

## MOULTON COLLEGE

### CORPORATION

#### Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 via Teams

- Present:** Mr D McVean (in the Chair), Mr A Clarkson, Mr S Greener, Mr B Hansford, Miss S Harlow, Mrs C Harris, Mrs S Ijewsky, Dr P Jones, Miss L Knapp, Mr M Knibbs, Mr C Matts, Mr T Neville OBE, Mrs P Prow 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

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- 21/99 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**  
Apologies were received from Mrs P Hawkesford, Mr A Thomson and Mrs C Smith.
- 21/100 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**  
Mr T Neville OBE declared an interest in agenda items 11, 15 and 16.
- 21/101 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**  
The minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 had been circulated previously and were approved as a true and accurate record.
- 21/102 Actions from last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**  
The 3 outstanding actions were still progressing in line with agreed timescales.
- 21/103 Governance self-assessment report 2020-21 and Improvement Plan 2021-22 (Agenda item 6, Paper C)**  
The report had been subject to scrutiny and challenge at the last meeting of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee. The Committee had agreed that based on evidence supplied in the report, this was sufficient to support an overall judgement of Good.
- Resolved:** To approve the Governance Self-Assessment Report 2020-21; the Governance Improvement Plan 2021-22; and, the proposed grade of good.
- 21/104 Health and Safety (Agenda item 7)**  
A formal report had been presented earlier in the week to the Finance and Resources Committee. A number of sub-groups for wellbeing and other areas were being set up. A champions' network was being reintroduced from January 2022. Following the Government's recent announcement in relation to Covid-19, DfE guidance had been received. Risk assessments would be updated as required. The College would continue with face to face learning. There had been increased levels of positive Covid-19 cases during the autumn term compared to the previous year. As a result, the Infection Control Team (part of Public Health England) visited the College and reported that they were fully satisfied with the control measures that had been put in place. Lucille Knapp had now taken on the role of Governor Champion and had attended the last Committee meeting. Lucille explained that staff reported positively on the way that the College had handled the pandemic. The meeting also highlighted the need to ensure that wellbeing was a priority for staff and students. Governors were keen for health, safety and wellbeing to

be fully embedded into the curriculum. Governors were reminded to read Keeping Children Safe in Education and complete the e-assessment if they had not already done so as this was a requirement (**Action 190** – Governors). The Link Governor for High Needs confirmed that he had completed a learning walk the previous day and that health and safety was fully embedded into those sessions that had been visited.

**Resolved:** To note the Health and Safety report.

21/105

**Risk Management (Agenda item 8, Paper D)**

The report confirmed that the risk profile of the College had improved during 2020-21 with 2 of the 8 strategic risks remained above the College's risk appetite for securing long-term financial viability and reliance on bankers. Feedback from recent Committee meetings would inform some minor changes and discussion at a SLT away day the following week.

The SLT was invited to take away a number of observations for further thought including the need to change 'exceptional' to 'beyond outstanding' to reflect the ambition of the Corporation towards achieving this. A common definition would ensure a shared understanding of key terms. Risk 1: review the score in light of the recent Ofsted outcome. Risks 5 and 6: whether the target risk was achievable. In response to a request for an update in relation to Risk 3: recruitment of staff, the Corporation was informed that the College had been able to recruit to the majority of posts. One or two areas remained challenging but recruitment had been much better than previous years.

**Resolved:** To receive the report on Risk Management.

**SECTION B – STAFF AND STUDENT VOICE**

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21/106

**Governor feedback – Student and staff voice (Agenda item 9)**

The staff governor (business support) confirmed that his immediate priority was around income generation and diversification. He was looking to explore further opportunities with other colleges and universities. The Chair concurred with this proposal citing an over-reliance on student numbers was not sustainable. The staff governor (teaching and learning) outlined some suggestions for the SLT following discussions held with various directors. Good communication around the College's collaborative approach to learning walks was important if they were to be successful. A number of students had explained their preference for accessible toilets. A review of the pastoral curriculum was currently being undertaken and feedback from students was being implemented. The student governor confirmed there were no issues to report.

**Resolved:** To note the staff and student governor feedback.

21/107

**Equality, diversity and inclusion (Agenda item 10)**

The Governor Champion provided an update on the key points of discussion at the EDI Committee held earlier in the week. A proposal had been prepared for the SLT in relation to increasing the number of accessible toilets. The Principal and CEO from Craven College had delivered a presentation which everyone agreed was inspirational and should be circulated to governors (**Action 191** – Clerk). A lot of CPD was taking place which was being brought together by the Executive Director Human Resources (EDHR). The EDI annual report was reviewed at the same meeting. The data confirmed some gaps in achievement which the Director of Quality was focusing on to

address. The College had developed a 'Strategy on a Page' and had recently been awarded funding from the Education and Training Foundation to develop this project further working in partnership with another organisation. The Governor Champion highlighted the short timescales involved as the project had to be completed by the end of March 2022. Clarification was needed as to how governors from Moulton and a partner organisation would be involved.

One governor highlighted the importance of visible leadership from governors and how they could contribute to maintaining a high profile with EDI. It was agreed that the SLT should identify a number of actions that could be implemented quickly by governors, for example, badges, more inclusive lanyards, etc (**Action 192** – VPC&Q).

**Resolved:** To note the EDI governor champion feedback.

## **SECTION C – PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE**

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**21/108**

### **Principal's report including Operating Plan and KPIs 2021-22 (Agenda item 11, Paper E)**

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. Each CSR was linked to an individual's performance development review and monitored throughout the year. Good progress was being made with the curriculum planning process and there would be a renewed focus on HE. An enhanced adult offer of part-time courses leading to good employment opportunities would also be addressed through this process. There would also be a focus on T Levels and Apprenticeships and staff would need to be fully prepared to deliver these. More commercial activity was planned and this would be enhanced further once the College was delivering Apprenticeships. A leading UK construction and infrastructure services company had already confirmed that they would send their students to the College for block provision including using residential accommodation. The work related to achieving the CSRs was progressing well and there was every expectation that all of them would be realised within the timeframe. The Principal also confirmed that she had joined the Board at Landex.

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

**21/109**

### **Ofsted inspection: November 2021 (Agenda item 12, Paper F)**

This was the first meeting of the Corporation since the Ofsted inspection. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (VPC&Q) thanked all governors, in particular, Pauline Hawkesford and Barry Hansford for their support, drive and commitment throughout the visit. The report was extremely positive with 3 areas highlighted for improvement. Overall effectiveness was good. Since the inspection, it had been agreed that Landex would complete a peer review of supported learning. This would provide an opportunity to see the impact from some of the changes that had been implemented during the year with the curriculum. This was in relation to stretch and challenge and employers. The second area related to achievement rates in English and maths. The team was currently considering whether all students should complete GCSEs rather than functional skills. Finally, links were being made to individual CPD and learning walks and observation profiles.

The Corporation extended its thanks to the Principal and her team for such a successful outcome. Some promotional work had been completed but more was planned, particularly in relation to employers. Consideration could now be given to the overseas market particularly in relation to sub-degree level courses. The TLA Committee needed to give some thought to how it would monitor HE; and, the Apprenticeship strategy and what it would look like in 3 years' time. Thought needed to be given to how governors could develop their understanding of excellence from the work in other post-16 providers. Visits could be arranged over the next 12 months to develop governors' knowledge and understanding (**Action 193** – Clerk).

**Resolved:** To note the report following the Ofsted inspection.

## **SECTION D – COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL**

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### **21/110 Minutes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (Agenda item 13, Paper G)**

Key points to note from the minutes of the meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were:

- Ofsted: excellent report with actions already being taken to address points raised. The VPC&Q would produce a 1-page summary of those areas that governors needed to monitor during committee meetings or on visits.
- Risk management: In view of expected inspections in relation to residential and HE, recommended that the risk rating remained at amber.
- High Needs: Post-inspection action plan had been reviewed. All actions were included in the Quality Improvement Plan. The Governor Champion had completed a visit.
- Safeguarding and Prevent: There had been an increase in concerns during the period compared to the same time last year. Feedback confirmed that safeguarding arrangements had had a positive impact on students to enable them to feel safe and supported at College.

- 21/111 Recommendations for approval:** The following reports had been subject to scrutiny and challenge at the TLA Committee meeting. As a result, the Committee recommended each one for approval by the Corporation:
- a. College SAR 2020-21 and QIP 2021-22 (Paper G.1):** The report fully reflected the College's position in 2020-1 which had been endorsed by the recent inspection. The QIP had been updated in light of the Ofsted report.
  - b. Residential SAR:** A comprehensive report with judgements of either Outstanding or Good.
  - c. Equality, diversity and inclusion report:** The annual report would be uploaded to the website.
  - d. Stakeholder voice 2020-21:** In view of the Corporation's ambition to move beyond excellence, future exploration was needed in 2021-22 to what outstanding looked like in student voice.
  - e. Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance 2020-21:** Gatsby benchmarks continued to improve.
  - f. Equality, diversity and inclusion policy:** The Committee recommended that the policy should be further developed in 2021-22 to make more connections with the Corporation responsibilities.

**Resolved:** To receive the report from the last meeting of the TLA Committee and approve the 6 reports listed (a) to (f) in minute 21/111.

**21/112**                    **Audit Highlights Memorandum and Management Letter (AHMML) and Letter of representation (Agenda item 14, Paper H)**

The financial statements auditor confirmed that the audit was complete subject to the signed accounts. A clean audit report would be issued. There was nothing outstanding by way of audit work. The findings in the report confirmed that there were no significant issues in relation to: revenue recognition; management override of controls; access and participation expenditure; and, regularity. The College received a 'clean bill of health' in relation to the overall financial position and going concern. Arrangements with the bank to implement an overdraft facility were virtually settled pending signatures from relevant parties. No concerns were raised. Where pension liabilities were concerned, work was ongoing at the time of the Audit Committee. Since that meeting a new AHMML and Letter of Representation would be produced to reflect an unadjusted difference for pensions. The amounts involved were below the threshold for the accounts to be adjusted. The Finance team and external auditors had worked well together and the quality of what was presented was very good. Congratulations should be extended to the Finance team.

**Resolved:** To note the financial statements reports.

**21/113**                    **Minutes of Audit Committee (Agenda item 15, Paper I)**

Key points to note from the minutes of the meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were:

- a. Risk Management:** The Committee continued to review risk appetite and corporate risks.
- b. Internal audit tracker:** 77% of all recommendations had now been implemented or partially implemented with a further 10% in progress and 13% no longer relevant or superseded. One area of concern was IT but a new action plan would be produced with a revised set of timescales to improve controls in this area as well as consider the resources and skills required to implement them.
- c. Board assurance tracker:** A much improved level and range of assurances available to governors relating to how effectively risks were being managed.
- d. Internal Auditor Highlight report:** The internal auditor confirmed that work had commenced on the Payroll and HR and IT Security with reports available for March 2022.

**21/114**                    The following reports had been subject to scrutiny and challenge at the Audit Committee meeting. As a result, the Committee recommended each one for approval by the Corporation:

- a. Audit self-assessment regulatory questionnaire and Audit Committee annual report (Paper I.1):** Completed as part of the regulatory audits. Confirmed compliance with the financial memorandum between the College and the ESFA.
- b. Audit Highlights Memorandum and Management Letter (Paper I.2):** This had been subject to scrutiny at the Audit Committee and the financial statements auditor had presented detailed findings in the last agenda item.
- c. Draft Letter of Representation (Paper I.4):** The updated Letter of Representation had been received.
- d. Moulton College financial statements (Paper I.3):** The 2020-21 accounts for Moulton College had been reviewed by the Audit Committee at its last meeting. The F&R Committee had also scrutinised the report

including the reconciliation of adjustments which they confirmed were in line with expectations.

- e. **Anti-fraud and Bribery Policy (Paper I.5):** No significant legislative change. Any changes reflected the current structure and reporting lines.
- f. **General Data Protection (Paper I.6):** The policy had been updated to reflect latest advice and guidance and applying it to the way Moulton College would collect and use personal data in all its forms.

**Resolved:** To receive the reports from the last meeting of the Audit Committee and approve the 6 reports listed (a) to (f) in minute 21/114.

**21/115 Minutes of Finance and Resources Committee (Agenda item 16, Paper J)**

Key points to note from the minutes of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 were:

- Although Moulton had been successful this year with FE growth at c.7% compared to other colleges, numbers were slightly lower than expected. This was due to a number of reasons including grade inflation and gaining employment. There would need to be a careful look at staff and non-pay costs to cover any shortfall and this would be completed for the next meeting. It was possible that the financial health-score would remain the same for another year.
- A strategic conversation was planned with the ESFA the following week.

**21/116 Recommendations for approval:** The Committee was asked for support in relation to 3 changes for recommendation to the Board:

**a. Banking arrangements update (Paper J.1)**

**Resolved:** The Corporation approved: the resolution for the new temporary overdraft facility; to delegate authority to the Principal and Chief Operating Officer to sign the amendment letters; and, to delegate authority to apply the College seal and enable the Principal and Chair to sign the LIBOR amendment deed and confirmation of security on behalf of the College.

**SECTION E – CLOSING ITEMS**

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**21/117 Any other items of urgent business (Agenda item 17)**

- a. **VPC&Q recruitment:** The EDHR confirmed that a recruitment pack had been prepared; 3 suppliers had been approached to support the process – 2 proposals received; preferred supplier would be confirmed on the 13<sup>th</sup> December; and, the position would be advertised on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The Chair confirmed that the recruitment pack would be circulated to all governors. Governors would be fully involved in the process.

**21/118 Date and time of next meeting**

Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 202 at 9.30 am