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| **MINUTES** | | | | | | |
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| *Corporation No 152* | | | | | | |
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| Date: |  | *14/07/2020 (Tuesday)* |  | Time: |  | *18:00–20:00* |
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| Venue: |  | *Via Skype* |  | Committee: |  | *Corporation* |
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| Notes: |  | *The meeting will be held via video conference.* | | | | |
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| Present: |  | *Alison Robinson (Principal), Allan Foster (Chairman), Allison Jones, Barbara Godby, Clare James, David Hall, Debbie Clayton, Ian Higginbotham, Jane Booker (Vice Chairman), John Morphet, Kevin Burke, Louise Bell, Richard Furnival, Robert Wallace, Robin Newton-Syms and Sue Collinge* | | | | |
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| Attending: |  | *Joanne Sherrington (Deputy Principal), John Wherry (Deputy Principal) and Steven Downham-Clarke (Vice Principal)* | | | | |
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| Clerks: |  | *Ron Matthews (Clerk)* | | | | |
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| Item number: | Item description: |
| (and category) |  |
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| **52.20** | ***Attendance of College Management Staff*** |
| ***Decision*** | Standing Order 13 states that:  As a matter of policy all meetings of the Corporation and its Committees will be held  in private. The agendas and minutes and supporting papers of its public business will be made available to the general public.  However:  (a) The Principal shall be authorised to invite members of staff to attend in their employed capacity for both public and confidential business as appropriate and in accordance with Standing Order 25.  (b)The Corporation may however, exclude members of staff from attending any business that it deems necessary.  (c) Attendance by other persons shall be at the discretion of the Corporation following advice from the Principal or Clerk.  **Resolved:**  **That Management attend for the public and confidential agenda items.** |
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| **53.20** | ***Apologies for Absence*** |
| ***Record*** | Apologies had been received from David Hall. |
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| **54.20** | ***Minutes of Previous Meeting*** |
| ***Decision*** | The public minutes of meeting number 151 held on Monday 17 March 2020 and published on the extranet were agreed and signed as a true and correct record of the meeting. |
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| **55.20** | ***Declarations of Interest*** |
| ***Record*** | There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda. |
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| **56.20** | ***Governors Richard Furnival and Ian Higginbotham*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Chair referred to the forthcoming resignation of Richard Furnival after four years' service and the retirement of Ian Higginbotham after twelve years' service.  He thanked them for their work and commitment to the College, particularly  Ian who had served as Chair for four years during his time with the College.  The Principal and other Governors also expressed their appreciation.  Richard and Ian responded accordingly. |
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| **57.20** | ***Opening Remarks of the Chair*** |
| ***Information*** | The Chair began by reflecting on the unprecedented time we were currently experiencing at present. He felt that the Corporation had been kept informed of development via the Governor Briefings and he had continued to meet regularly with the Principal.  He had also kept up to date by joining the AoC webinars.  In closing he wished to thank the Executive for all their work during the lockdown and felt that the College was in a better position than many other educational establishments. |
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| **58.20** | ***Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2020/2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | Members gave consideration to the Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of Corporation for the ensuing year.  The current Chair and Vice-Chair were eligible for re-election.Following due process it was:  **Resolved**  **1. That Allan Foster be appointed Chair of the Corporation for the period 1**  **September 2020 to 31 August 2021.**  **2. That Jane Booker be appointed Vice-Chair of the Corporation for the period**  **1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021.** |
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| **59.20** | ***Correspondence*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation considered four items of recent correspondence.The first two were letters dated April and June from the FE Commissioner, Richard Atkins, and the third was a letter from the Rt Hon Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education.  The last item was a report from RSM, the College External Auditors, on Emerging Issues, Spring 2020. This report was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee at their last meeting when it was felt that it would be of interest to the wider governing body.  **Resolved:**  **That the correspondence be noted.** |
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| **60.20** | ***Actions of the Chair*** |
| ***Decision*** | During the Covid-19 Lockdown the Chair was required to take a number of decisions under the authority vested in Chair's Action.  The Corporation was asked to endorse the actions as follows:  1. Agreed to an Appendix to the Safeguarding Policy in the light of the coronavirus  outbreak. A copy of the Policy had been attached to the agenda.  2. Agreed to the HE Tuition Fees 2021-2022 as these were required urgently by  UCLan. A report of the agreed fees was attached to the agenda.  3. Extend by one month the period of service of Ian Higginbotham to 31 July 20.  **Resolved:**  **That the above actions taken by the Chair be endorsed.** |
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| **61.20** | ***Written Resolution - Opening of the College*** |
| ***Decision*** | On the evening of the 9 June 2020, following information conveyed at the Governor Briefing earlier in the day, and following the College over-arching Risk Assessment having been sent to Governors, the Clerk formally invited Governors to vote on the opening of the College on 15 June 2020 to a limited number of students in order that they might complete elements of their practical qualification.  Governors were asked 'did they agree to opening the College on 15 June 2020 or not'.  By the lunchtime of 16 June 2020 13 Governors had indicated that they agreed to the opening of the College. No Governors disagreed.  **Resolved:**  **That the confirmation of the written resolution be confirmed.** |
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| **62.20** | ***Learner Voice*** |
| ***Decision*** | In the absence of a report on Student Voice, due to the impact of Covid-19,  an updated version of the Learner Voice report considered by the  Quality and Standards Committee on 30 June 2020 was attached for the information of the Corporation.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **63.20** | ***Report of the Audit and Governance Committee of 16 June 2020*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation gave consideration to the report of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 16 June 2020.  **Financial Statements Audit and Regularity Audit Annual Plan for the Year Ending 31 July 2020.** Consideration was given to the Audit Plan prepared by RSM, the College Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors, for audit work relating to the year ending 31 July 2020, which included RSM's fee for 2020. Key areas of audit focus would be income recognition, pension scheme liabilities, going concern and management override of controls. RSM would also provide an independent reasonable assurance report in connection with the Teachers' Pensions Contributions for the year ended 31 March 2020.  **Timetable of Meetings 2020/2021**The Committee recommended a timetable for meetings in 2020/2021, which reflected the format adopted for the current year with minor changes to the dates of the July meetings. Each Committee had subsequently reviewed the timetable.  **Committee Membership 2020/2021**The Committee recommended a Committee membership for 2020/2021 based on the current format.  **Other matters reported for information:Appointment of Vice-Chair** - Rob Wallace was appointed.  **Internal Audit Reports** including Student Tracking and Monitoring, Student Recruitment and School Liaison Framework and Follow Up Report.  **Internal Audit Progress Report,** which indicated that no recommendations were outstanding for 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.  **Information Report from RSM on Emerging Issues, Spring 2020**  **Strategic Risk Register** - update on progress.  **Data Returns Monitoring Report** - no concerns were reported.  **Committee Annual Cycle of Business** was received.  **Resolved:**  **1. That the Financial Statements/Regularity Audit Plan for the Year**  **Ending 31 July 2020 be approved.**  **2. That the Timetable of Meetings for 2020/2021 be approved.**  **3. That the Membership of Committees for 2020/2021 be approved.**  **4. That the items for information be noted.** |
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| **64.20** | ***Report of the Quality and Standards Committee of 30 June 2020*** |
| ***Decision*** | **Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.**  The Committee elected Allison Jones and Barbara Godby as Chair and Vice Chair respectively for the remainder of the academic year.  The Committee considered the following performance reports:  **i) Strategic Plan Progress Report 2019/2020;**  **ii) In Year Performance Data – FE 2019/2020;**  **iii) In Year Performance Data – FE 2019/2020;**  **iv) Apprenticeships and Skills Performance Data – 2019/2020.**  Whilst most of areas of the Strategic Plan were covered in other reports Adult Based  Classroom income was £899,350 against a target of £1.031m. However, due to Covid-19 the Government had guaranteed funding to the end of the year provided the College continued delivery. The Liverpool Test and Learn programme at £150k may result in clawback of around £50k. Full Cost Recovery was £363k against a target of £743k due to year end curriculum loading and the impact of Covid-19.  Retention for FE for all ages was 92% against a target of 95% prior to lockdown due to Corvid-19. Punctuality was 99% prior to lockdown. Since lockdown engagement with students had reduced but factoring in all elements the average was around 70% for Preston and 60% for Liverpool with the smaller centres, with less numbers, doing better.  The economic environment in Liverpool for students attending Croxteth meant that not all students had access to the internet or to devices. The College had subsequently loaned out over 100 devices to staff and 50 to FE students.  There were 238 (plus 285 at Partners) learners registered for Functional Skills  this year.  Entry levels:  English 85 (plus 87 at Partners) Maths 67 (plus 83 at Partners)  Levels 1 & 2 English 39 (plus 56 at Partners) Maths 47 (plus 59 at Partners)  GCSE English, Maths & Sciences: There were 747 learners registered for GCSEs:(plus 11 at partners).  GCSE English (all centres) 357 (plus 4 at partners) (71 required exam access arrangements).  GCSE Maths (all centres) 365 (plus 7 at partners) (75 required exam access arrangements).  GCSE Chemistry 13 (all 14 to 16).GCSE Biology 12 (all 14 to16).  Pass rates in obtaining grades 9-4 for English and Maths had been in decline over the last three years. Estimated grades were anticipated to improve slightly this year but there was a need to await national monitoring of calculated grades.  In terms of HE overall retention was at 97.6% against a target of 97% with attendance, including authorised absences, at 87% prior to lockdown. Since lockdown student engagement was 89%. Destination data, managed by HESA, was now measured 15 months after graduation. The report included details of research activities, a number of which had to be curtailed. The NSS survey of student satisfaction had been completed with a smaller response rate of 70% compared to 76% previously with results due to be published on 1 July 2020.  Recruitment for the coming year was currently 573 compared to 649 at the same point last year, a reduction of 76, although it was difficult to gauge the impact of Covid-19 and what may happen after lockdown ceases completely.  New courses for 2021 start:  • BSc (Hons) Competition Motorcycle Technology Top-up (approved)  • Certificate Advanced Veterinary Nursing (to be approved)  • FdSc/BSc (Hons) Top-up Animals and Horticulture as Therapy (to be approved)  The Veterinary Nursing programme will be professionally accredited by the RCVS and lead to the professional recognition for the RCVS Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing.  Apprenticeships and Skills income was £2.4m but forecast performance was expected to reach £2.88m by the end of the year against a revised target of £2.9k. Recruitment numbers were currently down by over 80 but a considerable number were awaiting enrolment. There was a 93.5% positive engagement during Covid-19. Performance to date was slightly higher than the target of 75% with achievement at 75.4%, although this was expected to fall due to Covid-19.  **Office for Students Update** The OfS had paused all existing consultations and routine information requests until further notice to help reduce the burden on providers as they deal with the coronavirus pandemic. The OfS had however, consulted on a proposed new time limited condition of registration (condition E6). The condition would allow the OfS to take action against higher education providers that engaged in conduct which would not be in the interests of students and the wider higher education sector during these exceptional circumstances (e.g. unconditional offers). The consultation closed on 26 May with outcomes due in June.  The OfS had issued a moratorium on changes to admission offers during the coronavirus pandemic. The College adhered strictly to the moratorium and ensured that regular updates were provided to applicants during the moratorium. The OfS has offered providers the opportunity to re-direct current student premium and capital funding to support students through the coronavirus pandemic. The College has used this to purchase 40 additional laptops to loan to disadvantaged HE students. The OfS had also issued details of recurrent grant funding for 2020-21. The funding allocation has increased by £222K (30.7%). This was largely due to the changes in high cost subject funding. The DoE had issued a student numbers cap to help support stability within the sector. The student numbers cap for the College was 242 new (year 1) full time undergraduate students. The current level of applications indicate that the College should stay within this number control.  **Quality Assurance** The report detailed the arrangements for remote teaching following the lockdown due to Covid-19. The teaching staff had responded well with assistance from the Digital Learning and Skills team. Staff were also able to measure student engagement during this period. Lesson observations continued with assessors joining the remote teaching sessions. Overall 98% of lessons met expected standards with sub-contractors and partnerships lessons meeting expected standards as 100%. The Quality team had navigated through the demands of Awarding Bodies to adapt, delay or calculate learners’ predicted grades.  **Landex Report** The Committee considered the Peer Review report from Landex which took place on 12 & 13 February 2020. The report included a review of previous identified actions and those proposed for the coming year. The identified actions for the coming year had been included in the Quality Improvement Plan for 2019/2020.  **Quality Improvement Plan 2019/2020** The Committee received the above report which highlighted progress against target for those areas selected for improvement. Most elements of the Plan were in progress.  **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan** The Committee considered the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion self-assessment and action plan, which highlighted progress since the last meeting. Improvements and actions had been highlighted in the plan. The plan now included actions to integrate with a review of HR policies. Leaders in Diversity would be undertaking an assessment of the College performance in March 2021.  **Learner Voice** The Committee considered a report on recent FE surveys. The FE end of year survey was currently taking place whilst the FE Choices Survey undertaken on behalf of the ESFA had been cancelled. An FE survey of new FE lanyard colours had taken place with over 700 participants, which resulted in the new FE student lanyards for next year being black with aqua writing. Key outcomes had been noted from Course Reps Meetings, which had continued on a virtual basis following Covid-19. Golden Rose Awards and My Star Awards had taken place amongst students. The National Student Survey (NSS) results for HE would be published later in the year.  **Subcontracting Provision** The Committee received an update on the in-year subcontracting provision. The report covered details of the various contractors, the services they provide, the number of student starts and retention factors (remained high at 96.68) together with the value of each contract and the retention fees retained by the College. Discussions would commence shortly with the existing subcontractors on allocations for 2020/2021.  Two subcontractors had recently completed their contract and arrangements had ceased and a further one would cease their relationship with the College once existing students had completed their course of study. The ESFA would audited the subcontracting provision before the end of July. Finally, lesson observations were undertaken with all subcontracting teaching staff providing positive feedback.  **Statutory Risk Register** The Committee considered the report on those elements of statutory risk relating to its area of responsibility. Main areas of risk were student success rates, failure to deliver a quality curriculum and student support all of which had been exacerbated by Covid-19. The impact of Covid-19 was a major risk now identified across the whole of the Risk Register.  **Timetable of Meetings 2020/2021** The Audit and Governance Committee  had referred consideration of the timetable of meetings for 2020/2021 to each of the  Committees to ensure the proposals met their needs and requirements.  **Quality and Standards Committee Annual Cycle of Business for 2020/2021**.  The Committee received and noted a report on the proposed business of the Committee for 2020/2021.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **65.20** | ***Report of the Finance and Resources Committee of 7 July 2020*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation considered the report of the Finance and Resources Committee of 7 July 2020.  **Financial Position Statement for Period Ended 30 April 2020 including Capital and Revenue Cashflow and Venture performance;**  **Capital Expenditure Report for Period Ended 30 April 2020.**  The Committee received the above regular reports on the various aspects of the College finances for the period ended 30 April 2020. The strategic performance update identified recruitment was better than forecast although due to Covid19 Adult Classroom based activity, Apprenticeships and Full Cost Recovery were all behind profile. Recruitment was continuing for AEB and Apprenticeships. Apprenticeship income was expected to reach £2.88m against a revised budget of £2.9m.  As the Committee would be considering later in the agenda the report on the budget proposals, forecast end of year outturn and the financial plan, the Financial Position Statement report was noted without any detailed discussion. It was recognised that of Covid-19 had had a serious impact on the College finances, particularly on the performance of Ventures. The Farm deficit currently showed a loss of £126,132 against a budget forecast loss of £100,350 but had continued to operate during the challenging period of Covid-19 lockdown. Details of the returns to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership were included in the report. Capital Expenditure was behind profile due to the impact of Covid-19.  **ESFA Financial Health Check** The Committee received a letter from the ESFA informing them that following a review of the final accounts for 2018/2019 the Financial Health Check for the College had been confirmed as ‘Good’.  **Subcontracting Supply Chain Policy – Review** The Committee considered the annual review of the Subcontracting Supply Chain Policy Fees and Charges.  The Committee noted that there were no significant changes and therefore agreed the Policy.  **Student Bursary Fund Allocation** The student bursary policies were approved at the Committee meeting on 10 March 2020, at which time the College had not received all the allocation details. The table below details the Advanced Learners allocations which was missing from the paper in March.                                                         2019/20            2020/21            Variance                                                     £                       £                       £  Discretionary 16-18                    235,529            289,323              53,794  Free School Meals                         68,397              68,207                 (190)  Residential  Learners               426,242 426,242                                                                                                                                                               730,168             783,772               53,604  **Advanced Learners 65,813 73,986 8,173**  **TOTAL                                         795,981            857,758             61,777**  **Strategic Risk Register** The Committee received a report on risks associated with their area of operation.  Due to Covid-19 inherent risks scores had increased although the risks remained the same.  **Timetable of Meetings** The Audit and Governance Committee had referred consideration of the timetable of meetings to each of the Committees to ensure the proposal met their needs and requirements. A minor amendment was reported for the December meeting of the Committee, which changed the date of the meeting from 2 December to 1 December.  **Human Resources Report for the Period Ended 30 April 2020** Consideration was given to the Human Resources Statistics report for the period ended 30 April 2020, which provided information on staff turnover, stability index and levels of staff sickness together with areas for improvement and a report on actions taken and their impact. Current turnover of staff was 16.11%, which was better than the national average for north west colleges at 18.2%. The most common reason for staff leaving was recorded as salary level. It was also pointed out that some movement of staff was healthy to the organisation. This figure would be compounded by the redundancies at Croxteth following the closure of the café. Overall short-term sickness levels were at 2.83% against a target of less than 3% with 9 members of staff on long term sickness against a target of less than 6.  **Health and Safety Report for the Period ended 30 April 2020** Members gave consideration to the Health and Safety Report for the period ended 30 April 2020, which provided an analysis of accident statistics over the period, together with other Health and Safety activity including policy updates, staff training, free health checks, auditing and inspections.  Overall accidents had decreased by 32 compared to the same period last year with one accident RIDDOR reportable. Analysis indicated that of the 55 accidents 8 (15%) were taken to hospital, 32 (58%) received first aid treatment, 15 (27%) needed no treatment and 85% of accidents were either treated on site or required no treatment. Overall the accidents occurred to 7 staff (13%), 46 students (83%), 1 visitor (2%) and 1 contractor (2%).  The report included details of recent audits, training and drills. At the request of Governors the report now included details of Insurance Claims the majority of which related to vehicle accidents. The report this quarter also included details on contact and well-being initiatives for staff lockdown.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **66.20** | ***Key Strategic Risks*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation received a report on the Key Strategic Risks for the College.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **67.20** | ***Independence of the Clerk*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Clerk to the Corporation must provide independent unbiased and impartial advice to the Corporation at all times and must be able to demonstrate his/her independence. Adherence to the policy ‘Independence of the Clerk’ had enabled the Clerk to demonstrate his independence. Corporation Members agreed the current policy remained fit for purpose.  **Resolved:**  **That the Independence of the Clerk Policy be approved.** |
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| **68.20** | ***Corporation Annual Cycle of Business 2020-2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation considered a report on the Annual Cycle of Business for 2020/2021.  **Resolved:**  **That the Annual Cycle of Business for 2020/2021 be agreed.** |
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