



HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15TH MAY 2023

Present:

Nazir Afzal (Chair), Cathy Berry, Gill Banks, Clive Reid, Susan Ayres, Julie Burns, Martin Salins, Steve Taylor, Sarfaraz Akram, Ricardo Pedrosa Taylor, Greg Walsh, Jenny Worsdale

In Attendance:

Jo Bentley	Executive Director of Finance & Estates
Andrea Murphy	Deputy Principal
Caroline Street	Executive Director Business & Student Support
Greg Scully	Assistant Principal Curriculum
Fatema Hussein	Clerk to the Corporation

Meeting Commenced: 5.00pm

Meeting Ended: 7.00pm

Attendance: 70%

Quorum 8

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Julia Heap, Helen Barton, Paul Dixon, Leon Al-Asade and Matthew Burdaky.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any direct, indirect, personal, pecuniary or prejudicial interest on any item on the agenda.

There were no declarations.

3. Presentation – College IT Strategy / Dave Hanlon Head of IT

Dave Hanlon Head of IT delivered a presentation on the College IT strategy in which the following points were noted:

- The IT strategy had been refreshed during the last 12 months with a greater focus on the student experience and how this could be further improved
- There had been a significant investment in audio visual equipment to help improve the learning experience
- The aim was to standardise IT platforms, and enhance IT infrastructure and support
- Cyber security was a key area of focus and a multi-level approach was being adopted which included protection for hardware and software from external and

internal threats

- Staff training was to be provided on phishing and cyber security
- All IT policies had been reviewed and updated
- A new IT security and password policy had been introduced
- Work had also been undertaken with Greater Manchester police on cyber security
- College also had cyber risk insurance in place

Governor Questions

Q. How many notifications of inappropriate IT use were there in a week?

A. About a 1000 a week and usually related to the uniformed public services courses where students may be studying a module on terrorism for example

Q. Did College follow up inappropriate use of IT with individual students

A. It was confirmed that this was done

Q. Would agency staff be required to undertake cyber security training?

A. All agency staff were required to accept and abide by the College's IT policies and the intention was for them to undertake the training

Q. Was the cyber essentials plus certification required for external contracts?

A. College was planning to undertake this in the near future

Q. Were alerts raised for searches related to self-harm and suicide?

A. It was confirmed that they were

Governors requested that they were also provided with access to the cyber security training

ACTION:

Head of IT / Executive Director Performance & Planning

Governors thanked the head of IT for his presentation. Dave Hanlon left the meeting at this point

(Change in order of agenda)

11. Safeguarding Update

The following update was provided by the Executive Director Business & Student Support:

- Since the last report, the College had been inspected by Ofsted and Safeguarding confirmed as "Effective"
- Verbal feedback received was highly positive in relation to how College safeguarded learners
- The termly meeting with the lead Safeguarding Governor had been held last week and it had been agreed that an audit of safer recruitment practices would be included in the internal audit plan for the next academic year
- The completion rate for single agency safeguarding training was now at 99%
- The Prevent Action Plan had been reviewed and all actions were progressing
- The signal for the "lockdown alarm" was still being worked on to allow for a

practice exercise to be planned.

- The College had seen a further increase in the number of Safeguarded and Child Protection learners this year
- Domestic abuse was becoming more prevalent and domestic abuse training was being provided to staff
- The College had won the 2023 Educate North Award for Social Mobility (FE)
- The award recognised the College's trauma informed approach to supporting those who would otherwise not access education
- An application had been submitted for Queens Anniversary Awards in recognition of work on Mental Health and Wellbeing
- There were no cases of allegations management at present
- Further work was being undertaken on professional guidelines training for staff

Governor Questions

Q. Had there been an increase in cases of domestic abuse or was it the reporting of cases?

A. There was greater awareness of the issue and it was easier to report, but there had also been a rise in the number of incidents

Q. Had there been a change in the thresholds for when referrals could be made to external agencies

A. There had been no changes in the Rochdale borough

4. Approval of the Minutes – 17th March 2023

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2023 are approved as a correct record and authorised for publication

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Action Progress log was reviewed, and it was noted that the College was waiting for the final version of the LSIP (Local Skills Improvement Plan) to be published.

6. Deputy Principal's Update

6.1 Ofsted Inspection Update

The Deputy Principal provided an update on the recent inspection of the College. It was noted that the draft report had been received and management had started to implement the recommendations that had been made.

The Board thanked the senior leadership team and staff for their efforts in ensuring that the inspection had progressed smoothly and the inspection team had been provided with all the necessary information.

7. Deputy Principal Vacancy

The meeting was informed that the post had been re-advertised and a recruitment agency had been appointed to assist with the process. Interviews were expected to take place on 3rd and 4th July 2023.

8. Rochdale B Block

Governors were referred to the slides that had been uploaded to the Convene document library.

The Executive Director of Finance & Estates and the Assistant Principal Curriculum explained that:

- DfE had informed the College in March that the build cost for B Block had increased by £10million
- A meeting had been held with the DfE last week to discuss the current position regarding B Block
- DfE were totally committed to the project but the shortfall in funding was an issue and further progress could not be made until this had been resolved
- DfE was requesting an additional £2.6million from the College for the H.E. element of the project
- It was anticipated that further cost savings could be made via value engineering
- The overall cost of the project was £35million
- College had the option of not going ahead with the H.E. floor but the growth of H.E. provision had been identified as an important priority for the Borough
- Rochdale Council had also provided the College with £5million in funding towards the H.E. floor
- An additional £500,000 of grant funding would also need to be provided to the DfE in addition to the £2.6million

Governor Questions

Q. Was the additional £2.6million contribution fixed or could this change?

A. It was not fixed and DfE had advised that this was a prudent estimate, and the actual cost may not be as high as this

Q. Would any further funding be required for the project post value engineering and the College's contribution?

A. There would still be a shortfall of £2.6million but DfE had stated that this could be provided through other funding streams. £1.3million of inflationary costs had also been built into the revised budget for the project

Q. How feasible would it be to achieve the £3million in savings via value engineering?

A. College had been informed that this was very feasible

Q. What would happen if the contractor withdrew from the project?

A. This was a risk and would result in a delay. The contractor had however invested time and resource into the project

Q. Was the additional contribution from the College affordable and what impact would it have on other planned projects?

A. Cashflow forecasts provided to the Board last year had demonstrated that the project was affordable and these had not included the additional funding received from the Council at that time. The additional contribution may not have to be paid until the project had been completed. Other projects may need to be re-prioritised as a result. The College's financial plans submitted at 31 July to the ESFA would confirm and demonstrate the affordability of this project

Q. What were the risks of not providing the additional contribution to the DfE?

- A. College could lose a significant amount of funding if the DfE decided not to go ahead with the project

RESOLVED:

The Board discussed and considered the request from the DfE taking into account the associated risks, affordability and benefits including the importance of increased H.E. provision for the Borough.

The Board agreed that the following be approved:

- College's contribution to the HE element would increase by £2.6m to bring the total college HE contribution of £7.44m. This would be funded from both financial support from Rochdale Council and the College's own cash reserves
- College's FE match funding to increase by a further £500k from the Reclassification grant. This would therefore bring the total FE match funding contribution to £1.4m.
- The additional contribution to the HE element of the build would be managed by reprioritising other capital projects previously planned over the next two years together with grant support from Rochdale Council.

Accountability Agreement

The Accountability Agreement was considered and it was noted that a few minor changes had been made to the draft statement that had been shared at the March 2023 Board meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Board reviewed and approved the Accountability Agreement for submission to the relevant funding bodies.

9. Board and Committee Meetings Schedule 2023-2024

The Clerk advised that the proposed schedule had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting for review, and no amendments had been proposed.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the meetings schedule for 2023/24

ACTION:

Clerk to arrange for meeting invitations to be sent to all members

10. Risk Register – Top 10 Risks

The meeting was informed that the following risks were no longer classed as severe and would be downgraded; Ofsted, Inflationary increases, Tec Centre project and emergency lockdowns and closures

10.1 Scoring of Severe Risks

Governors requested that any risks that were classed as severe needed to be brought to the Board's attention so that it could monitor the possible impact of these and what mitigating measures were being taken

ACTION:

Executive Director Finance & Estates

11. Financial Update incl Capital Projects

The following update was provided by the Executive Director of Finance & Estates:

- An operating surplus of £293,000 had been confirmed as at the end of March 2023
- The full-year surplus was forecast to be £498,000
- The positive variance was as a result of additional income having been received for the AEB budget and receipt of capital grant monies
- College was hopeful that a balanced budget could be set for 2023/24

13.1 TEC Centre

- The TEC Centre project was now due to complete on 19th June
- There was also a slight delay to the work on the Refectory
- Post 16 capacity bids for the Bistro at Rochdale and Smallbridge animal management had been unsuccessful
- College had been successful in its bid for Salix funding and would be receiving £2.9million to assist with sustainability improvements to the campus
- The outcome of the T Level wave 5 bids would not be known until the summer

14. * College KPI's 2022/23 Update

Governors reviewed and noted the progress being made on the KPI's.

15. Items in Convene Document Library

Governors were made aware of the following documents that had been placed in the Convene document library:

- Rochdale B Block Update
- AOC Information on Pay Negotiations
- Hopwood Hall MPM (Managing Public Money) Return
- Queens Anniversary Prize Application

16. Reserved Business

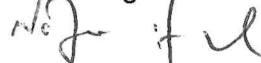
16.1 Principal & CEO Mid-Year Appraisal

Discussed under reserved business

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 29th June 2023 at 5.00pm

Chair's Signature:



Date: 29.6.2023