

Minutes of an electronic Corporation meeting held at 1800 on 12 July 2021.

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| **Present** | Christine Chisholm | Jan Edrich  (Int Principal) | Jean Fawcett | Phillip Fulton |
|  | Sue Grant  (Chair) | Neil Myerson | John O’Sullivan | Rob Payne |
|  |  | Peter Thompson | Mairi Watson |  |
| **In Attendance** | David Alder  (Dir Mar&Ad) | Nicola Caiger  (Dir I&P) | Ralph Devereux  (Clerk) | Ana Guimaraes  (Dir Curr) |
|  | Celeste Jones  (ED UCSA) | Paul McCormack  (FD) | Harpreet Nagra  (DP) | Andrew Slade  (Principal Des) |
|  | Sian Williams  (Dir Curr) |  |  |  |
| **Apologies** | Jesmin Haq | Kerry Hood |  |  |

**PART ONE**

**92/20 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM AND OPENING REMARKS**

1. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no interests declared.
2. Chairs Opening Remarks. The Chair welcomed all to the last meeting of this turbulent and challenging year, in particular, Andrew Slade the Principal (designate). All stakeholders were again thanked for their determination and commitment.

**The information was noted and received.**

**93/20 UNIVERSITY CAMPUS ST ALBANS (UCSA) (out of agenda order)**

1. Presentation. The UCSA Executive Director (ED) delivered an electronic presentation (Attached to the filed copy of these minutes); the detail briefly examined the organisation history, the scope of delivery and the funding arrangements. The session concluded with an examination of the future challenges and opportunities and a discussion. There were many Higher Education (HE) delivery models in the Further Education (FE) sector, which the ED was researching partly prompted by the recently revised limits on subcontracting. Members noted the innovative but resource intensive model. In addition to the review of the UCSA strategy, it was noted that the current overall HE Strategy for the College, had been determined before the pandemic had arrived and it was agreed that the entire approach, including the existing structure, would be reviewed in the coming year. (**Action 1)**
2. Report. The Report, in ten sections, informed Members on progress since the last update. The Report had been presented to the UCSA Board and had been updated to reflect current information; including the main management and delivery focus on the Covid-19 response. The current portfolio of 6 degree programmes and 4 “Accreditation of Prior Learning” (APL) was welcomed. Flexibility of operations allowed rapid assimilation of business opportunities and all involved remained enthusiastic and committed, however without complacency; future opportunities and challenges in the conclusion would inform the intended HE Strategy Review.

**The information was noted and received.**

**Actions had been identified (Register 99/20)**

**94/20** **STANDING ITEMS**

1. The minutes from the Corporation meeting (Part 1) held on 10 May 2021 were confirmed for electronic signature. **(Action 2)**
2. Matters arising. There were no matters arising. Members wished to thank SLT members for all their contributions to the new monthly report which they have found very useful.
3. It was noted that the schedule of meetings would be circulated separately.
4. Actions. Actions from the last meeting were discussed and confirmed as listed.

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| See referenced minute for full detail | | **Status** |
| **Action 1** | 74/20b. Urgent Business agreed. | **Complete** |
| **Action 2** | 77/20a. Last minutes (08.03.21) confirmed for signature. |
| **Action 3** | 77/20d (iii) Reference to EAM to be removed. |
| **Action 4** | 78/20b. Face coverings to remain mandatory in designated areas. |
| **Action 5** | 79/20b. Pay and percentage of income tbc by FRC. |
| **Action 6** | 80/20. Revised budget to next meeting. |
| **Action 7** | 81/20. “Governors’ monthly report” to be introduced. |
| **Action 8** | 81/20. Business Schedule approved as flexible. |
| **Action 9** | 81/20. Meeting schedule to be considered at next meeting. |
| **Action 10** | 85/20. SPH Grievance Policy approved. |
| **Action 11** | 86/20. PT elected as Corporation Chair. |

1. Committee Minutes. The draft and unconfirmed minutes of the Committee meetings were introduced by each Committee Chair and the content was noted to inform considerations.
   * 1. Audit Committee (AC) meeting (08.06.21). The Chair updated members on the proceedings and recommended:

* re 31/20, the Internal Audit Service (IAS) Plan, which had been widened by the Committee to include “Quality of Teaching and Learning (T&L)”; and
* re 33/20, the External Audit Plan.

Both were approved wie. **(Action 3)**.

* + 1. Finance and Resources (F&R) meeting (11.06.21 & 27.07.21). The Chair updated members on the proceedings of both meetings. In particular, he explained (re 19/20b) that the July meeting had been unavoidably inquorate, urgency had dictated continuance as a working group and necessary decisions had been taken under the acting Corporation Chair’s Action; (full meeting papers had been available to all Members in advance) the Chairs Action was unanimously approved. **(Action 4)** It had also been suggested to hold separate Capital Project meetings to reduce the length of meetings and that was agreed wie. **(Action 5)** It was also noted that an additional member would be required as Sue Grant was retiring after this evening’s meeting.
    2. Curriculum & Quality Committee (CQC) meeting (09.06.21). The Chair updated members on the proceedings and explained greater focus would be given to English and Maths (EAM) and Functional Skills (FS) attendance levels. The greater level of information that has been provided to the committee was welcomed and it was noted allowed for greater scrutiny.

* + 1. People Committee (PC) meeting (30.06.21). The Chair updated members on the proceedings and explained that there had been an excellent presentation on “Homestead” and the outgoing HR Director had suggested scrutiny of the “job-family” arrangements. The Marketing Strategy (re 16/20) had been recommended and was approved wie. **(Action 6)**

There was general consideration of the committee structure and it was agreed as becoming embedded, the additional work that it required from Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members was acknowledged and understood and appreciation was recorded. **(Action 7)** Additional Corporation Members were in the recruitment pipeline and it was likely that three would be available for appointment by the start of next term.

**The information was noted and received.**

**Actions had been identified (Register 99/20)**

**95/20 FINANCE AND RISK**

The Finance Report was presented and discussed.

1. Management Accounts. The Management accounts for the 10 months to 31 May (Annex 1) had been fully reviewed and recommended to the Corporation by the FRC. The current situation profiled on past trends or expected timings and tabulated the Statement of Comprehensive Income (SOCI), was a deficit of c(£590k) against the budgeted c(£981k); income was positive by £62k with all variances tabulated and explained, payroll was holding up well and together with non-pay expenditure both were positive by £345k and £105k, respectively. Likely changes to the year-end accounts were included in the paper and included:
2. apprenticeship position (negative); and
3. staffing initiatives (negative);
4. AEB clawback (positive); and
5. balance sheet rebasing (positive).

The Cash Flow Forecast (CFF) showed a strong cash balance for the College and the St Albans Phase 2 capital development. The accounts and likely changes for the year-end were **noted**.

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The Finance KPI (Annex 1e) schedule had been updated to account for the recently published updated Further Education Commissioner’s (FEC) financial benchmarks; sensitive areas had been highlighted in red. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Financial Heath score at “Good” and the possibility of achieving “Outstanding” was **noted** and The KPIs were **noted.**
2. Risk Management (RM). The Risk Register (RR) (Annex 2) had been considered by the FRC on 8 June; the scoring methodology leading to the residual grades’ summary on the “Heat Map” was explained in the document. The “Heat Map” was then scrutinised; there had been 2 changes to risk levels and the addition of one new risk since the last meeting:
3. Money 3. “Apprenticeship income not met” had been increased;

1. Money 4. “Low HE enrolment” had been reduced; and
2. Money 14. “Legacy contracts” disproportionately demanding on management.

The updated RR was **noted.**

1. Budget. The last meeting had considered a “top-down” c£900k deficit budget, which had been challenged; accordingly, the detail had been reviewed and adjusted to reduce the deficit and scrutinised in detail by the FRC; the revised deficit was c(£427k). Cross-College departmental capital bids of £2.4m had been reconciled and it was **noted** that the final review would bring the total into the £1m allocation. The reasoning behind the FRC recommendation for approval of the Budget was explained in the minutes and accepted: The Budget was approved. **(Action 8). It was acknowledged by members that activities should take place during 20/21 to reduce the deficiet if at all possible. Regular forecasts would be scrutinised theoughout the year by the FRC.** The FRC / Corporation would not expect to be asked to recommend/ agree a deficit budget in the following years. **(Action 9)**

1. 3-Year Plan. Looking ahead the Office for National Statistics detail forecast an increasing potential student cohort with local population increasing by c3%, the detail had been graphically presented together with estimated enrolment detail. The budget planned to “break-even” in 2022.23, as explained in the 2022/23 SOCI Plan.
2. College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR). Completion and submission of the CFFR to the ESFA by 31 July 2021 was delegated to the Principal. **(Action 10)**
3. Subcontracting & Supply Chain Fees and Charging Policy (SCFCP). Continuation of the existing partnership activity subject to the existing rigorous checks was approved. **(Action 11)** It was **noted** that contract values would be individually agreed and brought to the Corporation for approval. The SCFCP (Annex 3) had been scrutinised and recommended by the FRC and the Policy was approved. **(Action 12)** The ESFA requirement for a full subcontracting rationale and Policy (with the total value limit of 25% of income) was understood and would be drafted in the near future. **(Action 13)**

**The information was noted and received.**

**Action had been identified (Register 99/20 below)**

**96/20 PRINCIPALS REPORT**

The Principal’s Report updated on points not included on the agenda or considered elsewhere, the report had been circulated well in advance of the meeting and was received, items of note were discussed.

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The KPI (Annex 1) were noted; information relating to other agenda items was signposted and this led into general consideration of the information and whether it was logically arranged; there was more than one set available and the derivation of the individual copies was unclear. Also the introduction of the committee structure required scrutiny of the process to channel particular information to each to facilitate real time monitoring through the year. The clarity of detail was also questioned; for example, it had become apparent during a recent SAR moderation that EAM “attendance” data included students “self-completion” of some modules. That detail should be available and it was agreed, as a matter of urgency, to scrutinise this matter and to consider the KPI for 20/21 and the KPI process generally. **(Action 14)**
2. Coronavirus Update. The Covid update was noted, in particular the early start and testing arrangements for the start of the autumn term. It had disappointingly, not been possible to hold the normal year-end celebratory events, but it may be possible to arrange some retrospectively during next term.

**The information was noted and received.**

**Actions had been identified (Register 99/20)**

**97/20 URGENT BUSINESS**

Neil Myerson asked for Members’ attention. This was the Chair’s final meeting as a Corporation Member. She had been in post for a total of 8 years, having originally joined on the 8 July 2013 as the University of Hertfordshire nominated member and she became Chair on 9 July 2018. The events over the three years of her stewardship had been unexpected to say the least. Having accepted the post in the immediate aftermath of the Ofsted report and the Requires Improvement (RI) assessment, the pandemic arrived and the then Principal resigned (matters not related). Not only did Sue rise to these challenges in turn but she extended for a further year to see the College through the crisis. Throughout, she had shown outstanding leadership, fortitude and professionalism. Thank you from Oakland’s Sue and every good wish for the future.

Sue Grant replied and thanked everyone for the gift, which had been delivered to her that morning. It had been a privilege to be Chair of the Corporation of Oakland’s College and she thanked all for their support and loyalty. If invited to any future awards evenings or ceremonial openings she would assuredly be there!

**The information was noted and received.**

**Actions had been identified (Register 99/20)**

**98/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meetings would be:

1. Ofsted training 0900 until 1200 on 10 August 2021; and
2. Corporation 1800 on 27 September 2021.

**99/20 ACTION REGISTER**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| See referenced minute for full detail | | **Resp** | **by** |
| **Action 1** | 93/20a. HE Strategy to be reviewed. | **AS/CJ** | **2021.22** |
| **Action 2** | 94/20a. Last Minutes (10.05.21) confirmed for signature | **Clerk** | **wie** |
| **Action 3** | 94/20d(i) IAS and External Audit Plans approved. | **FD** |
| **Action 4** | 94/20d(ii) Chair’s Action unanimously approved. | **Chair** |
| **Action 5** | 94/20d(ii) FRC to hold separate meetings for capital issues. | **FRC** |
| **Action 6** | 94/20d(iv) Marketing Strategy approved. | **Dir Mkt** |
| **Action 7** | 94/20. Thanks recorded to SLT for additional committee work. | **SLT** |
| **Action 8** | 95/20d. Budget 2021.22 approved. | **FD** |
| **Action 9** | 95/20d. No deficit budget to be presented for coming years. |
| **Action 10** | 95/20f. Signing of CFFR delegated to Principal. |
| **Action 11** | 95/20g. Partnership continuation approved for 2021.22. |
| **Action 12** | 95/20g. Subcontract Fees & Charging Policy approved. |
| **Action 13** | 95/20g. Subcontracting Rationale and Policy to be drafted. |
| **Action 14** | 96/20a. KPIs identification & process for 20/21 to be scrutinised. | **Chair/Principal** |