

**Minutes of the Meeting of the**

**BOARD**

**held on Wednesday 12 July 2017**

**at 3.45 pm**

**at Broad Lane, Tottenham Hale, N15 4AG**

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| **Present:** | Tom Ilube *[Chair]* | External Member |
| Nick Wilcock *[Vice Chair]* | External Member |
| Kym Andrew | External Member |
| Andrew Butcher | External Member |
| Steve Davies | External Member |
| Rachel Jackson | External Member |
| Chris Payne | External Member |
|  |  |
| **and by remote**  **communication:** | Sir Rod Aldridge | External Member *[items 17/30 – 17/35]* |
| Jeni Tennison | External Member *[items 17/30 – 17/44]* |
|  | Kevin Walsh | External Member *[items 17/30 – 17/44]* |
|  |  |  |
| **In attendance:** | Gill Winward | Clerk to the Board *[withdrew for part item 17/46]* |
| Mark Smith | CEO *[items 17/33 – 17/45]* |
| Tom Fogden | Dean *[from items 17/34 – 17/45]* |
|  | Jayshree Shah | Finance Director *[items 17/30–17/32 and 17/38-17/41]* |
|  | Hardip Mothada | Vice Principal *[for item 17/37]* |
|  | Beth Lackenby | Greater London Authority *[items 17/30 – 17/45]* |
|  | Kate Cornish | Head of Institutes of Technology, Department for Education *[for item 17/33]* |
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| **Apologies:** [-] |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Declarations of Interest:** | None declared | |

*It was agreed that the agenda items be taken in a different sequence to that planned, to maximise the availability of Members and contributors*

|  |  | **Action** |
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| **17/30** | **FINANCE REPORT:**  **b) Working Capital Loan**  The Finance Director notified the Board of the £420k working capital loan that had been approved. This would be drawn down in 3 tranches until November, the first being on 24 July. Repayments would occur between January and May 2019.  External advice had been sought beforehand and the report circulated: some comments had been made by Members and were now incorporated. The main outstanding query was the matter of ‘set off’: the Finance Director explained the response of the Department for Education, which was that this was a standard agreement.  The Board **APPROVED** that the College enter into the Working Capital Facility Agreement. |  |
| **17/31** | **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**  The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2017 were **APPROVED** to be signed as an accurate record. |  |
| **17/32** | **MATTERS ARISING**  It was noted that all action points or matters arising had either been dealt with or were on that day’s agenda.  *Ms Shah left the meeting and Mr Smith and Ms Cornish arrived* |  |
| **17/33** | **INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY**  Ms Cornish from the Department for Education provided a briefing for Members on the policy and model that the Department was developing on this topic. There had been a significant delay, owing to the general election process but also to ensure that the approach now lined up with manifesto commitments. The aim was an employer-led Institute to deliver high level STEM subjects.  Ms Cornish also explained other policy aims and envisaged models of delivery. This included how National Colleges could fit into the plans.  A number of questions were raised by the Board and answered. These included on the capital funding at stake and the number of Institutes expected (likely 1 per region). Members heard that a hundred ‘expressions of interest’ had been received when the initial invitations had gone out, when the emphasis had been more at an FE level.  The summary comment was that this was an opportunity to leverage a network or partnerships and this was **NOTED** by the Board.  (*Some further discussion took place during the later item of ‘Chief Executive’s report’*)  *Ms Cornish left the meeting and Mr Fogden arrived* |  |
| **17/34** | **UPDATED 5-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN- GLA**  The CEO updated Members that more comments on the draft had been received after discussions at the last meeting. The document was now ready to be signed off.  Three queries were then raised:   * References to the Finance Committee still remained * The attrition rate shown did not match the reality experienced in 16/17 * Metrics on financial matters needed adjusting to match the most recent set   There was also some discussion on sensitivity analysis. The CEO agreed that it was important for all numbers to line up.  Subject to the adjustments discussed, the 5-Year Business Plan was **APPROVED** for submission to the GLA. If there were any substantial changes that resulted from final editing, the CEO would flag these up to the Board. | **JS**  **MS** |
| **17/35** | **2016/17 EXPECTED OUTCOMES**  A range of reports were presented.   1. **Sixth Form Learner performance**   *This item was confidential*   1. **Cohort 1 Apprenticeship Launchpad review**   The CEO provided an update on the first cohort of apprentices, highlighting feedback received and the main areas for improvement that had been identified. The main change would be the structure of the initial 8 weeks.   1. **Organisational Goals update**   The CEO drew Members’ attention to the update report and the main areas of movement. Key areas of note were that the planning application for the new premises was now submitted and that the apprenticeship recruitment target of 100 would not be met.  The final outcomes would inform the 17/18 targets.   1. **Risk Register summary**   The Dean presented the summary and took the Board through the 4 ‘red’ areas that had been flagged. 2 of these related to property matters.  The Vice Chair mentioned the suggestion that had been made at the Audit Committee meeting, that the Risk Register could usefully be mapped to the organisation’s governance framework to show where the main reviews and oversight was done.  All the above progress reports were **NOTED.**  *Sir R Aldridge went off-line at this point* |  |
| **17/36** | **ESTATES UPDATE**  The Dean raised two key issues:   1. *Capacity –* the written report covered the background to this, namely that the capacity of the current building could be a concern from November onwards, where learner numbers for classroom space became difficult to manage. The Dean added that this would be exacerbated when the apprentices were on-site. This could affect the learning experience and also back office functions.   Research into solutions showed that there were no ideal options, with a mobile building being brought on-site providing the best answer. Using 2 of these was proposed, but would cost £20k per annum.  Delegated authority was sought by management to act on this solution over the summer period. The CEO confirmed that the sums quoted had been included in the new budget. Responding to other questions, the Dean and CEO described expectations that these temporary solutions would be needed for a minimum of one year but that other options must be also looked at for 2018 as this would not be sufficient after then.  During discussion, Members expressed recognition that this issue affected the morale aspects discussed earlier in the meeting.  The Board gave **APPROVAL** to management to secure alternative accommodation over the summer as proposed, should expected recruitment numbers, once clearer, support this move.   1. *Fire assessment* – Following on from the recent Grenfell Tower disaster, the Board were informed that an additional fire assessment of materials being used for the new Ashley Road site had been requested, also on the planned layout.   The CEO explained that there was a requirement for sprinkler systems to be used in schools but not in FE colleges or universities. The historic reason was connected to protection of property from arson, rather than protection of life. The Dean also confirmed that the planned height of the new building was suitable for attention by fire tenders and ladders.  This was **NOTED.** | **TF** |
| **17/37** | **SAFEGUARDING**   1. **Annual Report**   The Vice Principal highlighted the key points of the report, including the work of the person engaged to advise the college and who fulfilled the role of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.  Other dimensions touched upon were:   * Internal responsibilities and how these were discharged * Responsibilities towards the 19+ age group * Cases of concern * Summary of staff training, both completed and planned * ‘Safer Recruitment’ of staff.   Two of these topics were the subject of further discussion, being staff recruitment, including the use of DBS checks, and particular safeguarding cases. Members heard that DBS checks had not revealed anything of concern, also that many individual cases related to the same source school.  It was mentioned that it proved difficult sometimes to obtain information from previous schools and this gave rise to additional debate. Lack of poor diagnosis at earlier stages was especially noted and commented upon.  In conclusion, the Vice Principal outlined priorities for further actions and these, and the report, were **NOTED.**   1. **Policy approval**   The updated Safeguarding Policy had been circulated and was **APPROVED.**  A generic point about presentation of Policy documents was made, with the suggestion that it would be helpful to the organisation if it included an indication of any approval date, plus planned date for review.  The CEO informed the Board that all Policies would be uploaded to the new website.  *Mr Mothada left the meeting and Ms Shah rejoined* | **SLT** |
| **17/38** | **2017/18 PLANNING: ORGANISATIONAL GOALS/DASHBOARDS**  The CEO explained the approach that had been used to develop the dashboard. It was proposed that 2 tiers of metrics would be used, a top tier for Board level and associated reporting but a more detailed set available if desired.  Members made some suggestions to enhance the dashboard including:   * + Building occupancy   + Success at work for apprentices   + Absolute grades achieved by learners, not just target ones (to improve striving for excellence)   + More detailed profiling of students   + More on apprentices (surveys, recruitment, employer experience)   + SEN and Safeguarding data   + Learner destinations   It was also suggested that the monitoring documents could helpfully include:   * + Trends in the data   + Benchmarks or other comparative measures to assess against   It was proposed that the Board would receive the Tier 1 metrics report at each meeting and that the document content be reviewed each year.  The Organisational Goals for 2017/18 were still in draft form. They would be finalised once the 16/17 outcomes were known, then be emailed out for comment before being brought back to the September meeting for sign-off.  This was **NOTED** | **SLT**  **SLT** |
| **17/39** | **FINANCE REPORT**  **a) Period 10 position**  The Finance Director highlighted the key points of her report, including the expected deficit at year end. Members were reminded that this had been the driver behind obtaining the working capital loan.  The position was **NOTED** |  |
| **17/40** | **FINANCIAL PLANNING:**   1. **2017/18 Budget**   The Finance Director highlighted the key points of the proposals. Staffing costs were the largest element of costs, as in most labour intensive organisations.  The Board **APPROVED** the proposed 2017/18 budget.   1. **2017/19 2 year Financial Forecast**   The Clerk explained that it was an EFSA requirement that a 2-year Financial Plan be approved and submitted.  A query was raised about the possible mismatch of learner numbers between two tables in the paper. The Finance Director also responded to questions on pay, explaining what had been included, and financial health. The CEO commented that the college would be fully staffed next year.  It was noted that financial health had previously been categorised as ‘good’ but there was recognition this would change given the known factors. Members requested to have sight of the revised position.  The financial forecast for 17/18 and 18/19 was **APPROVED.** | **JS** |
| **17/41** | **ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**  The Audit Chair reported back on the Audit Committee meeting that had been held earlier that afternoon. On this matter, it had been agreed that 3 quotes should be obtained to provide the service of Financial Statement and Regularity Auditors, ideally for a 3 year period.  Owing to time constraints and the need for field work to commence in late summer and before the next round of meetings took place, the Committee were requesting that authority be given to their membership to take a decision on this and make the appointment.  This request was **APPROVED.**  *Ms Shah left the meting* | **JS** |
| **17/42** | **CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT**  The CEO had nothing to add to the reports and papers sent out and already discussed.  He took the opportunity, though, to share some initial thoughts on the Institutes of Technology (IoT) item and this in turn prompted further discussion. The general view was one of disappointment at the policy shift from FE to HE.  There seemed a possibility that some National Colleges could be re-branded as IoTs. The CEO added that the ‘Ada College’ brand was tending to be used more than the label of ‘National College for Digital Skills’.  It was **AGREED** that the topic should be picked up again at the Board’s upcoming Strategic Planning Event in November and the position monitored meanwhile. | **MS** |
| **17/43** | **FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEES:**   1. **Education Committee**   Ms Andrews, as Committee Chair, gave a report back from the last meeting, held on 20 June. Many of the topics discussed had been similar to those at this meeting but covered in more detail.  A key debate had been on learner support and the emerging information that some individuals had issues that the college had helped to diagnose and helped to meet, that had not been addressed at an earlier stage of life. This meant that some learners had received a positive impact on their lives through attending this college, even if they had not continued on their courses.  In response to a question, the CEO commented that it could take some years to build up a publicly held view of the college as a caring institution. It was also noted that this level of input and individual attention could be harder to maintain as the college grew in size.   1. **Audit Committee**   The Committee Chair, Mr Wilcock, gave further feedback on the meeting that had taken place immediately prior. This had been the first meeting of the Committee and, in addition to appointment of auditors, had covered:   * Terms of Reference * Internal controls - with further debate planned for the autumn tern, ideally after training had taken place. It was possible that some assurance work on this area could be commissioned over the summer to cover the initial period. * Assurance mapping would also be looked at in the future, to support the above   It was the suggestion of the Committee Members that the Finance Director attend Board meetings for the whole of the meeting from next year. |  |
| **17/44** | **BOARD OPERATION**   1. **Membership appointments**   Following discussions earlier in the year there was now a recommendation via the Search Committee for a candidate to fill a remaining Board vacancy. The Clerk also explained the proposals to fill the 2 vacancies on the Education Committee.  It was **AGREED:**  [i] to appoint Professor Kalina Bontcheva to the Corporation Board from 1 September for a term of 4 years.  [ii] toapprove the appointments of Prof Bontcheva and Mr Payne to the Education Committee   1. **2016/17 Self reflection**   It had been the intention for Members to engage in a discussion within the meeting on reflections of the last 12 months from the viewpoint of the operation of the Board. With limited time now remaining it was decided to postpone this for another occasion. Discussion took place on various models and approaches that could be used. The Chair and Clerk were then requested to give consideration as to how best to conduct a 16/17 self- evaluation exercise.  *Mr Walsh and Ms Tennison went off-line at this point*   1. **2017/18 Business Planning**   The Clerk explained the background to the creation of this planning aid. The Board were asked for their opinion on the content, especially whether some regular repeat items should continue to appear on each agenda or less frequently, to permit more detailed scrutiny in rotation. The consensus was that all the items be retained and that there could be ‘deep diving’ on some issues each time as desired, or further debate called for on a subsequent occasion.  The proposed schedules of business for 17/18 for the Board and its Committees were **APPROVED** | **Clerk**  **Clerk** |
| **17/45** | **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**  The CEO requested that some Members reviewed the new website before it went ‘live’. Mr Butcher, Ms Andrews and Mr Davies volunteered.  *Management and others in attendance then withdrew for the final item* |  |
| **17/46** | **BOARD APPOINTED ROLES**  *This item was confidential*  *The meeting closed at 6.10pm*  **Confirmed as an accurate record:**  **Signed…………………………………………………………………………………..**  *(Chair)*  **Date………………………………………………………………………………………** |  |