

MOULTON COLLEGE

CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 27th January 2022 via Teams

Present: Mr D McVean (in the Chair), Mr A Clarkson, Mr S Greener, Mr B Hansford, Mrs P Hawkesford, Mrs C Harris, Miss L Knapp, Mr M Knibbs, Mr C Matts, Mr T Neville OBE, Mr L Pinto-Leite (Observer), Mr A Thomson and Mr M Wakeford

In attendance: Mr D Aldridge, Miss A S Bruce, Mrs G M Hulley and Mr J O'Shea

SECTION A – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

- 22/01 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**
Apologies were received from Mrs S Ijewsky, Dr P Jones and Mrs P Prow.
- 22/02 Welcome (Agenda item 2)**
Mr L Pinto-Leite was welcomed to the meeting as an observer as preparation for a potential role as HE student governor.
- 22/03 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 3)**
Mr T Neville OBE declared an interest in agenda items 12 and 13.
- 22/04 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper A)**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th December 2021 had been circulated previously and were approved as a true and accurate record.
- 22/05 Actions from last meeting (Agenda item 5, Paper B)**
The 3 outstanding actions were still progressing in line with agreed timescales. Action 192 would be considered as part of the EDI update. The Chair confirmed that the College would remain in supervised status pending the outcome of discussions with the ESFA and FE Commissioner as to the most appropriate next step.
- 22/06 Governance (Agenda item 6)**
- a. **Student Governor:** Sam Harlow had tendered her resignation as FE student governor. The Chair extended his thanks for her contributions to date and wished her well for the future. The Clerk confirmed that the nomination process had begun for a replacement.
 - b. **Independent Governor:** The Chair requested a further 6-month extension to the leave of absence for Mr Ian James which had been approved in July 2021. During this period, Ian would be completing some desk research into defining world class employer engagement and any implications for the College. In a wider discussion around governor recruitment, it was agreed that the proposed brochure and letter would be circulated to everyone to gather feedback (**Action 194** – Clerk).
- Resolved:** To approve the 6-month extension for Ian James with a further review to be completed in March 2022.
- 22/07 Formal record (Agenda item 7)**
- a. **College seal:** Members noted the College Corporation seal had been affixed to the LIBOR amendment deed and confirmation of security on

behalf of the College authenticated by David McVean, Chair of Corporation and Corrie Harris, Principal and CEO.

22/08

Health and Safety (Agenda item 8)

A formal report had been presented to the Finance and Resources Committee minutes of which had been circulated earlier in the week. The next Committee meeting was planned for the 31st January 2022. Staff training was planned for the 22nd February 2022. The Governor Champion was arranging dates for learning walks around the College. A health and safety visit to a construction site was being organised.

Consideration was given to defining outstanding health and safety in the context of post-16 education. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) outlined the progress the College had made in recent years. To become world class, further developments to fully embed health and safety into the curriculum would be required to support and educate students. Learning walks would be useful for governors to observe this in action particularly taking into account the student journey and thus an end to end process of assessment and management. Members agreed that visibility of governors was really important. An area of concern experienced by many colleges related to work-experience and the need to develop student skills in questioning any poor practice that might be observed. This was crucial if students were to understand their legal rights; did not lose their jobs; and, completed their work-experience safely. Members agreed that this issue was just as relevant to safeguarding and when the College resumed the delivery of Apprenticeships, work-experience co-ordinators would need to be mindful of the linking health and safety and safeguarding to make sure students fully understood their legal rights. Good progress was being made in relation to the wellbeing of staff and students. As a result, thought should be given to using the wider term of health, safety and wellbeing (HSWB). The Chair recommended that at the next meeting, governors needed to be clear about the various activities around HSWB (**Action 194** – Health and Safety Manager).

Resolved: To note the health and safety report.

22/09

Risk Management (Agenda item 9, Paper C)

The College continued to have 2 of the 8 strategic risks above the College's risk appetite for securing long-term financial viability and reliance on bankers. Emerging concerns related to: the College's ability to invest in the IT infrastructure; the short-term impact of lower than anticipated student recruitment; and, the ongoing impact of Covid on the commercial operations of the College.

A discussion was held around staffing with agreement that: reporting of agency staff should be in terms of cost and quality of educational experience; and, the need to build a flexible workforce where ideally, there was a bank of staff to appoint from. An example from the University of Northampton (UoN) was outlined of how this worked in practice for associate lecturers. The Corporation was in agreement that the IT infrastructure remained a priority and welcomed the COO's confirmation that a comprehensive report would be presented to the Investment Appraisal Advisory Group on the 9th February 2022. This report would outline what was needed in the short-, medium and longer-term; budget requirements; and, financing options (partnerships, leasing arrangements, etc). Where HE was concerned, there were no

immediate issues to report. Thought needed to be given to how to develop this area further and a HE plan was in development. A meeting with the UoN the previous week had provided an opportunity to explore partnership opportunities. A commercial report would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee.

Resolved: To receive the Risk Management report.

SECTION B – STAFF AND STUDENT VOICE:

22/10

Student and staff voice (Agenda item 10):

Staff governors raised a number of queries in relation to: progress with the security tender; maintenance of facilities; and, staff retention. Feedback confirmed that the College had invested heavily in recent months in security including a whole new CCTV system. The tender exercise was in progress. Where maintenance queries were concerned, the Director of Facilities Management should be contacted. Where retention of staff was concerned, the Executive Director HR confirmed some staff had been lost due to promotion and others because they had wanted to work closer to home. Staff turnover remained relatively low. Further work was also in progress in relation to reviewing the current terms and conditions including benefits to ensure the College remained competitive.

The Corporation was also informed of a visit to see the new lambing equipment had been very successful. This would be an excellent teaching and learning resource and governors were encouraged to visit. Feedback from local farmers had also been very positive. Curriculum co-ordinators and course managers were actively using the EDI dashboard to analyse KPI information across different protected characteristics. This was another method of communication that was having a positive impact.

Resolved: To receive the staff governor report.

22/11

Equality, diversity and inclusion (Agenda item 11)

The Governor Champion highlighted the importance of the EDI data dashboard. A verbal update had been requested for the next TLA Committee to focus on actions being taken to protect students with certain protected characteristics. The EDI Senior Leaders and Governance Collaborative project funded by the ETF was making good progress. The EDI Committee was giving consideration to how the 'strategy on a page' could be further developed. A dissemination event in March 2022 was planned where outcomes from the project would be shared with the wider sector. It was expected that 50 delegates from 25 providers would attend. EDI champions were now being actively sought and this would help to further promote the College's commitment towards being inclusive. Paper B, Action 192 listed a number of actions which could be implemented quickly by governors in order to maintain a high profile for EDI as well demonstrate visible leadership. The Link Governor Scheme had been developed to include EDI questions that could be used during learning walks particularly asking staff and students whether individuals with protected characteristics were treated differently. Pronoun badges had been received very positively by staff and these were available to governors via a request to the Clerk. Finally, governors were encouraged to take part in contributing to future human library events. This would involve being interviewed by a member of staff or student member. In summary, the Corporation received an assurance that good progress with

EDI had been made in the last 12 months and that this priority was moving in the right direction.

Resolved: To receive the EDI report.

SECTION C – PRINCIPAL’S UPDATE:

22/12

Principal’s report including Operating Plan and KPIs 2021-22 (Agenda item 12, Paper D)

The Principal’s report provided a comprehensive overview of the progress that had been made throughout the year towards achieving the critical success factors (CSR) agreed in the Operating Plan. Key points to note included:

- Student KPIs were on track;
- The Ofsted review of the College’s residential provision was imminent;
- Good progress was being made with re-joining the register of apprenticeship training providers (RoATP);
- The Principal had participated in the FE Commissioner’s Active Support Ideation Workshop the previous week. This was an opportunity to share what intervention should look like in the future.
- A successful meeting had been held with the UoN where discussions were held about international work. The College was in the process of applying for an international licence.
- Mark Wakeford had provided incredible support with the planned Future Construction Skills event on the 3rd March 2022. An exhibition was planned as well as a workshop that would explore what soft and hard skills were required by the construction industry in the next 1, 3 and 5 years.

Details of the event were welcomed by the Corporation and the need to maximise potential for TV coverage and any other promotional activities was encouraged. In response to a query about retention and attendance following attendance at a performance monitoring board, the Principal confirmed that there was a rigorous testing procedure in place and that all students had to meet entry criteria. Extra classes were always made available to support students’ needs. Some consideration was given to the implications of delivering T Levels; the College could deliver Construction from 2023 but infrastructure was needed. An alternative route for discussion by the TLA Committee would be Construction apprenticeships. The Principal also highlighted the curriculum planning process was in progress and a new adult offer was likely. The Chair confirmed that there was a need for further discussion in the TLA Committee to agree the sequencing of different initiatives being introduced.

Resolved: To receive the Principal’s report, Operating Plan and KPIs.

SECTION D – COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL

22/13

Minutes of Finance and Resources Committee (Agenda item 13, Papers E.1 and E.2)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 24th January 2022 had been circulated previously. An additional ‘overview of risk’ document had been circulated which governors were urged to read. Key points to note included:

- Two governors were still required to complete the KCSIE e-assessment.

- Financial position remained at inadequate but it was hoped that it would rise to satisfactory. Student growth expected to improve again in 2022-23 which would impact positively on forecasted budget.
- Any lessening of Covid restrictions would have a positive impact on Commercial. Residential accommodation needed to be actively promoted and there was a need to develop stronger partnerships in HE.
- Further investment was required and with increased student growth in 2022-23, this would make a real difference.
- The Committee reviewed 3 policies which were being recommended for approval: Capability; External work; and, Recruitment of ex-offenders.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the: Capability policy; External work policy; and, Recruitment of ex-offenders policy and noted the report from the Finance and Resources Committee.

22/14

Proposal: Research to inform MC Curriculum Plan (Agenda item 14, Paper F)

A proposal had been prepared for the alternative use of days that had been contracted with an external consultant. The ultimate purpose of the project was to identify examples of outstanding provision across the post-16 skills sector so that governors could then visit as part of their link role. Questions would also be prepared to support such visits. Six days were allocated to the project and a report for the Chair/Board would be produced.

The Corporation agreed that adult learning and EDI should be included. Any research that was completed on good (or better) providers should only be based on very recent information because of changes to the inspection framework and as a result of Covid. As this was a project to be completed in a limited amount of time, there was a need to focus on those elements which would be most beneficial to governors. A review of aims and outcomes should be completed to ensure the project was deliverable (**Action 195** – Consultant).

Resolved: To approve the proposal.

SECTION E – CLOSING ITEMS

22/15

Any other items of urgent business (Agenda item 15)

- Future Construction Skills event:** Any governor interested in attending this event should contact the Clerk for further details.
- Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality:** This would be the last Corporation meeting for the VPC&Q who was leaving the College in April following a promotion. The VPC&Q was thanked for his contribution to the College. He had been a true asset to the College; influential, motivational and a good appointment.

22/16

Date and time of next meeting (Agenda item 16)

Thursday, 24th April 2022 at 9.30 am