

CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
BOARD OF THE CORPORATION
24 September 2021

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of the Corporation held at the Committee Room, Moulsham Street Campus, Chelmsford and via MS Teams on Friday 24 September 2021 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Amanda Montague (Chair)	
Andy Sparks (Principal) *	
Jenny Beaumont	* (left 4.15 pm)
Trevor Bolton	
Susan Hughes	
Nedas Lauranivicius	
Sarah Noble	
Christian Norman	*
Paddy Reilly	*
Jaya Patten	*
Barbara Vohmann	* (from 3.15pm)
Doug Zeeman	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Debs Hurst (Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Resources)
Debbie Garroway (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality)
Mark Emerson (Director of Information Services)
Rob Millea (Clerk to the Corporation)
Joanne Harrington (Assistant Clerk)

* Denotes attended through MS Teams – all other attendees were present in person

1505. APPOINTMENT OF NEW GOVERNORS

On the recommendation of a panel of SG&R governors, the Board **APPROVED** the appointment of Richard Davidson as an independent governor of the Board for a four year term, commencing immediately. He will join the Audit Committee and his Governor Champion designation is to be Adult Learning/Apprenticeships.

Barbara Vohmann abstained from this vote due to a perceived possible conflict of interest.

The Clerk advised that two candidates have been identified to fill the position of student governor. The Board **AGREED** that the Principal and the Director of Learner Inclusion and Development should decide on one

of these candidates and the Board be then asked to **APPROVE** the appointment of this candidate by email resolution, so that the student can join the Quality & Learners Committee on 9 November 2021 and the Board in December.

The other candidate will be asked to join the Quality & Learners Committee also, as a co-opted member.

ACTION: CLERK

1506. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOME TO NEW GOVERNORS

Apologies for Absence were received from Richard Davidson.

The Chair welcomed Richard Davidson (in absentia) and Paddy Reilly to the Board.

1507. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Resources informed the Board that she continues her role as a Member Representative on the Essex LGPS Advisory Board.

The Principal and Jaya Patten notified their interests as Directors of Essex Shared Services Limited.

The Clerk renewed his declaration that he acts as Company Secretary of Essex Shared Services Limited.

No confidential items were notified save that minute **1522** was deemed Confidential (**Part 2 Agenda**).

1508. URGENT BUSINESS

The Clerk reported that Julie Williams (Staff Governor) has resigned from her position in the College and consequently as a staff governor, with immediate effect. The Clerk will organise an election of a new support staff governor as soon as possible.

The Chair will write and thank Julie for her service to the Board.

There were no other items of Urgent Business.

ACTION: Chair

1509. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JULY 2021

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 July 2021 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

1510. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk tabled a paper tracking actions arising from the last minutes, all of which are covered elsewhere in the Agenda.

The Board **NOTED** that Jaya Patten has been appointed as a Director of Essex Shared Services Limited, replacing Elaine Oddie.

Barbara Vohmann advised that she had been provided with a response to her question regarding students progressing to HE and support/help for them.

1511. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

The Chair led a discussion regarding how the Board should operate in the future.

The Chair set out her thoughts on the future working of the Board, including:

- Best way for the Board to contribute based on individual's skills
- Equal emphasis on curriculum and finance
- Governors to contribute to the content of the Agenda
- Feedback to Board on observations from Learning Walks
- Governance structure of the College

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should prepare a paper on governance suggestions for consideration by the Search Governance & Remuneration Committee on 9 November 2021, covering the following topics:

- Organisation of the Agenda – related time constraints
- Blended attendance approach
- Finding time for greater in-depth discussion (more meetings?)
- Implementation of the Governor Champions programme
- Restore the Personnel, Finance & General Purposes Committee

Governors made a number of comments:

- Appoint a governor champion on careers advice
- Reporting back to Board/Committees and Senior Managers on Governor Champion activity/observations is key (separate Agenda item at Q&L for this)

- Restoration of PFGP could give further forum for greater discussion
- Stricter time management of Meetings

It was acknowledged that Governor challenge opportunities have been hampered by COVID and the lack of face to face contact with staff and students. Remote contact is not an effective substitute. Hopefully, this will resolve itself in the future.

ACTION: CLERK

1512. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Board **NOTED** progress, with commentary, against agreed KPIs for the year ended 31 July 2021.

The Board observed that the College is likely to meet the 90% threshold against the ESFA Adult Skills Budget for 2020/21 and therefore avoid any clawback of funds.

The Board noted that, despite pandemic uncertainty, Apprenticeship income will outturn above the target set at the start of the year (20% higher).

The Board also noted that progress against Target Achievable Grade for students no longer provides a real measure. This is because all qualifications that are subject to QTAGs now allow for permitted reductions in content. Accordingly, the measure is not relevant for last academic year.

Attendance has slightly declined since the last Report but overall retention remains high, including for Looked After Children and for students who are young adult carers.

The forecast for performance for all provision types and levels are in line with last year's outcomes, but it is noted that they are impacted negatively by projected pass rates for functional skills. In addition, the forecast achievement rate for Apprenticeships has declined by 8pp from last year (and 10pp against target).

Trevor Bolton asked that Staff KPIs, which are expressed in % terms, should be useful also as absolute numbers to give greater context.

Trevor Bolton observed that the lack of national information over the last two years means it is difficult to compare our results with other Colleges. Anecdotal evidence of which the College is aware suggests the College's performance has been good.

Paddy Reilly noted that, with regard to the proportion of 3 key observations being met by staff, shows that 20% of staff do not meet them. This issue will be worked on throughout the year as things get back to normal.

The DPFCS advised Trevor Bolton that the staff cost/income ratio would be lower if agency staff were not required as that cost carries a profit to the agency plus VAT.

The Principal said that the aim is to simplify the College Improvement Plan to make it more effective and decisive.

The position regarding staff and financial KPIs are covered in the relevant sections of this Agenda – minutes **1515** and **1516**.

1513. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented a written Report for the information of governors, supported by a slide presentation.

Recruitment and student matters

Enrolment is still underway but 16-18 full time learner enrolment numbers are 202 higher than the same time last year (10%) – the highest level in the last five years. This increase will feed through to funding levels for 2022-23 on the lagged funding model and should produce £500K - £750K additional income in that year.

Enrolment of 19+ learners is similar to last year. Apprenticeships starts are strong (116) as are pre-apprenticeship enrolments. HE recruitment is slow (down from 39 to 24) and, in response to Jenny Beaumont, the Principal felt that the College offer may be a little tired and will need to be refreshed for the future.

The Report gave a fuller breakdown of the learner numbers by age and curriculum area. There is a considerable variation in levels of enrolment by curriculum area compared to last year.

Access, Engineering, Technical Construction and Brickwork are all down significantly but these are offset by increases in Electrical, Sport and Science. All other areas are broadly the same as last year.

So far, there has been high compliance with protective measures by students in line with Step 4 of the Government's roadmap and they are clear what is required of them, especially with regard to carrying out lateral flow tests on a regular basis, initially in College and then at home. A small number of positive tests of students for COVID 19 are being

recorded each day – a total to date of 31 out of 3058 tests (1%) of which about 50% have been confirmed with a PCR test.

The central process for recording confirmed cases of COVID remains in place.

Most students are in campus now for 100% of their time.

A small number of appeals (25) were received against the TAG process.

Debbie Garroway has commenced employment in College as the new Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality.

Vicky Ford MP visited the College on 2 September 2021 to see how the return to study is proceeding.

Most of the new PCs have been installed, with academic staff having first priority. These are migrated to the cloud. All student PCs have been re-imaged with latest Windows including OneDrive.

The Board were informed of the Learner Induction process which is being followed, including online introduction, contact induction, initial COVID lateral flow test, student support facilities (including mentors) and ensuring learners are on the right courses. Induction continues to 22 October 2021, following which a Student Induction Survey will be carried out.

Risk Register/Dartboard

There are three critical risks at present which are covered in the Agenda item on Risk Management (minute **1517**). The Board were also provided with the latest version of the Risk Dartboard.

Staffing matters are addressed in the HR Report and this includes COVID-19 measures following the removal of virtually all restrictions as from 16 August 2021 (minute **1515**).

The Board **NOTED** that the **draft SAR** is prepared in the current Ofsted inspection framework format (minute **1514.1**). The grade proposed in the SAR is Good. Fuller discussion will take place at the Quality & Learners Committee on 9 November 2021, when achievement figures are available and the curriculum areas have been validated, in order that the Report can be approved at the December Board Meeting.

Funding & Finance

The Board were informed that a small operating surplus of £117K is currently projected for the 2020/21 year. This will be adjusted by pension accounting under FRS102 (see Finance Report – minute **1516**).

All bank covenants have been met and Financial Health for the College continues to be Requires Improvement.

The new National Insurance Levy is estimated to cost the College an additional £80K per annum (£27K for this year).

Subcontracting

The College wishes to renew its subcontracting arrangements with Qube Learning for 2021/22 for short provision for the unemployed, as in past years. The contract value is for £200K provision with a 15% management fee. The Board **APPROVED** this provision, in line with ESFA requirements, before the agreement is signed.

Mark Emerson informed the Board that Scrutton Bland, the College's internal auditors, had carried out a review of the College Subcontracting Arrangements which provided significant assurance.

The Dance Academy subcontracting proposal did not proceed.

Governor questions

Susan Hughes asked why Access recruiting dropped and the Principal said that universities are luring students by telling students that they don't need to do an access course. Christian Norman said that this was his experience also.

Sarah Noble asked whether GCSE grades of students led to students being placed on the right course at the right level. The Principal said that the FE sector has an unfolding disaster happening with possibly overstated GCSE grades which affects placements (and ultimately achievements) of students on Level 2 and 3 courses.

The Report was **RECEIVED**.

1514. QUALITY & LEARNERS MATTERS

1514.1 Self-Assessment Report 2020/21

The Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality **PRESENTED** the **draft SAR for 2020/21** to the Board to provide governors with an early insight as to the College's performance against the requirements of the Education

Inspection Framework. It was prepared as a draft by the previous Deputy Principal of the College.

It includes judgements both pre-lockdown and during lockdown within 2020-21 and the draft Report itemised the sources used in its compilation.

It was noted that final assessment figures (data tables) are not yet available but will be included in suitable form in the final version. It is proposed that the College will continue to be overall **GOOD**, subject to the completion of curriculum validation, presently in progress. Each of the four judgements and all four areas of provision are proposed to be **GOOD**.

The text of the Report identifies areas requiring further improvement and these are marked RI. It will be used to produce the draft College Improvement Plan for 2021/22 and Areas of Intervention.

The SAR will move to completion through review by the Quality & Learners Committee on 9 November 2021 and then be approved by the Board in final form on 10 December 2021.

The key recommendations for 2020/21 are itemised within the Report (Pages 5/6) and are summarised as follows:

- Attendance at functional skills English and maths has declined significantly affecting FS achievements
- Variability in quality of education between programme areas causing lack of progress by a small minority of learners
- Teaching staff not yet fully proficient in remote teaching and learning compared to face-to-face learning
- Part time Adult learners not fully benefiting from personal development opportunities compared to full time learners

Governor questions

The VP, C&Q said that SAR Validation Meetings are taking place next week and invitations have been sent to governors via Teams. Governors could attend in person if able to do so. A number of governors indicated that they would attend.

Greater strategic focus by Curriculum Directors is required according to Debbie Garroway. In particular, Princes Road needs more attention as it is a bit neglected compared to Moulsham Street. It is noted that there are different types of students there doing different courses: both are relevant factors. The College needs to ensure the areas of focus required are treated equitably.

Mark Emerson reported that the Internal Auditors had carried out a funding assurance review and no issues have been identified as yet. This will assist the external auditors as they now have to carry out tests to satisfy themselves as to the funding claims made (previously, this was provided by the ESFA).

1514.2 STUDENT EXIT SURVEY 2020/21

The Board **RECEIVED** a Report on the outcome of the Exit Survey 2020/21 carried out at the end of the academic year.

Previously, governors had received Reports of three in-year student surveys (October, December, April). The % positive response of the exit survey was 90%, broadly consistent with the earlier surveys.

The learner experienced in 2020/21 was distorted by the various lockdowns but the positive response rate was not materially affected.

The positivity varied by curriculum area with Construction lowest at 77% and Art, Design and Media highest at 100%.

The Next Steps were shared with governors:

- Rollout to curriculum teams and action points identified
- Shared with learners through Student Voice
- Safeguarding aspects included in Personal Development programme
- Reintroduction of student 'question of the week'
- Improvement the engagement/response from Construction students

Governor questions

Susan Hughes asked about dates for the next Learner Voice Meetings – Debbie Garroway said the Board will be informed in due course.

Sarah Noble felt there should be consistency in the chairing of LV Meetings and a greater focus on the questions which are debated/discussed to make meetings more purposeful. Presently, they seem to be rather generalised. The Clerk was asked to ensure Learner Voice be a Standing Agenda item at Q&L Meetings.

ACTION: CLERK

In response to Trevor Bolton, feedback will be passed to students through Learner Voice meetings. Debbie Garroway said that she was committed to polish up the LV process and the involvement of student representatives.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

1515. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

The Board **RECEIVED** a Report from the Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Resources on Human Resources matters.

The key points were:

- **Turnover** to date for this academic year annualised is 17.70% (14.79% at time of last report) against a target for the year of 18%, but 5% higher than at August 2020. The overall trend remains pleasingly downwards and compares well with the AoC benchmark in the Eastern Region of 18.2% (2018/19), no doubt reflecting the usual trend of staff changing employment during the summer break.
- Staff recruitment remains high during this term with successful recruitment of 29 staff during the summer. In addition, 14 casual staff have been appointed as Enrolment Assistants as it is difficult to recruit to this area. In addition, agency staff are being used due to the difficulty of recruiting LSAs.
- **Sickness absence** averaged 5.11 days in the rolling twelve month period to end of August against AoC benchmark (2018/19) of 5.4 days and 6.35 days this time last year, a downward trajectory. Short term staff absence averages 2.4 days per person per annum.
- **Employment relations** are good with the unions and there have been no claims made to the Employment Tribunal. Since the last Report, one grievance has been formally raised.
- All 60 College HR policies have been reviewed and, where necessary, updated with the assistance of Peninsula, the College's HR advisers.
- Consultation has begun (28 August 2021) with the College's employed cleaning staff under TUPE arrangements following the decision to outsource the cleaning contract to Wettons Cleaning services from 1 October 2021. Some staff elected not to participate and have left.
- Incremental pay progression for some staff this year is being reviewed.
- COVID arrangements and protocols are covered in the Principal's Report

Staff Survey recently took place on Wellbeing with a 67% response rate and the results will be discussed at Staff Development Day on 22 October: some issues have arisen (question from Susan Hughes). A further survey is planned for a two week period in January 2022. There continues to be a lot of activity in the area of Mental Health and Well Being to further meet commitments under the AoC Mental Health Charter.

For example,

- Staff intranet updated regularly
- Monthly Staff Wellbeing newsletter
- National awareness days
- Telephone appointments with the College's Mental Health Advisor
- Socially distanced walkie talkies and Boot Camp
- Addressing staff anxieties on returning to College
- Workshops with Mental Health advisor

1515.1 WORKFORCE STRATEGY

The Board considered a review of the College Workforce Delivery Strategy which was developed in 2018 for a three-year period.

Various additional items have been included at both a National Level and Local Level such as COVID issues, introduction of T Levels, removal of BTECs and the uncertainty over the future of LEPs.

Two College Level items have been removed (implementation of December 2017 Ofsted inspection and the Area Review recommendations) and three added – rollout and delivery of T Levels, developing HE provision and increasing adult provision to address local workforce strategies.

The Strategy includes greater use of Staff Surveys and continuous reviews of employment policies.

The changes were itemised in the written Report.

The Board **APPROVED** the Workforce Delivery Strategy for 2021-2024.

Governor questions

Susan Hughes was informed that Peninsula (College's HR advisers) will provide training for middle managers to help them in performance management.

Trevor Bolton said that there needs to be underpinning processes to give effect to the strategy and its principles as the document is a general overarching document – this was agreed and will be actioned by the DPFCS.

Debbie Garroway said that Mental Health Wellbeing is a high priority. Doug Zeeman reported that he had attended a Mental Health England First Aid course which was excellent, providing a good introduction to the issues involved.

Trevor Bolton felt that the results of the College, both financially and in student achievement, were exceptional in a very difficult year.

Susan Hughes asked why Colleges are having to bear the full cost of the NI increase – the DPFCS said this was a Government diktat. Schools are being compensated but the FE sector is not, because Colleges are different organisations and not directly state funded.

Otherwise, the Report was **NOTED**.

1516. FINANCE REPORT

1516.1 Management Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2021

The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services **PRESENTED** the Management Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2021 for discussion and comment by the Board. These have been reviewed by the designated Finance Governors.

For the year, the College is showing an operating surplus of £117K in the Management Accounts against a deficit in the reforecast of £107K, a favourable variance of £224K.

In addition, the Board noted that the surplus comprises a surplus by the College of £135K and a loss by Dovedale Nursery of £18K. The Nursery loss reflects the effects of the pandemic including the need for maintaining staff/children ratios.

Total income amounted to £15.897 million and total expenditure amounted to £15.780 million.

The Accounts were accompanied by a detailed commentary explaining the variances from budget. These management accounts do not take into account any adjustments which will result from including FRS102 pension adjustments – see minute **1516.3**.

At 31 July 2021, group net assets stood at £11.793 million, including cash of £1,611K and revalued fixed assets of £29.443 million. Total Debtors stood at £74,559 and appropriate provision for any non-recoverable items has been included in the Management Accounts.

The College's Financial Health for 2020/21, based on the SFA's new methodology and designations, is Requires Improvement and is likely to remain so for 2021/22.

The current ratio stands at 0.62 broadly as expected, but slightly under target of 0.65. Pay expenditure as a percentage of income is 70% against target of no more than 65%. It is therefore higher than the suggestion from the FE Commissioner that pay as a percentage of income should not exceed 65%.

The target for 2021/22 is 67.5% which reflects no increases in core funding rates as against rising costs in salaries, including the proposed NI Levy increase next Spring and a small budgeted pay award from 1 January 2022. The actual for last year was 70% affected by lower overall College income due to the pandemic – also, agency staff negatively impact this ratio.

Borrowing as a percentage of income is 22.55%, which is lower than the ESFA tolerances of 40% to 60%.

Chelmsford College is in compliance at 31 July 2021 with all its bank covenants.

A detailed cash flow forecast was provided to governors for the year to 31 July 2022. It is not expected that an overdraft will be required in the early months of 2022, but discussions with the College's bankers will continue in case the situation changes.

The Board **APPROVED** the draft Management Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2021 and **NOTED** the projected cash flow for the year.

1516.2 Capital Update

The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services **PRESENTED** a Report on Capital Works, which covered COVID-19 secure measures and progress on the New Construction Centre at Princes Road.

ESFA have awarded £588K for capital works (category D assets) which has been used to replace the gas boilers at Princes Road, demolition works to enable progress on the New Centre and repairs to the Sports Hall roof.

The Board **NOTED** the Report.

ACTION: DPFCS

1516.3 Year end accounts and audit

The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services said that the external audit by Price Bailey has begun.

A reconciliation from the Management Accounts to the draft Annual Report & Accounts was presented to the Board, taking into account the LGPS pension adjustments:

Surplus per management accounts	£117K
Pension Scheme interest charge for the year	121K
Pension Scheme service charge for the year	880K
Pay cost adjustment	(7K)
	(877K)
Actuarial gain in respect of LGPS	3,421K
Total comprehensive income per ARA (draft)	2,544K

Some minor adjustments are anticipated on funding and apprenticeship achievement.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

1516.4 Insurance Review 2021/22

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services **PRESENTED** a Report outlining the College's Insurance Cover for 2021/22 for review by the Board as part of its duty to safeguard the assets of the organisation and procure protective cover against other risks to which the College might be exposed.

Public and Products Liability cover has been increased from £10million to £25 million on the recommendation of the College's insurance brokers (similar to other Colleges).

The costs of the main insurances for 2020/21 is £35.1K and this was **AGREED**.

During 2021/22, a valuation of Buildings will be undertaken (cost £4K) to ensure that the current insurance valuations are adequate (Moulsham Street £31million and Princes Road £25million).

1516.5 Financial Regulations

The Board **APPROVED** the updated Financial Regulations in December 2020. Some minor amendments regarding the delegation schedule (replacing Caroline Williams with Debbie Garroway) are required and will be presented to the next Board Meeting in December for agreement.

ACTION: DPFCS

1516.6 Budget Update

The DPFCS alerted the Board to some emergent challenges to the 2021/22 Indicative Budget which the Board approved at their July 2021 Meeting, as follows:

- Rising costs of materials for curriculum areas (e.g. electrical 20% increase)
- Rising energy costs
- General inflation increase
- Need to use Agency staff to cover vacancies (especially LSAs)
- National Insurance increase from 1 April 2022 (£27k cost this year: annual cost £80K+)
- Additional posts in place to support 'Catch Up' fund as no internal capacity

A reforecast will be prepared for the next Board Meeting.

ACTION: DPFCS

1517. RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

The DPFCS presented this Report. The Risk Dartboard highlights the risks. There are 22 risks in total, of which 3 are RED (COVID19 protection processes and procedures, Functional Skills and financial cost of new National Insurance Levy of £80K per annum), 13 are AMBER and 6 are GREEN.

The Report outlined the steps taken to accommodate staff and students returning to the College, following Government advice recently which are noted in the Principal's Report. In particular, there are changes to the isolation advice in the event of a confirmed COVID case arising.

The Board was provided with a copy of the latest iteration of the Risk Register for review and comment and were reminded that the Risk Register is regularly discussed and reviewed by SMT on a weekly basis.

The Risk Management Policy will be subject to its annual review at the Audit Committee Meeting on 23 November 2021.

ACTION: CLERK

1518. ACOP 2020-21 AND REGULARITY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2020/21

The Board **APPROVED** the Audit Code of Practice Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2020/21 on the recommendation of the Audit Committee and it was **SIGNED** by the Principal as Accounting Officer and the Chair of the Corporation. It will be submitted to the regularity auditor, Price Bailey, as part of the evidence for their regularity audit.

To support the Questionnaire, the Clerk provided the Board with a Paper explaining the changes to the Audit Code of Practice for this year including the College compliance and changes to the Questionnaire.

The Clerk informed the Board that the DfE had recently issued a COVID 19 supplement to the ACOP for 2020/21 – this has been completed by the Deputy Principal and reviewed by the Clerk and will be submitted to the regularity auditor. It does not require signature.

ACTION:CLERK

1519. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

The Clerk **PRESENTED** a detailed Report addressing a number of Governance issues.

Governor Recruitment

Following the appointments of Paddy Reilly and Richard Davidson as independent governors, there is currently one vacancy on the Board for an independent governor: there are no candidates at present.

Matters are in hand to appoint a student governor and the Clerk will organise an election for a support staff governor as soon as possible, following the resignation of Julie Williams.

The Board had previously decided that it was content to appoint a staff governor to the Audit Committee if that met the skill requirements of the Committee and that it was not prohibited by the Audit Code of Practice (although not recommended). They confirmed their position in this regard.

Governor's Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2020/21

All governors who served during the year (twelve) were asked to complete the SAQ – eleven have replied. The Clerk provided a Report to the Meeting of these responses.

Overall, Governors awarded a grade of 1.568 (last year 1.602, based on eleven returns) which, in Ofsted grading terms, is more or less midway between Good (grade 2) and Outstanding (grade 1).

A number of points featured more than once as Areas for Development or Improvement within the responses:

- Re-engagement with students/interaction & feedback/the student experience post COVID
- Roll out of Governor Champions programme for curriculum areas
- Greater understanding of the curriculum and its delivery including feedback from CAMs and student satisfaction/narrowing the achievement gap
- Engagement with stakeholders
- Improve level of challenge and questioning techniques especially in interrogating less well performing areas
- Strategic developments including Strategic Plan revision and reissue
- Return to face-to-face Meetings

The Paper includes possible topics for further training and development for governors for follow up.

ACTION: CLERK

The Paper summarised responses to specific questions relating to the College handling of the COVID-19 issues. Governors were satisfied overall with the College's approach and the challenges of delivering learning to students remotely and with the continuance of governance processes during this difficult time. It was felt that technology had been well used both at the governance level and operationally.

Programme for Governors' Development Day 15 October 2021

The following topics were suggested by the Board and the Principal:

- Strategic Future discussion commencing with a presentation from the Principal of USP College
- Learning Walks
- Learner Voice Meeting
- Update presentation on E&D and Safeguarding by the Director of Learner Inclusion and Development
- Curriculum issues arising from SAR validation meetings

It was **AGREED** that the Chair and the Principal will finalise the programme shortly and advise the Board, including location and timings.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

Compliance against English Colleges' Code of Good Governance 2020/21

The Clerk **TABLED** a Report demonstrating the College's Compliance against the Code for last year and this was **NOTED**. This compliance and the College's adoption and adherence to the Code is quoted in the College's Annual Report and Accounts.

The Clerk noted that the Code is undergoing revision. The SG&R Committee will be kept informed.

ACTION: CLERK

Review of Confidential Papers

The Clerk **REPORTED** that he had reviewed items in the minutes over the past year which had been deemed by the Board and its Committees to be Confidential. These related to Remuneration Committee Reports (covering pay and remuneration of Senior Postholders), College Strategic Future, IT issues, Performance Reviews of internal and external auditors, cleaning arrangements and confidential HR issues.

He recommended that none of these items should, at this stage, be reclassified as Open, since they remain commercially and politically sensitive. He further reminded the Board that discussions regarding Remuneration of Senior Post Holders is always treated as Confidential to give privacy to the individuals concerned. Decisions in this respect are reported to the Board by the SGR Committee.

The Board **ENDORSED** the Clerk's advice.

Register of Members' Interests and Eligibility to Serve

The Clerk reported that most Governors had completed these and he reminded remaining governors to complete them as soon as possible for audit inspection.

ACTION: CLERK

Governor Attendance 2020/21

The Clerk provided details of attendance by governors at Board and at Committee Meetings (in person and remotely), during 2020/21. The overall average for Board and Committees was 92% (last year 88%).

Governors on leave of absence at any time during the year are not included in the attendance figures.

The generally accepted benchmark within Colleges is 80%. There are no figures as yet for the average in the sector for the last two years, but the 2018/19 average was 82%. In the opinion of the Clerk, 92% would be regarded as an excellent average for attendance.

Board & Committee Memberships from 24 September 2021

A current list was provided for information, including allocations for newly appointed governors.

Governor Champions

The Clerk provided an update to the Board of preferences of Members as to the curriculum and other areas where they wish to be attached as Governor Champions.

The next step is for the relevant Senior Managers to take the process forward by making contact with the governors attached to their areas. The Clerk will distribute the list of Governor Champions to the Managers to enable this to happen.

ACTION: CLERK

Governor Training Policy

The Clerk provided a draft Policy on the above reflecting provisions in the Governance Code and the RSAQ for discussion.

The Policy was **APPROVED** by the Board. The Assistant Clerk keeps a record of Training undertaken by Board Members and the Clerk.

1520. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of AOB.

1521. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Friday 15 October 2021 – Development Day at 9.00am
- Friday 10 December 2021 at 2.00 pm
- Friday 4 February 2022 – Development Day – arrangements to be decided
- Friday 25 March 2022 at 2.00 pm
- Thursday 7 July 2022 at 2.00 pm

There being no further business, the Meeting terminated at 4.50 pm.

Signed.....Dated.....