



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation  
held remotely on Tuesday 7 July 2020**

**Present: -** Mr Igor Andronov (Chair)  
Mr James Caird  
Mrs Sally Cassels  
Miss Abby Durant  
Mr Tony Ford  
Mrs Laura Johnston  
Mrs Debbie Lambert  
Mr Alan Layng  
Mr Adam Matthews  
Mr Jeremy Nicholls  
Mr Ian Peake (Principal)

**In attendance: -** Mrs Jo Ricketts (Deputy Principal)  
Mr Edward Gwillim (Director of Finance)  
Mrs Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)  
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)

The meeting was quorate as eleven Governors were present for the meeting which was held by conference call due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- |  | <b>Action</b> |
|--|---------------|
| <p>1. I. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sebastian Bowen and Mrs Rebecca Payne.</p> <p>II. The Chair referred to item 5 II proposing that Governors to appoint Alan Layng onto the Board as the first item.</p> <p>The Chair reported that he had taken Chair's action since the last meeting to withdraw the capital project to sell Pound Farm and develop Holme Lacy Campus which would not be timely to progress due to probable funding changes and likely cost increases.</p> <p><u>The Board agreed: -</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To appoint Alan Layng and an Independent Governor and member of the F&amp;E Committee for an initial 1-year term in office as the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee</li><li>• To note and support Chair's action taken since the last meeting</li></ul> <p>III. Declaration of interests. Tony Ford declared an interest regarding 5.I</p> |               |
| <p>2. I. <b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b></p>  |               |

The Board agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes of the Board meeting held on 28 April 2020 as a true record.

## II. Matters arising

There were no matters arising

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

### *Discussion*

## 3. Principal's Report

- I. The Principal's written report was noted. He reiterated that the majority of activity conducted had been virtual. The College's COBR Committee had continued to meet frequently. In addition, a planning meeting for 2020/21 had been meeting regularly with the Principal Designate. Virtual award ceremonies and open events were held with high levels of student attendance and positive feedback. Staff development will be delivered online at the end of term.
- II. The KPIs had previously been discussed by the Q&S Committee. Retention remains good at 95%, an improvement of 2% compared to last year. There is a possibility that pass rates could be lower on courses that some students have not completed final assessments which need to be taken on campus. Attendance was reported to 20 March 2020. The 'insight app' with Microsoft Teams has been piloted to track attendance whilst delivering remote teaching and learning delivered. Apprenticeships require practical assessments which are not being completed, particularly if apprentices have been furloughed. This will reduce the overall and timely achievement as apprentices are likely to require additional time to complete apprenticeships due to COVID-19. GCSE English and maths will be graded on a calculated result which will also consider past performance. Results calculated by teachers have been submitted, these have improved following changes embedded to delivery of teaching and learning. Last year's achievements were below the national comparator and expected to be considered. GCSE results will be published in August. Functional Skills results were challenging to calculate as teachers have not all been able to meet students to calculate grades after the March lockdown with subsequent grades calculated by vocational teams.
- III. The Principal updated Governors on the impact of COVID-19 on the current term. The majority of staff have reacted positively to support students evidencing their commitment. Staff are keen to return to work with a few staff and students anxious about social integration in the College environment. Challenges experienced by some students working at home with remote support was under-estimated. COVID-19 has had a financial impact moving to an in-year deficit. A proportion of students have returned to College to complete assessments. It is anticipated that there will be an impact of first year students joining in September who have been out of education since March.

- IV. ESFA correspondence on Herefordshire Ludlow and North Shropshire College's financial statements 2018/19 reported that the College's financial health category was assessed as 'requires improvement'. Governors agreed that it is important to continue to closely monitor finances and ensure the cash position remains strong. The Director of Finance reported that ESFA will consider the impact of COVID-19 on colleges.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the Principal's report, KPIs and COVID-19 briefings
- To note Herefordshire Ludlow and North Shropshire College financial statements 2018/29 and required actions assigned to the Director of Finance

*Decision*

**4. Finance**

- I. The Director of Finance explained that the budget 2020/21 process had been delayed this year due to COVID-19 and the new MIS system. Detailed planning has been completed using the curriculum resource model (CRM) to prepare the budget. COVID-19 has caused uncertainty regarding the number of apprentices. The 16-18 funding allocation has increased to £13,120K which is calculated on a lagged funding methodology from the previous year. In contrast AEB funding has decreased with an anticipated reduction of £41K. The CRM was used to calculate pay costs for substantive posts and hourly paid teaching staff. Savings of c£300K will be made from restructuring. Discussions are taking place with the catering providers at each campus to deliver the service following social distancing guidance and identify the impact of COVID-19 on income. Walford Farm income is forecasted at breakeven which had previously made a loss. The 24-month cashflow forecast showed that the College remains financially sustainable subject to cautious spend which will continue to be closely monitored. Overall the College has set a breakeven forecast with a positive EBITDA and healthy cash surplus.
- II. Sub contracting provision 2020/21 was proposed to a maximum of £1M based on rationale presented in the report with two sub contracting partners.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the budget 2020/21 update which the Principal, as accounting officer, would sign along with the financial health calculator, for submission to ESFA
- A summary of the budget headlines will be sent to Governors
- To approve sub contracting provision 2020/21 to a maximum of £1M

**5. Governance**

The Board agreed: -

- To re-appoint Tony Ford for a further 1-year term in office as an Independent Governor
- To approve the Internal Auditor's Strategy 2020/21-

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2021/22.

- To approve Mazars Audit Strategy and Memorandum to 31 July 2020

The following reports were presented for information with specific points recorded.

6. **GCSE English, Maths and Functional Skills**  
The Deputy Principal had addressed this in in item 3.
7. **Risk Management and Risk Register**  
The Audit Committee had discussed the risk register which had incorporated the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. A Governor suggested considering an additional risk in the event that staff fail to engage with new working methods and staff training to support these. A generic risk regarding the College's resources to respond to operating under COVID-19 restrictions, such as staffing skills and infrastructure would be added.
8. **Minutes from Committees**
  - I. Audit Committee: 8 June 2020
  - II. Search and Governance Committee: 17 June 2020
  - III. Quality and Standards Committee: 17 June 2020
  - IV. Finance and Employment Committee: 24 June 2020
9. **Management Accounts to 31 May 2020**  
These had been discussed by the F&E Committee.
10. **Reports from Committees**
  - I. Health and Safety Report. A Governor commented that there were substantially more incidents at Walford Campus compared to other campuses. It was clarified that 19 incidents related to working with animals. The Health and Safety Advisor and Estates Manager will review the site and incidents to ascertain actions to mitigate these including implementing support systems embedded at Holme Lacy Campus.
  - II. Staff Report
  - III. Safeguarding and Child Protection Report
  - IV. Equality and Diversity Report
  - V. Quality Improvement Plan
  - VI. AoC Code of Good Governance: Principles and Values
  - VII. Timetable of Board and Committees' Business 2020/21
11. **Governors' benchmarked self assessment exercise with West Midlands Colleges**  
The benchmark self assessment will be issued to Governors for completion. This year there are fewer colleges participating due to COVID-19.
12. **College Events 2020**  
It was confirmed that the Ludlow College presentation evening and Apprenticeship evening would be held virtually.
13. **Any other business and comments**
  - I. A Governor asked for an update on Ofsted inspections;

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- full inspections have been deferred until January 2021.
- II. The Chair recorded appreciation to Cllr Bowen who had completed two 4-year terms serving on the Board. He had agreed to continue to serve as a Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee for another year.
  - III. The Chair thanked CMT, staff, students and Governors for their hard work and commitment during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown.
  - IV. Finally, appreciation was recorded to the Principal who had worked tirelessly for the College over many years wishing him a happy and long retirement. The Principal responded that he would miss working with Governors and the team.

**14. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 20 October 2020 with Governors' Workshop commencing at 2.30 pm followed by the Board Meeting at 4.00 pm. Arrangements would be determined subject to lockdown restrictions.

[Staff and Student Governors left the meeting for the confidential agenda]

**Signed as a true record of proceedings**

**Chair:** ..... **Date:** .....