

HARTLEPOOL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Governors held on Thursday 14 May 2020 at 5.15pm via TEAMS

Members Present:	Prof A Mullan [Chair]	Mrs M Roberts
	Mr D Hankey	Dr K Gillen
	Mr F Ali	Mr S Irvine
	Mr S Salvin	Mrs L Watson
	Mrs L Thornton	Mr N Godfrey
	Mr M Ward	Mrs J Regan
	Mrs L Nelson	

Also present:	Mrs K Dales [Assistant Principal]
	Mr S Hope [Assistant Principal]
	Mr A Theakston [Clerk]
	Mrs C Menzies [Minute Clerk]

1	To welcome new governors Mrs L Thornton and Mr F Ali were welcomed as new members.
2	Apologies for absence Apologies from S Robinson. No representation from the ESFA at this meeting but a feedback meeting is arranged with D Hankey for tomorrow.
3	Declarations of Interest S Irvine declared his directorship of North Tees and Hartlepool Solutions LLP with effect from 1 May 2020.
4	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 February 2020 The minutes were accepted as a true record.
5	Matters arising and action points All actions have been completed.
6	Principal/Chief Executive's Report
COVID:	
6.1	Safeguarding DH confirmed vulnerable and high needs learners are being supported by the WARMS Team and laptops have been provided where required. DH is pleased with the support given and how learners have responded. Governors noted this fantastic work. LW reminder members of the importance of reading the draft legislation for safeguarding which is to be implemented from September as it has implications for governors. SI asked what happens if positive contact is not made with learners. DH said D Hill, WARMS Team Leader, is very tenacious and continues to keep contact and has printed resources and delivered to learners as required. SI asked how the extra cost of IT equipment is covered as this would not have been in the budget. KD advised money is available from the bursary fund and should this be breached a business case can be submitted to the ESFA.
6.2	Curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment update

	<p>SH highlighted the context of the report which is due to the current lockdown situation management of student performance significantly differs from previous processes. Some key factors for governors to note are summarised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there will be no performance tables for the academic year 2019/20 • attendance is not captured in the same way, instead the college (as with many other colleges) has adopted a measurement of 'engagement' with learners engaging with teachers at times different to their timetable and working independently in place of some taught lessons – engagement is monitored rated red, amber, green • consultation for the awarding of academic qualifications (for us that is our GCSE provision) has closed and learners will be awarded a grade based on calculations from teachers • consultation for awarding bodies of vocational programmes identify three categories, calculate, adapt or delay. Work is underway to complete students but until publication of these categories we will not be able to definitely predict completion dates for some learners • 16-18 year old engagement is similar to typical attendance ranging 80-90% across Schools. It is predicted 80% of our provision will be calculated and teachers are working well with learners to collate evidence where it doesn't already exist. We are at a 'sticking point' with courses that require large practical delivery (i.e. Hairdressing, Brickwork, Fabrication & Welding etc.) as the majority of theory work has now been delivered but practical work cannot be adapted. We await announcements of delay for these qualifications • Engagement for Adult and HE programmes is high • Apprenticeships is an area for concern and although engagement is pleasing 230/700 learners have been furloughed and some positions are at risk which can make engagement difficult but the situation is being monitored <p>SI asked if the grade given by the College will stand or could it be reviewed by the awarding body. KG asked about the opportunity for an appeals process. SH explained the College will allocate the grades but there will be an appeals process and the relevant policies are being updated.</p> <p>AM said this situation will be supported by the good performance tracking in place.</p> <p>LT asked if welfare chats were happening for apprentices. SH said contact was being made and support to find alternative employment.</p>
<p>6.3</p>	<p>Cash flow</p> <p>KD advised a cash flow had been prepared rather than management accounts due to access to the finance system for staff working remotely. Work is ongoing to allow access to produce management accounts moving forward. KD advised that only four members of her team had access to the finance system. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash dipped in March but this was due to the large supplier payment made before closing. It was noted that cash flow was well above the minimum figure required by the bank • KD has confidence in the figures up until July but less so from September until enrolment numbers are known • Main funding body income is secure with assurance provided that there will be no performance related claw back of funds • HE figures are expected next week which could be impacted by bad debts however learners are still engaging • The majority of income is secure but apprenticeship income is a concern. There have been 24 learners laid off or made redundant and numbers from September onwards are likely to be affected • The £1.3m cash bank balance, part of the loan covenant, is being achieved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KD will continue to update the cash flow on a monthly basis
6.4	<p>Risk register</p> <p>KD included a Covid risk register with the papers but explained this was changing on a daily basis due to the fluid position of the situation. KD included for information a separate risk register regarding how Covid could affect IT systems. AM thanked KD for the reports saying the information included was excellent.</p> <p>SI appreciated how proactive Executive Committee have been to provide the risk registers but asked how the business continuity plan had been impacted. DH informed of the weekly Cobra team meetings to review business operations. AM asked DH to update the business continuity plan outlining specific tasks the College needs to take and share it with the Board.</p>
6.5	<p>Early planning for re-opening</p> <p>DH advised he had met with Management Forum yesterday to start planning for the College operating under social distancing measures. Learners in delay stage who need to complete practical sessions will be the first learners to be filtered into classes then a plan for all learners from September onwards given the fact a vaccine may not be available for some time. DH said there have been numerous discussions with managers and confirmed the College will not reopen until it is safe to do so.</p> <p>KG asked if DH had an overview of how College staff feel about returning to work given the fact some school staff and unions are averse to returning given cases in Hartlepool are still rising. DH said some staff in the shielding category will be unable to return, likewise if they have close family members in this category. Feedback received from College unions is that the decision has been rushed by Government. DH agreed the College will not be in a position to open by 1st June as this would only allow two weeks to implement plans taking into account the May half term holidays. DH advised staff welfare is priority.</p> <p>MR informed a survey is being produced which will be sent to all staff to gain their opinion and help the planning process.</p>
Strategic:	
6.6	<p>Update relating to adult education proposition</p> <p>Confidential.</p>
6.7	<p>Tees Valley Energy Centre</p> <p>Confidential.</p>
2018/19 academic performance	
6.8	<p>SAR update in light of national achievement rate table (NART)</p> <p>SH explained this was an update on last years performance and asked governors approve or decline should they not agree with any of the six points shown in the report. SH said the FE Commissioner recommended an addendum of any changes which is the reason for the report. SH said the table shows the comparison for overall achievement and the areas shown below NAR 18/19 levels work is being done to try and improve results. The adding of the six points to the 2018/19 SAR were unanimously approved by the board</p> <p>AM commented that he was disappointed that the FE Commissioner visit in July needed to be cancelled as this information would have resolved a lot of the concerns they raised.</p>
7	Finance items for approval
7.1	<p>Budgets for 2020/21 and key risks</p> <p>KD has revised the 19/20 budget and is starting looking at the forecast outturn. KD reported apprentices were due to overperform and indications are that it should still do so which will offset</p>

	<p>some of the reductions to commercial income. KD informed salaries are under budget too so an early indication is a small surplus of £30-40k based on the cautiously calculated figures.</p> <p>KD advised of F&GP recommendation for board approval to furlough some staff from commercial operation areas. The Board approved this decision.</p> <p>KD reported there will be some additional costs incurred for PPE equipment for the building such as screens for reception, wipes and hand gels.</p> <p>KD said the 20/21 budget is different to the plan sent to the ESFA in February and may have certain caveats due to the current decisions. A RAG rating has been applied to each area.</p> <p>NG asked if any payments were paid based on achievement. SH informed there was no risk this year as payments were an allocation and not based on achievement.</p>
7.2	<p>Financial Regulations KD advised the only change was the annual thresholds. The Board approved the revised version.</p>
8	<p>Finance items for information and noting</p>
8.1	<p>Barclays Bank (Loan Covenants) KD stated management accounts are needed by Barclays Bank as part of the loan covenant but given the current situation and the fact management accounts are not being produced a different way of assessing information has been agreed. KD confirmed auditors are also happy with the revised process.</p>
9	<p>Corporation items to approve</p>
9.1	<p>Appointment of Chair of Governing Body AT informed one nomination was received, from Dr K Gillen and Search Committee 100% recommend the Board approve this decision. Dr Gillen has previously been a governor and is highly regarded and experienced.</p> <p>The Board approved Dr K Gillen as Chair of the Governing Body from 1st June 2020 to be coterminous with her period of office i.e. 31 December 2023. KG thanked the Board saying it was a privilege and an honour.</p> <p>AM said the appointment of a Vice Chair was discussed at Search Committee and it was agreed KG could discuss this option at a later date should this be required.</p>
9.2	<p>Re-election of Mrs L Watson for one year to 09.07.21 AM reported that Search committee had carefully considered the ending of the term of office for Mrs Watson and referred to the memorandum which had been included with the agenda papers. After discussion Search committee recommended that she be reappointed for one year when her term of office ended on 9 July 2020. This was approved by the board</p>
9.3	<p>Re-election of Mrs J Regan for one year to 24.06.21 AM reported that Search committee had carefully considered the ending of the term of office for Mrs Regan and referred to the memorandum which had been included with the agenda papers. After discussion Search committee recommended that she be reappointed for one year when her term of office ended on 24 June 2020. This was approved by the board</p>
9.4	<p>Updated Standing Orders/ Instruments and Articles AT circulated the Standing Orders to members prior to the meeting and had advised that the Instruments and Articles were on Sharepoint. He drew attention to the changes, all of which had previously been approved by the board or at recent committee meetings when all</p>

	committee terms of reference had been considered and updated where appropriate. See memo attached. The Standing Orders and Instrument and Articles were approved.
9.5	<p>Tender process for Internal Auditors</p> <p>A request was made to delegate authority to Audit Committee to search for and recommend a new internal auditor due to revised guidance that states the same company cannot provide both internal and external audit services. SI had declared, during Audit Committee, a potential conflict of interest in respect of AuditOne as a previous employee although he had not worked for them for 14 months. Details are shown in the memo attached.</p> <p>The Board noted the details of the proposed tender process as attached and delegated authority to conduct the tender process to the Audit Committee including appointment of the preferred supplier subject to ratification by the chair of the board. The appointment would be ratified by the whole board at the subsequent meeting</p>
10	<p>Designation of confidential items</p> <p>Items 6.6 and 6.7 were designated confidential items</p>
11	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Great thanks were given to AM for his service to the College during his 20 years service on the Board, 13 of these as Chair. DH expressed his thanks for AM's support to him as Principal during the past 7 years which have had some very challenging and difficult times for the College and sector as a whole. DH said a meal will be arranged as a thank you in the Flagship Restaurant once normal operations resume.</p> <p>AM thanked members saying it has been a delight and privilege and he is confident governors and staff will fully support KG in her role as Chair.</p>
12	<p>To note date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 7th July 2020 at 5.15pm</p>

Chairman:

Action Points arising from meeting held on 14 May 2020

	Action	Responsible	Date Due
6.1	Governors to read the revised Safeguarding legislation which is operational from September	Governors	July 2020
6.4	Business continuity plan to be updated to include specific tasks relating to the Covid pandemic	D Hankey	August 2020