

**THE CORPORATION OF CROYDON COLLEGE**  
*Meeting held via video conference*  
 20 May 2020 at 6.00pm

---

**PART ONE MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Gordon Smith (Chair of the Corporation)  
 Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)  
 Jean Cook  
 Tom Hesmondhalgh  
 Nigel Dias  
 Penny Wycherley  
 Nasim Jivani Hemani  
 Andrew Lowe  
 Andy Booth  
 Rahel Haque  
 Fiona Brennan (Staff Governor, Coulsdon)  
 Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ann-Christine Harland (VP Finance & Resources)  
 Angela Edwards (VP Education and Quality)  
 Fadia Clarke (VP Skills Training and Higher Education)  
 Richard Beales (Principal, Coulsdon Sixth Form College - CP)

**CLERK:** Clare Mitchell (Director of Governance)

**ADMINISTRATOR:** Shariel Condappa, Executive Office Manager

**QUORUM:** The meeting was quorate

	Item
1	<p><b>PRELIMINARY BUSINESS</b></p> <p><b>i. Introductory Remarks</b>            The Chair asked members if they had any objections to the meeting being recorded to assist with the minutes. No concerns were raised. A Clerk needed to be present at a Board meeting for it to be properly constituted, so a replacement Clerk would be nominated if technical issues meant that the Director of Governance left the meeting.</p> <p><b>ii. Apologies for Absence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andrew Gilchrist, Arnold Amoako (Student Governor), Evelyn Bayerlein (Student Governor).</li> <li>• The Chair reported that this would have been Andrew Gilchrist's first Board meeting following his appointment as a Governor but that he was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>iii. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no declarations of interest from members.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Principal's Report</b></p> <p>i Arrangements during the lockdown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The P&amp;CEO explained that the report had only been circulated yesterday because the situation was changing rapidly as the Government issued more guidance on the reopening of Colleges.</li> <li>• The P&amp;CEO gave an overview of the arrangements that had been put in place to support students and staff during the lockdown. The move to a virtual learning environment (VLE) had gone smoothly and reports indicated high levels of engagement in most areas. However, it was now becoming apparent that at the Croydon Campus in particular, some students had insufficient access to IT in their homes to benefit from online learning. 70 laptops were on loan to students and a further 100 were on order. The College was working with the Council to provide further laptops targeted at vulnerable students. The concern was that the closure of the College to the majority of students would have the greatest impact on the most disadvantaged students.</li> <li>• The College had remained open to vulnerable students during the lockdown, supported by a rota of staff. The numbers attending were very small.</li> <li>• Staff were following the guidance from Ofqual and other awarding bodies very carefully to ensure students would achieve their qualifications this summer. This guidance was still not available for some awarding organisations. The CP provided assurance that the process for submitting proposed grades for A Levels had been thorough and evidence based and in line with the Ofqual guidance.</li> <li>• Apprenticeship training had continued during the lockdown with the theory aspect of the training being prioritised.</li> <li>• Staff were being supported by their managers and by the Teaching and Learning Mentors (TLMs). Zoom had been rolled out and was being used by staff to communicate with one another and had been embedded within the VLE at the Croydon Campus. HR had requested updated data from all staff to assess whether they were able to return to work at the College to support an increased number of learners.</li> </ul> <p>ii Reopening the College to larger numbers of students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors had been sent the guidance issued to date by the Department for Education on reopening Colleges. Colleges had the flexibility to bring in those groups of 16-18 years olds that would benefit most from face to face support before the summer holidays. At the Coulsdon campus this would be the Year 12 students. The Heads of Schools at the Croydon Campus were identifying the relevant groups, which were likely to include those who needed to finish practical assignments in order to complete their qualification.</li> <li>• Plans were being developed to pilot reopening in the first instance with students attending Croydon Campus in groups of fifty at a time, plus vulnerable students. High risk staff were being identified, who would continue to be protected by working at home. Health and safety arrangements such as one-way routes, PPE</li> </ul>

requirements and reorganising classrooms to support social distancing were being put in place.

- The requirements at Coulsdon Campus were different in that students were likely to be meeting teachers on a 1-2-1 basis.
- All of the plans would need to be risk assessed and approved by the Governors and communicated to students and parents before the College could reopen to larger numbers of students. It had not been possible to present the full plans for reopening to this meeting as the guidance had only recently been issued and planning and risk assessments were still taking place.
- The P&CEO noted that Richard Beales would be retiring as P&CEO of Coulsdon Sixth Form College in October 2020 and that Helen Langford had recently joined the College as Head of HR.

The Corporation **RECEIVED** the Principal's Report

- The Chair noted that a paper to Governors on the financial impact of Covid 19, originally circulated in early May, had been recirculated with the papers for this meeting. In response to questions, the VPF&R clarified that a small number of catering staff, who were not grant funded, had been furloughed. These staff continue to receive their full salary. The VPF&R assured the Board that furloughing these staff was in line with the guidance on the Government's Job Retention Scheme and in line with action being taken by other Colleges. The College's income from free school meals was now being paid direct to students. The College had not furloughed other staff where demand for their services had decreased, e.g. premises and security staff, because they were grant funded.
- Suppliers whose services were not being utilised because of the lockdown e.g. the Exam Boards, were being paid now with the expectation that future rebates would be negotiated. Negotiations were continuing with the GLA about how much of the additional AEB funding awarded through the Innovation Bid would be paid to the College. 3% of this additional funding had been included in the budget for 2019/20. The subcontractors were still on track to deliver the non GLA AEB as expected. The College was not planning to put in a bid for central funding for losses associated with Covid 19 as its financial position was relatively healthy. The College was still forecast to hit the deficit budget set for 2019/20. It was important that reserves remained healthy because of the uncertainty around the number of enrolments in 2020/21. Reserves would also be needed to invest in the College's property and for the further investment in the VLE that would be required from September 2020 onwards.

**ACTION: Clerk** to circulate March 2020 management accounts and commentary to Governors

- In response to questions, the P&CEO outlined the actions that were being taken to keep in contact with vulnerable students; the vast majority of whom were not attending College in person. Staff had also been communicating with Croydon Council to try to make sure that social workers were aware that the College was open for vulnerable students.
- At a national level, it appeared that the BAME population were at greater risk from Covid 19 and the Executive was asked to consider this as part of the risk assessment of the plans for reopening the College. The P&CEO indicated that the plans for reopening the College would consider the risk factors for students

and staff including their mental as well as their physical health. Cross College activities were taking place to combat staff isolation and staff who were able to do so were able to come into the College to work as long as they maintained social distancing requirements. An employee support and advice line was in place and a number of webinars had been run for staff on topics such as home working.

- The Staff Governor for Croydon emphasised the importance of investing in online learning for HE as a means of both growing provision at the current time when students might be less willing to travel to central London. Online learning could also result in an improvement in attendance for existing students. The P&CEO agreed and indicated that online learning would need to further developed across the whole of the College's provision. The College would be running a campaign for 16-18 year olds "Your future is safe with us" to reassure students about entry in September 2020.
- The VPE&Q assured Governors that the TLMs were delivering training to staff on how to deliver engaging online learning. Penny Wycherley suggested that the College should link with other Colleges delivering similar courses to develop online teaching and learning materials.

**ACTION: VPTS&HE** to contact Penny Wycherley re linking into a network of Colleges developing online teaching and learning materials

- Fiona Brennan indicated that the VLM was less developed at the Coulsdon Campus and further development was needed to ensure that the materials for online teaching and learning were consistent in terms of quality and effectiveness. Further training was also needed for staff in advance of the next academic year. The P&CEO indicated that having heard these concerns more resource would be channelled into supporting online teaching and learning at Coulsdon. An update on this and plans for the strategic development of video conferencing and online learning from September would be given at the June LQC meetings.

**ACTION: P&CEO** to give an update on channelling resource into supporting online teaching and learning at Coulsdon and the strategic development of videoconference and online learning from September would be given at the June LQC meetings.

iii Next steps

- The Chair informed the Board that the responsibility for safely reopening the College to larger numbers of students rested with the Board of Governors. He proposed that Nasim Jivani-Hemani should be appointed as the new Lead Governor for Health and Safety.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the appointment of Nasim Jivani-Hemani as the Lead Governor for Health and Safety

- It was agreed that the whole Board would meet again rather than delegate authority to a smaller group of Governors to review and approve the plans and risk assessments for wider opening. However, prior to the Board meeting, the high level risk assessment would be sent to the Chair and the Lead Governor for Health and Safety for consideration.

**ACTION: P&CEO** to send the high level risk assessment for wider opening of the College to the Chair and Lead Governor for Health and Safety

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The P&amp;CEO informed Governors that although the first date for wider opening of the College was 1 June 2020, the plan was to pilot wider opening of the College with a small group of students at the Croydon Campus from 3 June with a further pilot at the Coulsdon Campus towards the end of that week. It would not be possible to eliminate the risk to staff and students altogether but every effort would be made to manage risk and this would include factors such as staff and student travel plans. The Executive was engaging with the unions on the plans for wider opening. Fiona Brennan indicated that she was reassured by the risk assessments that would be undertaken and would communicate this back to staff.</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There were no items of other business</p>
5.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>Thursday 28 May 2020 at 6.00pm via Zoom.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note - this Board meeting was subsequently rescheduled for Thursday 4 June 2020 as the reopening of Colleges to a wider group of students was postponed to 15 June 2020 by the Government.</i></p>

**Signed:**

**Date:**