

Minutes of the Corporation Away Day incorporating a Special Meeting held Friday 28 January 2022

Commenced at 9am through Microsoft Teams

Present Joanne Chilton (*Chair*), Andy Dobson (*Principal*), David Allen, Tiffany Harvey-Pallent, Helene Jones, Zubeda Limbada, Gail Rothnie, Joanne Rouse, Mark Sterling,

In attendance Joanne Williams (*Deputy Principal, Director of Learning and Teaching*)
Jacquie Carman (*Vice Principal and Chief Operating Officer*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

Tom Morrison (Stone King LLP)

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received on behalf of Andrew Hanson, Thomas Huntbatch and Jonah Woodley.

Presentation: Stone King - White Paper Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth

Following the detailed presentation on the expectations and impact of the white paper 'Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth', several questions were raised pertaining to:

- Tensions between national policy and devolved budget and responsibility for Adult Education and how these are effectively negotiated.
- Understanding locality, operating across perceived and organisation/funding boundaries.
- Accountability and increased compliance for and expectations of governors.

The Chair summarised that the College was well placed in having taken into consideration the themes of the white paper in the new Strategic Plan, the undertaking of a governance review with revision to the framework documents, continued work on opportunities and building on collaborative work already begun.

Presentation: Ofsted and the Education Inspection Framework – College strengths and areas for improvement

Considering the current Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan and the scope and approach of Ofsted under the Education Inspection Framework members were updated on the Colleges strengths and areas for development.

Governor questions were regarding:

- Apprenticeships and how employers could be assisted to understand what students need for their courses and how they can be assisted in career and progression guidance, in addition to the College's responsiveness to placing apprentices.
- Access and understanding of data on teaching, learning, value added, performance, progression and destinations.
- Awareness of the range of staff development being addressed by the College.
- Supporting governors in visits to the College.

Finance Training

An overview of the responsibilities of governors, changes to funding measures and the financial health of the College was provided to support members.

Governors asked a range of questions to better understand the position regarding:

- Costs/savings in teaching on-line with course suitability, funding differences and the expectation by the funding body that the critical mass of delivery be in person.
- Clawback on the Adult Education contract considering the continued impact of Covid-19 on recruitment to Adult Education courses in the current academic year.

Draft Minutes of the Corporation Special Meeting held 28 January 2022

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In attendance Joanne Williams (*Deputy Principal, Director of Learning and Teaching*)
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1		Apologies
		Apologies were received on behalf of Andrew Hanson, Thomas Huntbatch and Jonah Woodley.
2		Declarations of Interest
		There were none.
3		Governance
	3.1	Minutes of the Search Committee meeting 17 January 2022
		The minutes of the Search Committee meeting held 17 January 2022 were received.
	3.1a	Governor Appointment
		Members noted that the skills and experience of the candidate nominated for consideration were reported as relevant and appropriate to support the Corporation.
		On the recommendation of the Search Committee the Corporation approved that Jamie Clayton be appointed for one year in the first instance, commencing 1 February 2022, subject to confirmation of meeting set eligibility requirements.
	3.2	Appointment of Vice Chair of Corporation
		The Clerk called for nominations for the role of Vice Chair of Corporation. Helene Jones was nominated and seconded. There were no further nominations.
		Helene Jones was elected and duly appointed by the Corporation as Vice Chair, commencing immediately and for a period of two years (subject to formal reappointment to office falling within this period).
	3.3	Revised Committee Membership and Appointments
		The Clerk called for nominations for the role of Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee. Andrew Hanson was nominated and seconded. There were no further nominations. The Clerk updated members on proposed changes to committee membership, to maintain their operation across the remainder of the current academic year.

		Members were updated on the action being taken to address the current vacancies arising from the increased determination of members.
		The Corporation approved the appointment of Andrew Hanson as Chair of Finance and Resources Committee with immediate effect. The Corporation approved that Mark Sterling be appointed to the Audit Committee and that Thomas Huntbatch be appointed to the Finance Committee.
4		ESFA Letter – From Annual Strategic Conversation 2021
		Members received the letter arising from the first of the newly instigated Education and Skills Funding Agency annual strategic conversations, as had been held with the College on the 18 th November 2021.
5		Any other business
		Financial Overview – Redacted minute due to commercial sensitivity.
		<p>Further to reporting to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in November 2021, regarding items under the Estates/Capital Programme, members were provided with an updated position. This included consideration of the space pressures on the estate, with a continued student growth trajectory, affordability, value for money and the financial health of the College.</p> <p>Members asked questions and interrogated the proposal to gain assurance on moving forward.</p> <p>It was noted that while the 16-18 growth trajectory continued until 2028/2029 there remained a need for additional space if enrolment remained static.</p> <p>Regarding pressures on space and confidence in growth Andy Dobson affirmed that the College was mindful of the need to demonstrate that accommodation changes were right. The College had sacrificed student social space out of necessity and was thinking very carefully about space needs and how these should be addressed. Therefore, work with a strategic space planning consultant was being undertaken.</p> <p>Members asked if there was a real danger in the current climate that construction costs could escalate and if sustainability and environmental standards in building refurbishment were being addressed. Additionally, it was asked if there was access to green funding grants.</p> <p>Jacque Carman responded that inflation and contingency costs had been included and that the College would work with architects to value engineer costs down where appropriate. The College was also looking at the BRIAM Good Standard. Jacque Carman also noted several potential avenues to seek grant support for a range of sustainability items.</p> <p>In response to questions about experience in operating satellite sites members discussed safety in inter-site travel, housing discrete curriculum areas and site identity.</p> <p>Members also asked about further opportunities in a new site for collaboration. Jacque Carman explained the current work in relation to the Skills Accelerator with a site in Halesowen town centre, to provide a skills base for adult learning and further collaboration with Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council on work under the Levelling Up Fund.</p> <p>Members noted that early conversations with banks had also been undertaken regarding borrowing.</p>
6		Date of next meeting

	The next meeting of the Corporation is scheduled for 30 March 2022.
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The meeting closed at 1.10pm.

Actions from Meetings			
Ref	Agenda item and action	Review Date	Reported by
Corporation Meeting 30 June 2021			
Action 4.2a	Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2025 Members were asked to provide any further comments to Andy Dobson by 9 July 2021. Andy Dobson would review the matters raised by governors and return the strategic plan to the Corporation for approval.	September 2021 Closed	Ado
Action 7.1.2a	Reappointment of Internal Auditors Clarification on the clauses used in the Internal Audit Letter of Engagement and Terms of Reference would be sought from TIAA.	September 2021 Closed	JCa
Action 8.1.2a	Governor Offices and Membership of Committees, including Additional Roles Membership Update Members agreed that biennial appointment to offices should be taken forward in the review of framework documents. September 2021 – Pending December 2021- Addressed	December 2021 Closed.	JSu
Action 8.1.3a	Committee Terms of Reference It was agreed that a meeting be arranged with the Chair of Finance and Resources Committee to further consider the Committee Terms of Reference.	August 2021 Closed.	JSu
Action 8.1.4a	Calendar of Meetings 2021/2022 Members agreed to additional committee dates in October 2021 to specifically address training combined with an overview of the start of the academic year 2021/2022. September 2021 – Pending December 2021 – Action under Away Day January 2021	March 2021	JSu
Corporation Meeting 13 December 2021			
Action 4.2a	Careers Strategy It was agreed that a further report on Careers would be returned to the Corporation.	March 2022	JWi
Action 5.2a	Annual Plan and Targets 2021/2022 Update It was agreed that to develop a new Estates Strategy would be rated as amber in the current plan.	January 2022	JCa/ADo
Action 5.3a	Equality and Diversity Annual Report Members asked for a specific update on the work being done moving forward with LGBT+.	March 2022	JSu/JGr
Action 6.1	Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held 24 November 2021	March 2022	JSu

	The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held 24 November 2021 would be updated for approval by the Committee.		
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