

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING**  
**HELD ON FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER 2022 IN THE EXCHANGE BOARD ROOM / VIA**  
**MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**PRESENT:**

Lillian Croston	Chair
Paul Levet	Vice Chair
Dr Fazal Dad	Principal and Chief Executive
Mark Allanson	Member
Fran Crossland	Member
Paul Fleming	Member
Ram Gupta	Member
Michael Lee	Business Support Staff Governor
Andrea Machell	Member
Mark Moren	Academic Staff Governor
Paul Morris*	Member
Arif Patel	Member
Taiyab Sufi	Member
Steve Waggott*	Member

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Jason Burgess	Beever and Struthers (the College's External Auditors)
Jennifer Eastham	Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services
Nicola Clayton	Director: Business Development and External Engagement
Rachel Tarplee	Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality
Sarah Horeesorun	Director of Governance

\* indicates attendance via Microsoft Teams

The meeting started at 14:00 and was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Fran Crossland and Jason Burgess. For Fran Crossland, a new Governor, it was her first Corporation Board meeting, and Jason Burgess, from Beever and Struthers, presented Item 5(i). For the benefit of both, the Chair suggested round-table introductions from all participants.

The Chair noted that this was the last Board meeting for Paul Fleming and thanked him for his years of support and valuable contributions to the Board and Committee meetings. The Board members all wished him well in his new job, and Paul Fleming added that it was a pleasure to have been part of the Governing Body Team, that the Chair was a true leader and he valued the support and experience.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Catherine Hill OBE, Imaan Ijaz, Khadija Ibrahimova, Chris Johnson, Dr Zubair Iqbal and Mark Bradley, Beever and Struthers.

**2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Chair advised those in attendance that should members of the Corporation Board become aware of any potential conflicts of interest, they should be disclosed at the earliest opportunity during the meeting.

### 3. **MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2022**

The Principal and Chief Executive requested one minor correction to Action no. 8 on the reverse of the Agenda and taken from the 10 October 2022 Board meeting. This should read 'public sector' not Local Authority (LA) control.

The Board accepted this correction and agreed that the minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on 10 October 2022 be **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record once the correction made. The meeting Minutes would be signed by the Chair.

### 4. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no new matters arising, the Board having noted the status of actions from the previous meetings.

The Principal and Chief Executive added that he had spoken to Andrew Gadsdon about the feedback on Staff Induction reported by the Staff Governors in the previous meeting. Andy Gadsdon was looking into this matter.

The Chair reminded Board members that a large number of items on the agenda for this meeting were for approval and had been discussed in detail at the various Committee meetings, as indicated.

### 5. (i) **AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER 2021/22**

Redacted:

#### (ii) **RISK REGISTER 2022/23**

The Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services presented the Risk Register and talked through the proposed changes considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2022.

A member queried whether risk C1 – Failure to ensure a dynamic and relevant curriculum at appropriate levels - should be separated out into Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE). The reasons for this suggestion being that HE was considered a high-risk area and was under review, whilst the opposite was true of FE. The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services agreed to look into the possible separation of the risk.

**Action: Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services**

There followed some discussion about the positive marketing of HE to increase student numbers and how this might be improved through use of social media and adopting an analytical or intelligence-based approach. The Principal and Chief Executive informed members that the new Head of Marketing and Communications was working on an innovative marketing approach for HE.

The Board noted the status of the risks as detailed in the Risk Register at Appendix One, and **APPROVED** the Risk Register and the proposed amendments as set out in the Report. (above).

## 6. (i) UPDATE ON BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Director of Governance provided a verbal update on the current status of the Board and Committee membership.

The campaign to nominate a Student Governor for Higher Education (HE) had concluded and the successful candidate was Imaan Ijaz whose course was Supporting Teaching and Learning in English - FdA Teaching and Learning Support (Primary) – Stage A. Imaan would be a Board member and member of the Learning and Quality Committee.

The resignation of Paul Fleming as a Governor of the College and member of the Audit Committee Resources and Student Voice Committee, meant that there were now:

- 3 vacancies on the Board
- 1 vacancy on the Audit Committee
- 2 Vacancies on the Policy and Resources Committee
- 2 vacancies on the Student Voice Committee

Members were encouraged to consider the vacancies on the Student Voice Committee and also to let the Director of Governance know of any suitable potential candidates for the Board roles.

The Chair added that members of the Governance Panel had recently met with one potential candidate and that others were in the pipeline.

The Board:

**ACCEPTED** the resignation of Paul Fleming as a Governor of the College and member of the Audit Committee and Student Voice Committee.

**RATIFIED** the appointment of Imaan Ijaz as the Higher Education Student Governor and member of the Corporation Board and Learning and Quality Committee for the term of office starting 24 October 2022 to November 2023.

## (ii) WHOLE BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT 2021/22

The Report was presented by the Director of Governance and previously considered by the Governance Panel at its meeting on 10 November 2022.

Members were complimentary of the Report but thought that it would be useful to have some more direction as to what more Governors could do if they had the time to do it. The Chair praised the support, time and valuable expertise that the members contributed to the effective decision making and management of the College and suggested that maybe, time permitting, Governors could support more events and promote the College externally throughout the wider community.

The Principal and Chief Executive added that the College had benefitted from the Board's curriculum expertise and relentless push to improve quality, and that it would be good to mirror this using other areas of expertise, for example, I.T., Health and Safety or Human Resources.

A member recommended that Governors undertake a Learning Walk as it was a useful and enlightening experience and members thought it worthwhile to look into ways of raising the visibility of Governors with staff and students.

**Action: Director of Governance**

Having talked Board members through the Report and associated action plan attached, the Board were content to **APPROVE** the:

- Board Self-Assessment 2021/22
- proposed grade as 'Good'
- action plan for 2022/23

(iii) **EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

To ensure compliance, the College/Corporation Board needed to commit to an external governance review, but should be satisfied that this will add value and benefit an already effective governance regime, whilst also being mindful to protect the public purse.

At its meeting on 10 October 2022, the Governance Panel requested three potential options to consider in its meeting on 14 November 2022, with a view to identifying a preferred supplier and proposing this to the Board for consideration and approval in its meeting 9 December 2022. This report and supporting Annex provided information on three potential suppliers of external governance reviews.

Key considerations when conducting the research were that the suppliers:

- be external, objective and independent
- be an expert with relevant experience or qualifications such as:
  - experience of governance in the charity or education sector
  - an advanced Chartered Governance Institute qualification
  - a track record of carrying out reviews
- have strong communication and interpersonal skills
- offer good value for money

A further consideration, was that the suppliers be available to conduct the external governance review in spring 2023 (March-May).

[REDACTED CONTENT COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE]

(iv) **SUCCESSION PLANNING POLICY**

The Director of Governance talked the Board through the proposed changes to the Succession Planning Policy, highlighting that there were no proposed changes to the process itself, only to job title – Director of Governance replacing Clerk to the Corporation. The proposed changes were highlighted in the Appendix reviewed by the Board.

The Chair pointed out one occasion on page 4 where Clerk had not been updated to read Director of Governance.

On the basis that the small update would be made to page 4, as above, the Board **APPROVED** the proposed changes to the Succession Planning Policy as detailed in the Report and Appendix.

**7. (i) COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021/22 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) FE & WBL 2022/23**

The Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality presented the Report which provided the Board with an update on progress against the actions included within the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2021/22 and the Further Education and Work-Based Learning Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2021/22.

These documents had been updated to reflect the comments and suggestions made in the Learning and Quality Committee meeting on 1 December 2022 which was dedicated to discussion of these quality documents.

The consensus of opinion was that the documents were much improved from the draft versions considered at the Committee and the changes reflected had strengthened and placed emphasis on the right areas.

There was some discussion about aspiration and should that be the aspiration of the College or the personal aspiration of the student. As always, there remained the desire to develop learners to the best of their individual potential and see more Blackburn College FE students progressing to Blackburn University Centre HE courses rather than going elsewhere.

The Board **APPROVED** the College Further Education Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2021/22 and Quality Improvement Plan FE & WBL 2022/23.

## **(ii) QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) HE 2022/23**

The Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality presented the updated Higher Education Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2022/23 assuring Governors that whilst the granular detail had been omitted from the QIP, this version was more dynamic, with emphasis on the operational level and including internal measures and assessments as well as the B3 metrics.

There followed substantial discussion of the B3 metrics and their inclusion in the QIP, and suggestions of, where available, inclusion of comparable data from previous years to illustrate trajectory. Discussions covered the discrepancies and nuances of graduate employment and North/South divide.

**Action: Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality**

It was agreed that a better understanding of the B3 metrics and implications of not meeting them be an item for discussion at a future Learning and Quality meeting.

**Action: Director of Governance**

The Board **APPROVED** the Quality Improvement Plan for Higher Education 2022/23.

The Chair thanked the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality, the HE Team and Head of Quality for their work on improving the documents and in particular, the quick turnaround and changes made after the last Learning and Quality Committee meeting.

## **(iii) ACADEMIC BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

On recommendation from the Learning and Quality Committee meeting 10 November 2022, the Board reviewed the Annual Report from the Academic Board for 2021/22 and were content that the Academic Board was discharging its duties effectively.

The Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality informed members that Cath Taylor, BwD Local Council, was now a member of the Academic Board and members commented that they were pleased that the sequencing of the Academic Board meetings now fitted better with that of the Learning and Quality Committee meetings.

The Board **APPROVED** the Academic Board Annual Report 2021/22.

## **8. ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2021/22**

The Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services introduced Item 8(i) and explained that what followed in this Item was a suite of documents that underpin the Annual Report and Financial Statements and that it was important, in the interests of disclosure, for the Reports to be considered together and brought to the attention of the Board.

All of the following Reports had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2022.

**8.(i) Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021/22** – these documents will be submitted to the ESFA and made available to the public on the College website. The Annual Report includes commentary on performance and developments during the year, plus risk and Corporate Governance. The Accounts delivered financial health that is ‘Outstanding’ as measured by the ESFA, met all three of the FE Commissioners measures and also met the bank covenants. The Reports had been audited by Beever and Struthers who gave an ‘unmodified’ opinion.

The Board **APPROVED** the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2021/22. That being the case, the Chair of the Corporation Board and the Principal and Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, signed the requisite letters of Representation and Assurance and the Annual Report and Financial Statements.

a. ESFA Finance Record for Colleges – As part of the ESFA Accounts Direction, the College is required to submit the accounts to the ESFA in an Excel Spreadsheet called the Finance Record Return. The key elements were included in Appendix 1 of the Report and the return was due for submission to the ESFA by 31 December 2022.

The Board **APPROVED** the submission of the Finance Record to the ESFA

b. Financial Objectives – To comply with ESFA guidance all Colleges must have clear Financial Objectives that support the achievement of its strategic objectives. The Financial Objectives and performance against them was reported in the Financial Statements and presented in the Report for Board approval.

The Board reviewed, noted the performance and **APPROVED** the Financial Objectives 2021/22 and agreed that discussion of the Financial Objectives for 2022/23 be deferred to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee 27 February 2023.

c. Related Party Transactions – Reporting standards dictate that any transactions between the College and a Governor or related organisation was disclosed in the Annual Report and Financial Statements. The detailed transactions were declared in Appendix One of this Report and **APPROVED** by Governors.

d. Annual Review of Accounting Policies – The College’s accounting policies are the rules by which it does its finance and accounting. These policies have been used in the preparation of the accounts and as there have been no new accounting standards, only minimal changes are required to the policies, none of which would have an impact on the financial stability of the College.

The Board **APPROVED** the Accounting Policies for the 2021/22 Financial Statements as set out in Appendix 1.

## **8. (ii) Management Accounts**

a. 2021/22 Final - The Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services confirmed that the College remained at a breakeven position, cash balances remained healthy and the FE Commissioner metrics and loan covenants continued to be met. A draft of this Report had been reviewed by the Board at its meeting 14 October 2022 and there had been marginal changes since. This Final Report had been considered by Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2022.

The Board **APPROVED** the Management Accounts for the period ending 31 July 2022 (FINAL), as recommended by Policy and Resources Committee.

b. Period ending 31 October 2022 – The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services informed members that this was the second set of accounts so far this year and explained that the College was slightly behind its budgeted position for this time of year, but that this would get back on track by the end of the year. The reasons for the shortfall in forecast outturn were explained as variances in Higher Education and Commercial income, plus the cost of repaying the Bank loan was unbudgeted and paid off in one go. Management were confident that the finances would be in a good position come the end of the year and low-level adjustments and savings were being made to compensate.

The Principal and Chief Executive added that the Management Team were making rational financial decisions that would make savings, but in no way compromise the quality of education or the student experience.

The Board acknowledged this approach and **APPROVED** the Report.

### **8(iii) College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

#### a. KPIs 2021/22 - FINAL

The Board reviewed the FINAL Report setting out the performance on the College's KPIs for 2021/22. The relevant KPIs had been discussed by both the Policy and Resources Committee and Learning and Quality Committee and the FINAL version remained unchanged from the draft version presented to the Board at its October meeting.

The Board noted the Appendix outlining the FINAL position against the targets and the actuals for previous years, and approved the Report.

#### b. KPIs period ending 31 October 2022

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services introduced the first Report for this year. This had been scrutinised at the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 28 November 2022 where it was noted that Higher Education Learner Count, Staff Turnover and Surplus/Deficit were underperforming and mitigating actions in place.

The Board **APPROVED** the Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2022/23 and the actuals for the period ending 31 October 2022.

### **8(iv) Strategic Plan Operating Statement**

a. **2021/22 FINAL** -The Report enabled members to monitor the College's progress to delivering the Strategic Plan and set out, for consideration, the proposed targets for 2022/23.

The Board noted that of the 25 targets for 2021/22

- 8 had been achieved
- 8 on target to achieve
- 5 not achieved
- 4 not yet reportable or no longer applicable

The detail was supplied in Annex A, but in summary the key issues and those targets that had not been achieved were:

- Apprenticeship achievement rates being over 75%;

- Value added scores being 3;
- Achieve Ofsted outstanding;
- Enrolments across HE cohorts grow by 3% annually;
- Improving Space Utilisation by 5%;
- Increasing Commercial Income by 10%;

Explanation for each of these was covered elsewhere on the agenda.

A new Strategic Plan had been approved for 2022-2025 and a new Operating Statement with actions and targets was presented to Corporation Board on 14 October 2022. A few amendments were suggested at that meeting and a revised version of the 2022/23 Operating Statement provided for the Board's review.

The Board **APPROVED** the Strategic Plan Operating Statement FINAL Report 2021/22 and the targets for 2022/23.

### **8(v) Biennial Review of Financial Regulations**

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained that the Financial Regulations should be reviewed every two years, as a minimum, to ensure that they are accurate, remain fit for purpose and reflect changes to the control environment.

A review of other documents had taken place to determine whether changes were necessary to the Financial Regulations, and resulted in only minor changes to the Financial Regulations.

The proposed changes were supplied in Appendix 1, with the majority of updates being very minor in nature and summarised as:

- Updated Terms of Reference for Committee's
- Updated legislation titles
- Changes in College structure or job titles
- Wording to reflect modernised working practices

The Board agreed the proposed changes and **APPROVED** the Financial Regulations.

### **8(vi) Freedom of Speech Policy**

To ensure continued compliance with the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, the College had conducted its annual review and reported to the Policy and Resources Committee on 28 November 2022. There were no changes since the policy was last approved on 15 December 2021. However, the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality informed members that there was going to be a Freedom of Speech Bill and that this may impact on the Student Union in particular, with personal liability being a potentially controversial aspect of the Bill. Members were reassured that the Student Union President was aware of likely changes and that the College's Pastoral Team provided support and guidance to the Student Union.

The Board **APPROVED** the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and the continued adoption by the College.

### **8(vii) Conflict of Interest Policy**

The Director of Governance introduced this item and explained that the Conflicts of Interest declarations completed by Senior Managers, budget holders and Governors on an annual basis, informed the College's central Register of Interests.

The Board noted that there were no substantial changes proposed to the policy, with only minor changes to job titles and in reference to the revised Data Protection Act 2018.



The Board agreed with the proposed changes and **APPROVED** the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

## **9. STUDENT VOICE – REVIEW OF THE CALENDER OF BUSINESS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Student Voice Committee had met on 23 November 2022 and reviewed the Terms of Reference and proposed changes. The Committee agreed that the Terms of Reference worked well and remained fit for purpose, with changes to job titles as set out in the Annex to the Report.

The Board noted the commentary covering the Student Voice Committee's progress against its Terms of Reference and **APPROVED** the Calender of Business and proposed changes to the Terms of Reference.

## **10. CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Chair reflected on her participation in three exciting events in College and thanked Board members for their part in supporting the Graduation Ceremonies, the official launch of the HEAT facility and opening of The Exchange.

The events had all created a buzz around the College, were well attended and there was a positive atmosphere.

The Chair shared her experience of the recent Quality Summits which provided the opportunity to focus on individual academic areas and to drill down into the data. She reported that there had been some very good areas of Teaching and Learning, with some small pockets of resistance to change and progress. The Chair remarked upon the relentless challenge to raise standards, particularly when faced with the issues around staff shortages, though acknowledged that teacher recruitment was an issue sector wide and not isolated to Blackburn College. One recommendation as an area for improvement would be, in the Chair's opinion, readily available data reports. This would benefit the day to day efficient management of curriculum areas and add value to the Quality Summits. Data Reports and Management Information was supplied, but late in the day and without enough time to understand and interrogate it fully. On a personal note, it would be helpful to have any data reports enlarged to make it easier to read and interpret unfamiliar data.

Whilst remarking on quality, the Chair added that Andy Gadsdon, Head of Quality and successful in driving quality improvement in curriculum, organisational development and CPD, was leaving in February 2023.

There had been several students successful in obtaining interviews with Oxford and Cambridge. The Chair had enjoyed meeting them and helping them to prepare for their interviews, remarking that they were very well informed and capable.

In summarising her report, the Chair said that there had been lots of exciting developments in the last term, but that there were still areas for improvement and listed, amongst those, HE and staff recruitment.

A member remarked that the College is always busy and this is a good advertisement for staff and students alike, but wondered whether the Staffing Risk on the Risk Register should be 'red' rather than 'amber' given that staff recruitment is a concern. In response the Principal and Chief Executive acknowledged that this was indeed a fair point, but reasoned that it should remain 'amber' as this was something that Management was working on, and shared that the College had adopted several strategies to try and reduce the impact of staff under-recruitment. For example, promoting the culture of the College to develop its own staff into posts, making it more attractive to appeal to, and retain, high-calibre people, and effectively use performance management. On this final point, the

Chair added that she thought that the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality was doing a very good job managing staff – remaining diplomatic and professional.

## **11. PRINCIPAL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

The Principal and Chief Executive presented his Report which included the latest on student retention, attendance and achievement.

The Report recognised the good achievement rates and, as identified in the Quality Summits and the Colleges Quality Improvement Plans, acknowledged areas for further improvement, these included:

- GCSE maths and English – Grades 4–9\*
- Maths and English Functional Skills Level 1 and 2
- Creative industries achievement rates
- High grades A-Levels and Vocational Level 3 programmes
- Achievement rates of White Male students

This academic year the College had enrolled over 1500 GCSE students to resit their maths, English or both qualifications. During November, the College had supported a very small cohort of 30 GCSE maths and English resits. The College will be receiving the results of these exams during January 2023.

The commentary provided the Board with the latest information on achievement rates for High Needs students, Apprenticeships and HE student performance.

The Principal and Chief Executive provided an update on the College's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) application and the latest position on the Hybrid/Agile Working framework development.

The Board was pleased to learn of new partnerships and that in the recent Lancaster University Partnership Review, the College had successfully met all 8 recommendations from the Review and thanked the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality and her HE Team.

There was mention of the Skills Accountability Statement and that the sector is awaiting further guidance from DfE and also, confirmation of the ONS Review announcement which at present, do not appear to have any significant ramifications.

The Local Authority, with the College, were successful in the joint Prosperity Fund Bid which will support the College improvements to Business and Cyber industries. Grateful thanks were given to the Director of Business Development and Employer Engagement and her Team for securing the external funding to develop resources and bring facilities up to date.

The Principal and Chief Executive shared with the Board details of his visits, College events and completed his report with mention of meetings that he had had with students.

And finally, The Principal and Chief Executive said that it had been a good academic year, and yes, the strike action had undoubtedly had an impact, sadly to the detriment of the students, but the College was working to redress that.

The Board praised the College for its continued focus to work with all students to develop the knowledge skills and behaviours to progress to their next level of study, secure employment and to fulfil their ambitions. The Board was mindful that all staff, teaching and support, were acknowledged for the tremendous collaborative efforts of the Blackburn College family to ensure that the students had an excellent student experience and be the best that they can be.

The Chair thanked the Principal and Chief Executive for his Report.

*Paul Morris left the meeting at 4pm.*

## **12. STAFF GOVERNORS' REPORT**

The Staff Governors presented their Report commenting that on the whole, staff were pleased with the pay rise and extra days holidays over the Christmas period.

The Report highlighted that The Exchange was working well, though there had been a shortage of laptops available to borrow, news was that 70 more laptops had been ordered. This was well received.

Staff were keen to hear the outcome from the Agile/Hybrid Working Group, but appreciated that this was very complex.

Governors were pleased to learn that the Enrichment Budget was promoting equality of opportunity by paying for all students to benefit from College trips, not just those that could afford it.

Staff were complimentary of the new approach to marketing and the general buzz and vibrancy that the attractive and useful new facilities had brought to the College and student experience.

The Board thanked the Staff Governors for their update a member enquired whether, given the cost of living crisis, staff and students were given advice and support on say, budget management. The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services said that staff can access an Employee Assistance Programme 24/7 which offers financial, debt, mental health and personal advices and guidance, whilst the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality added that students received similar advice through Tutorial, Pastoral Support and access to a 24/7 Student Assistance Programme – similar to the one available to staff.

## **13. ONS RECLASSIFICATION OF COLLEGES – OUTCOME AND UPDATE**

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services informed the Committee that the outcome of the ONS Review into the reclassification of Colleges from Private to Public Sector had been announced on Tuesday 29 November 2022. As the Principal and Chief Executive had mentioned in his Report, there do not appear, at present, to be any major ramifications, but the detail was still being worked through.

The College was keeping a watching brief on this and no doubt there will be further fall-out from this as the implications are realised.

## **14. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Chair approved minutes from the following Committees were received for information:

- Learning and Quality – 10 October 2022
- Governance Panel – 14 November 2022
- Audit Committee – 22 November 2022
- Student Voice – 24 November 2022

It was noted that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 28 November 2022 and Learning and Quality Committee meeting on 1 December 2022 had not yet been approved by the respective Committee Chair and would therefore be included in papers for the next Board meeting.

## **15. ESFA FINANCIAL HEALTH LETTER**

The letter was shared for information and provided the Board with assurance regarding the College's Financial Health. Based on the forecasts, the College Financial Forecasting Return generated an auto-score of 'Outstanding' financial health and this was concurred by the ESFA.

The Board noted the content of the Report.

## **16. SUBCONTRACTING CONTRACT/ACTIVITIES**

The Director Business and Employer Engagement talked the Board through this Report highlighting the current subcontract out arrangements and anticipated increase in adult provision under consideration.

The Board received this Report for information and thanked the Director Business and Employer Engagement for all of her hard work.

## **17. HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) UPDATE AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2022**

The Report provided the Board with an update on HR related issues for the period 1 August 2022 to 31 October 2022.

The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services explained the huge challenges that had come about after the announcement of the increased National Living Wage, the impact of which, was widespread and effecting organisations everywhere. The College was working through staff and teams to assess the impact and would be reporting back to the Policy and Resources Committee at its next meeting.

The Chair queried why only 11 out of 44 leavers had received an exit interview to which the Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services replied that all leavers are offered an exit interview, but some do not wish to take up the offer. In the discussions that followed it was thought that it might be useful to increase the options for exit interviews for those staff leaving – maybe instigating this process earlier, before staff leave, and offering the opportunities to complete a survey or have a face to face conversation on departure to support the staff and identify any emerging trends. The Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services said that this had come up at the Policy and Resources Committee, the exit survey is online and that the HR Team are exploring ways to encourage take-up of an exit interview whichever way it is approached.

The Board thanked the Vice-Principal: Finance and Corporate Services for all of the work that has been done on the National Living Wage and increasing exit interviews.

The Board received this Report for information.

## **18. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING AND ASSURANCE REPORT 2021/22**

The Report provide assurance to the Board that the College continues to prioritise safeguarding arrangements for all students across all aspects of its provision. An Assurance brief was provided for information. This Report had been considered by the Safeguarding Committee in September 2022 and Learning and Quality Committee at its meeting on 10 November 2022.

The Board received this Report for information.

## **19. STUDENT UNION ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22 INCLUDING ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

The Report, which had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 26 September 2022 provided a summary of the organisational Development activity for the period 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022. The key data sets were included in Appendix 1, and the Report highlighted significant staff development activity and increased Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

The Board received this Report for information.

## **20. GOVERNORS' EXPENSES REPORT 2021/22 AND POLICY 2022/23**

The Report had previously been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 28 November 2022 and confirmed that no overseas business trips, trips funded through the Research and Scholarship Committee/Staff Development or educational visits had been made by staff, students or Governors in 2021/22.

The Board received this Report for information.

## **21. NET CARBON ZERO - UPDATE**

The Report provided Board members with information on progress against the 31-step FE Climate Change Road Map, a copy of progress against the Action Plan being included in the papers. The Report had been presented to Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2022.

The Board received this Report for information.

## **22. PROGRESS AGAINST AoC CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE – REVISED ATTACHMENT**

The Report provided the Board with the correct attachment outlining progress made against the AoC Code of Good Governance. The incorrect attachment had been supplied when the Board originally considered the Report in July 2022. In the interests of compliance and completeness, the correct update was supplied and noted by the Board.

The Board received this Report for information.

## **23. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A member mentioned Chat GPT, a new AI and the need for College to quickly familiarise itself with this as a potential threat to the curriculum and use in plagiarism, but also to explore it as a possible tool and enhancement to teaching and use in lessons.

The Vice-Principals and Principal and Chief Executive invited Board members to the College Carol Service, Police Commemorative event and Staff Awards.

**Action: Director of Governance**

## **24. REVIEW OF MEETING**

The Chair thanked College managers for their Reports, Governors for their attendance and contributions and wished everyone a Happy Christmas and New Year.

## **25. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 17 March 2023 Board Meeting at 2pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....