



HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Corporation Meeting held on Thursday 1st July 2021 from 5pm via Zoom.

Unconfirmed Minutes

Present: Ms L Summers, Mr J Dawson, Ms T Wright, Mr K Webb, Mr A Leach, Ms M Boryslawskyj, Mr A Nelson, Ms H Haigh, Ms M Dean, Ms H Coldwell, Ms R Drury, Ms A Williams and Mr T Hosker. (attendance: 87%)

In attendance: Ms E Montgomery (for agenda item 4 only), Mr M Smith-Connor and Ms K Rogerson

Clerk: Mrs C Coupland

1. Apologies for Absence/ Declaration of Interest

Apologies for absence were submitted by Ms H Richards. Ms S Johnson also did not attend the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests.

Ms Summers addressed one preliminary matter before proceeding with the meeting. Ms Summers wished to take this time to publically record that this was the final meeting for Mr Nelson and Ms Wright; both of whom are retiring from their governor roles after 8 years of service. All present agreed that Mr Nelson and Ms Wright had immersed themselves into the life of the college as passionate advocates for HNC. The significance of their roles as Chair of Audit and Safeguarding Link Governor, respectively, have also had a considerable impact on the quality of the college's governance – with their contributions and guidance creating a culture of consciousness, transparency and openness in turn maximising the performance of the corporation.

Ms Williams also took this opportunity to pass on the senior leadership team's appreciation and thanks for their unwavering support and challenge during their time spent as governors. They will be greatly missed by the college.

Resolved:

- **To record the corporation's and the wider college's appreciation and thanks to Mr Nelson and Ms Wright for their contributions, guidance, support and challenge during the 8 years served by each as college governors.**

2. Minutes from the Meeting held on 22nd April 2021

Resolved:

- **That the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting**

3. Matters arising

- **It was noted that the one matter arising relating to academisation is to be addressed in full under agenda item 9 – Corporate report.**

4. Equality Act Duty 1 : EDI Promotion

Ms Montgomery, reminded the corporation that as a public sector organisation, the college has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Education Duty 2011 (PSED) to eliminate any unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation, to promote equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between different groups of people.

Ms Montgomery explained that the College's Equality Vision is that all individuals at the College have an equal opportunity to participate fully in the life of the College, to realise their potential, and to be free of discrimination, bullying and harassment whilst doing so.

She presented her report to governors which displayed the efforts being made by the whole college community to ensure that Diversity continues to be valued and celebrated, and everyone is able to flourish and to realise their potential.

The corporation recognised and applauded the efforts of both staff and students to deliver on the equality objectives for the college and for the unswerving commitment to FREDIE in promoting and celebrating diversity.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received**

Ms Montgomery left the meeting at this point.

5. Strategic Goals 2020-21 and Strategic Plan 2021-24

Strategic Plan 2020-21

Ms Williams reminded the Corporation that at its meeting on 30th April 2020, it was resolved for the existing strategic plan 'one step beyond' for 2017-2020; to be extended to also cover the academic year for 2020-21. The Corporation at this point agreed specific one-year goals for 2020/21 to serve as a bridge between the old Strategic Plan (September 2017-August 2020) and the new Strategic Plan (September 2021-August 2024).

Time was taken by the corporation to receive and reflect on Ms Williams' report outlining the actions taken by the college to successfully achieve all the strategic goals set. It was noted that the college's self assessment report will include more detailed evidence, which will be presented to the corporation during the autumn term.

Strategic Plan 2021-24

Ms Williams reminded the corporation that the draft strategic plan for 2021- 2024 was first considered at the strategy planning meeting held on 26th February 2021. It covers the key areas of work identified to inform the proposed key performance indicators for each strategic priorities.

The updated version was further considered at the corporation meeting on 22nd April 2021 and the revised mission statement was also approved. It was therefore agreed for the final version of the strategic plan to be presented to the corporation at this meeting for approval.

The corporation agreed that the strategic plan for the next three years was ambitious, based on a realistic assessment of growing student numbers to 2780 (and by another 140 by the end of the plan in 2024, if the Capital Expansion Bid is successful), with clear and coherent strategic priorities aligned to the college continuing to fulfil its long standing vision and mission.

Resolved:

- **That the strategic goals for 2020/21 be 'signed off' as completed**
- **That the final version of the strategic plan 2021-24 be approved.**

6. One HNC Strategy 2021-22

Ms Summers advised the corporation that the One HNC Strategy had been shared with Governors, on request of the R&P Committee, who had received it at their last meeting when considering staff CPD.

Mr Smith-Connor explained to the Corporation that the One HNC strategy intends to support the College's achievement of the goals set out in the 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan; specifically goals 1 – 3 (curriculum, quality and student support) through active teaching using evidence based strategies.

The One HNC Strategy recognises also that in September 2021, HNC will be welcoming a cohort of new and returning students who have experienced unprecedented disruption to their personal and academic development because of the global pandemic. To enable these students to flourish, collectively we therefore

need to ensure that they are supported and challenged to develop both personally and academically so that they progress to their planned and aspirational next steps. The Corporation welcomed the One HNC Strategy which provided clear focus on challenging objectives in a very accessible way.

Mr Smith-Connor confirmed that the One HNC Strategy had been launched with Staff on Friday 25th June for implementation as of September 2021.

Resolved:

- **That the One HNC Strategy be received.**

7. College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR)

Ms Summers advised Governors that the Corporation is tasked with reviewing the Finance committee's (and SLTs) recommendations for the college's submissions for the College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR). This financial model replaces the Integrated Financial Management for Colleges (IFMC). The CFFR incorporates an outturn statement for the year 2020 to 2021 and budget forecast plans for the years 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023 and is to be submitted to the ESFA by 31 July 2021.

College financial forecasting return – current year 2020 to 2021:

Ms Summers explained that the budget actuals and forecast for the current year should reflect the corporation's financial performance. Although it is substantively based on actual transactions, there is an element of forecasting to year end. The CFFR reflects however actual financial performance to end of May 2021.

College financial forecasting returns– budget forecast years 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023

Ms Summers confirmed that the budget forecasts for the years 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023 should give a realistic view of the corporation's expected financial performance of the college. It must also reflect the cost of implementing the corporation's strategy including income, expenditure, balances and cash flows associated with projected levels of activities.

Governors reported to be satisfied that sufficient detail had been provided within the accompanying commentary on the assumptions underlying the 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023 years and explanations offered for why the corporation has adopted these assumptions. The Corporation was also satisfied that the supporting commentary fulfilled the checklist provided with the Financial Planning Handbook.

All present agreed however that it would be essential for the corporation to revisit the assumptions during the Autumn Term once funding for 2022/23 have been confirmed and update budget forecasts accordingly.

Financial Health:

Ms Summers explained that the ESFA continues to formally assess the financial health of corporations based on three financial indicators taken from the finance record:

- Solvency
- Performance
- Borrowing

The Corporation agreed that the commentary makes clear the college's rationale for the outstanding financial health self assessment for the following periods;

Finance Record - 2019-20:

Auto-calculation of the College Financial Health grade based on financial performance in 2019-20 gave a grade of Outstanding (score 290). This grade is consistent with that calculated and reported to Governors during the year.

Financial Health – to July 2021:

The College self-assessment of financial performance to 31st July 2021 is also a grade of Outstanding (score 290). It has not been necessary to moderate this self-assessment grade.

Financial Health - 2021/22 and 2022/23

Given that the national funding rate for 2021/22 is now confirmed as £4,188 per student, and with the significant growth seen in student numbers to 2,779, the college expects to maintain this outstanding financial grade in 2021/22 and aim to be good or outstanding in 2022/23.

Resolved:

- **That the CFFR be approved and submitted to the ESFA by 31 July 2021:**
 - **Outturn – year ending 31 July 2021**
 - **Budget – year ending 31 July 2022**
 - **Forecast- year ending 31 July 2023**
- **That the financial self assessment for the college for 2020/21 and 2021/22 is outstanding.**

8. Admission Policy: Entry Criteria 2022

Mr Smith-Connor presented, for approval, the General Entry Criteria and Curriculum offer for 2022/23. Governors felt assured that the entry requirements proposed had not shown to be excluding students thus remaining true to the college's mission to remain inclusive.

Time was however taken to ascertain how teacher assessed grades may impact on enrolment options. Mr Smith Connor confirmed that the college will continue to enrol with integrity and that it is hoped that TAGs, Like CAGS last year, will not result in any increase of course changes or possible restarts.

Consideration was also given to the additional behavioural expectations listed alongside the general entry and subject specific criteria. In particular attendance records which may have been hit hard for covid related absences. It was confirmed by Mr Smith-Connor that the college holds conversations with the school in the first instance for those students who do not initially meet elements of the behavioural criteria in order to better understand the reasons and to determine the right course of action. Absence for example may be impacted not only by COVID 19, but by bereavement, transitioning or pregnancy etc. All students attendance, behaviour and attitude to learning is therefore interrogated.

Resolved:

- **That the General Entry Requirements for 2022/23 be approved**

9. Corporate Report:

Ms Williams provided a comprehensive update to the board on the action taken by the Senior Leadership Team since governors last met. Key areas discussed included the following:

Covid 19

Ms Williams advised Governors that all Covid 19 safety precautions are to remain in place at the college until 19th July given the delay to initiating step 4 out of lockdown and that Kirklees remains a Delta variant hotspot.

The Corporation was also advised of the full year figures for Covid 19:

Students: 242 tested positive thorough 2020/21. 37 were asymptomatic. 1691 other students have had to self-isolate as a result of other students testing positive.

Staff: 34 tested positive throughout 2020/21 (17 teaching;17 support)

Ms Williams explained that the college is working on the premise that it will be open and operating as normal at the start of the new academic year however, senior leaders are expecting the release of additional guidance in the lead up to September, regarding possibility of daily testing for close contacts instead of self isolation.

Performance update:

Ms Williams briefed governors on the colleges attendance and retention rates for 2020-21, 94% for both.

The Corporation was advised that the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) were submitted to the appropriate awarding bodies to the dead-line Friday 18th June. These are subject to a quality assurance (QA) process by the awarding bodies. TAGs will be published on Tuesday 10th August and Ms Williams stated that she expects the TAG grade profile to be very strong.

Ms Williams explained to the corporation that the college's firewall had regrettably screened out a late quality assurance request from Pearsons resulting in sample returns being delayed. Pearsons had however accepted the

college's explanation. Governors took time to question senior leaders on the strength of the firewall settings. All acknowledged that cyber security is key at present given the real threats posed to the education sector but all also recognised that settings shouldn't be so high so as to filter out too much in turn debilitating business performance. A number of suggestions were therefore considered which Ms Williams agreed to share with IT support services.

Staffing update:

Ms Williams confirmed that staff recruitment for August 2021 is almost complete. Governors were advised that there had been a reshuffle of roles and responsibilities at senior leadership level; which in Mrs Williams opinion further protected the stability of all cross college and curriculum areas. New appointments to the senior leadership team also brings fresh ideas and perspectives which now makes it an even stronger and efficient staffing structure. Governors were advised that Mr Goddard remains to be the colleges Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Student and Other stakeholder views:

The Corporation was advised that 23 formal complaints had been received by the college in 2020-21 as opposed to 9 in 2019-20. This increase in formal complaints is Covid 19 related. Ms Williams explained that 22 complaints were from parents. 1 was from a student. The student complaint was about not being allowed to change course in December of Year 12.

14 of the parental complaints were COVID-19 related; the other 8 were general complaints. Ms Williams explained that all formal complaints were dealt with in line with the College's Complaints Policy and only one went to appeal. The complaint was not upheld on appeal.

Governors were also advised that there were no complaints which would come under the jurisdiction of the Equality Act 2010.

Progression from College

Ms Williams advised the Corporation that this term the Careers Manager, Dan Odlin, has led twilight sessions on progressing to apprenticeships and progressing to university for Year 12 students and their parents/carers and on student finance for Year 13 student and also their parents/carers. These sessions were all hosted on MS Teams.

In addition, all Year 12 students have taken part in a Careers Week: 24th to 28th May through their subject lessons. This involved a series of 'Progression Talks' on CV writing, enhancing employability skills, choosing a degree course / university, life at university and searching for an apprenticeship.

Careers links to the subject were facilitated by talks from employers or HE providers relevant to the subject area. This replaced the Year 12 Progression Conference that the college was unable to hold for a second year due to Covid.

Mr Webb, the CEIAG Link Governor, took this opportunity to formally recognise the great efforts which staff are taking to ensure that students are informed and engaged in their progression options. He reported that he was impressed with how well the staff are responding with imagination and energy.

Local developments (Confidential)

Ms Summers advised the corporation that the option for applying for an 'empty' MAT is now not possible in light of the refreshed and relaunched government guidance (published April 2021) on academy conversion; which makes explicitly clear that two options are only available to converters:- 1) to create a new MAT or 2) to join an existing MAT. Ms Summers explained however that the option for 'associate partners' or 'prospective joiners' is now mentioned within the publication suggesting that there is an option for a trial period for the college to engage with an interested school, covered by a MoU, without formal conversion. Thus enabling prospective partners to experience first hand the benefit of MAT partnerships. Ms Summers confirmed that she and Ms Williams are to meet with a representative from the DfE to explore this option further given that an empty MAT application is no longer a viable option.

Ms Williams also confirmed that she and Ms Summers had met with the Headteacher and Chair of Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery (JIN) School in June who agreed to explore further with their wider governing body the option of being a potential Trust partner in HNC's Multi Academy. Ms Williams and Ms Summers were both in agreement that from the discussions Littletown JIN School felt like a positive option for a partner and that the conversations to date were promising.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received.**

10. Board Assurance Review: Poor whole college experience for students and parents/carers

Ms Rogerson presented the assurance report to the corporation. The Governors agreed that the report provided a comprehensive review of the individual risk and provided the necessary assurance that the existing controls in place are adequate and effective and in proportion to the individual risk being managed. Given the ongoing disruption to the normal student experience caused by the pandemic, the College had responded fully and creatively to maintain a positive student experience.

It was noted that there was a wealth of independent assurance sources cited within the report to support the corporation's recommendation for green assurance. Furthermore, governors agreed with the revised risk scores assigned to this risk given the significant level and effectiveness of the risk controls currently in place.

Resolved:

- **To assign green assurance rating to the individual risk**
- **For the clerk to update the Master BAF**

Mr Smith-Connor and Ms Rogerson left the meeting at this point.

11. Search & Governance Committee (Meeting held on 7th June 2021)

Ms Boryslawskij briefed Governors on the business of the Committee. Particular attention was given to the outcomes of the annual reviews of Governance policies and procedures. The Corporation duly approved the amendments proposed for Governors Code of Conduct, the standing orders and the scheme of delegation.

The Corporation approved the Committee's recommendations for membership appointments.

Resolved:

- **That the minutes be received**
- **That the changes to the Standing Orders be approved**
- **That the changes to the Scheme of Delegation be approved**
- **That the changes to the Code of Conduct be approved and for all governors to confirm by email to the Clerk that they shall agree to observe this code of conduct to the best of their abilities.**
- **For Mr Navinder Uppal to be appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee from September 2021 to July 2023.**
- **For Ms Hannah Haigh to be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee from September 2021 to July 2023.**
- **For Mr Jonathan Dawson to be appointed as Chair of the F&R Committee as of September 2021 to July 2022.**
- **For Mr Alex Leach to be appointed as a member of the Search & Governance Committee.**

12. Audit Committee (Meeting held on 15th June 2021)

Mr Nelson advised the Corporation that the committee had received a further Data Protection & Security Report 2020/21 for term 2. Members of the committee remain of the view that the report provides comprehensive assurance to senior leadership team and Governors that the college is doing as much as it can to mitigate against cyber security risks.

Mr Nelson briefed the corporation on the outcome of the internal audits undertaken to date. Particular attention was given to the outcome of the budgetary control assurance review. The overall assurance assessment assigned was reasonable (amber) with one important recommendation made relating to the management accounts (between November 2020 and March 2021) being prepared and reported outside of the 14 days timeframe, as required by the Financial regulations. No operational effectiveness matters were raised for consideration. The Corporation was of course already aware of this issue and members of F&R Committee had supported SLT to resolve it. Monthly management accounts are now up to date and systems are in place to ensure this position is sustained. Governors confirmed that they were now satisfied with the position.

Mr Nelson also advised the Corporation that all key risks identified throughout 2020/21 had been subject to assurance reviews. He also confirmed to the corporation that the audit committee continued to review the COVID 19 risk assessment at each Audit Committee meeting..

Mr Nelson explained to the Corporation that the Colleges Whistleblowing policy had been subject to its annual review. No amendments are required on this occasion.

Mr Nelson advised the corporation that in light of the changes to the Post 16 Audit Code of practice(ACOP), the committee recommends amendments to the current terms of reference for 2021/22; to ensure that they continue to reflect terminology and phraseology and maintain compliance with the ACOP. The corporation approved the changes.

Resolved:

- **That the minutes be received**
- **That the changes recommended to the committee's terms of reference be approved for immediate implementation.**

13. Finance & Resources Committee (Meeting held 21st June 2021)

Ms Summers briefed Governors on the remaining business of the Committee.

Ms Summers confirmed that the outstanding accounts for February 2021 had been shared with all Governors by Friday 26th March 2021 and that management accounts for March 2021 and April 2021 had been shared within agreed time limits with Governors and posted on Moodle. The management accounts for May 2021 had been considered by members at this meeting, in line with the college's financial regulations and the committee's agenda plan. As noted previously, monthly management accounts were now up to date, with a high level of confidence that this situation will be maintained.

Ms Summers went on to explain that the recommended changes to the Financial Regulations were required to better reflect the college's current framework and approach to financial management and control. The corporation was also reminded that the financial regulations continue to include both high level guidance in terms of the college's governance requirements and also procedural detail to support decision making, clarify accountability and ensure integrity of internal controls and stewardship. The corporation duly approved the changes to the financial regulations.

Ms Summers advised the corporation that the college's fees and charges policy and the business travel and expenses policy had been subject to annual reviews by the committee, as per the scheme of delegation.

Ms Summers also drew the corporations attention to the letter received from the ESFA confirming that they had received and reviewed the colleges audited financial statement and assurance returns for the year ended 31 July 2020 and the finance record for the years ending 31 July 2020 and 31 July 2021. ESFA are in agreement with the college's assessment grades for outstanding financial health for 2019/20 and 2020/21. The accompanying ESFA's financial dashboard was to also be used as part of the college's proposed new financial dashboard intended as a visual aid in tracking the college's progress against the agreed financial KPI's as of September 2021. Ms Summers confirmed that the dashboard, once finalised, will be shared with all governors, alongside a glossary and associated training.

Resolved:

- **That the minutes be received**
- **That the Financial Regulations be approved.**

14. Meeting schedule 2021/22 and Agenda Planner 2021/22

Mrs Coupland advised governors that the calendar reflects the planned number of corporation and committee meetings for the new academic year - incorporating 4 formal Corporation meetings and 1 strategic planning day.

The Corporation was advised that all committee meetings for 2021/22 are to continue to take place virtually via teams (not Zoom). It is planned, however, for all corporation meetings to take place in college, social distancing rules permitted. It was explained that a decision had been taken by the clerk and the chair that there is to be no current option for hybrid meetings – where attendance can be physical or virtual. This is to best facilitate the

effective running of meetings and to provide an opportunity for governors to have physical presence at the college and engage with staff.

Mrs Coupland confirmed that as the college calendar was still being finalised it had not been possible to fully populate the corporation calendar with key stakeholder events such as the Self Assessment Review Validation meetings or celebration evening etc. The updated meeting schedule will be circulated again nearer the end of term.

Resolved:

- **That the schedule and Agenda Planner be approved**
- **All governors agreed for committee meetings during 2021/22 to remain virtual via Teams and for all corporation meetings, if permitted, to be held in college.**

15. Any other Business.

There was no other business.

16. Learner Impact Reflection

The impact of discussion and scrutiny of the Corporation's work in improving the outcomes and experience for all learners was considered and the following agreed.

- **The focus of the strategic plan is to continue to fulfil the longstanding vision of the college for all the young people HNC serves.**
- **The focus of the strategic plan is to continue to fulfil the longstanding vision and mission of the college for all the young people HNC serves.**
- **Scrutiny of the College's CPD staffing report ensures Governors' focus, challenge and support in improving teaching and learning experiences for Students.**
- **To ensure that HNC continues to succeed and is able to continue to deliver a high quality of student outcome and experience**
- **Assurance received that the college continues to provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all students to develop personally and academically.**
- **An informed Board of Governors is effective in its scrutiny, challenge and support of the senior leadership team thus ensuring positive outcomes and progress for all students**
- **To continue to ensure that the college and the corporation publishes accurate and honest information about its activities and processes – this is particularly important in relation to information for parents, students and employers**

Ms Williams & Mr Hoskins left the meeting at this point.

17. Remuneration & Personnel Committee (Meetings held on 25th May 2021 and 29th June 2021) (confidential)

Meeting held on 25th May 2021 (Confidential)

Meeting from 29th June 2021 (Confidential)

18. Determination of confidentiality

Minutes relating to agenda item 9 and 17 and associated supporting papers are to remain confidential.

19. Date of next meeting: 21st October 2021 from 5pm – at HNC.