



THE CORPORATION OF CROYDON COLLEGE

Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 6.00pm

Virtual Meeting

PART ONE MINUTES

PRESENT: Tony Stevenson (Chair)
 Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)
 Tom Hesmondhalgh (Vice Chair)
 Jean Cook
 Andrew Lowe
 Rahel Haque
 Nasim Jivani Hemani
 Andrew Gilchrist
 Catherine Boyd-Maunsell
 Claudine Reid (from item 3.i)
 Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon Campus)
 Fiona Brennan (Staff Governor, Coulsdon Campus)
 Shyam Pillai (Student Governor, Croydon Campus)
 Abbigail Azirou (Student Governor, Coulsdon Campus)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ann-Christine Harland (VP Finance & Resources)
 Angela Edwards (VP Education and Quality)
 Fadia Clarke (VP Training, Skills & HE)
 Odette Carew (Principal, Coulsdon College)

CLERK: Clare Mitchell (Director of Governance)

QUORUM: The meeting was quorate

	Item
1.	<p>PRELIMINARY BUSINESS</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed members to the first Board meeting of 2021. The format of the agenda had been revised slightly and the minutes would be taken at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>i. Apologies for Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no apologies for absence. <p>ii. Declarations of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Gilchrist is a Governor at Brooklands College.
2.	<p>PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE</p> <p>i. Skills White Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The P&CEO provided an overview of the White Paper on Skills for Jobs published by the Department for Education on 21 January 2021 and the potential implications for the College.

The report emphasised the role that FE Colleges could play in improving productivity, the development of employer hubs and the need for adults to be able to access learning at L3 and above throughout their lives.

- The White Paper contained little information on education and training at L2 or below and focussed on adults rather than 16-18 year olds. The paper did not address many of the recommendations in the Augar review; including the need for levelling up between Colleges and Universities.
- The AoC were keen to support the White Paper as a significant step in the right direction, which could have a very positive impact on Colleges. However, a lot would depend on the implementation and the amount of investment available. The P&CEO stated that she had indicated that the College would be interested in being involved in any pilot of employer hubs.

The Corporation **NOTED** the update on the Skills for Jobs White Paper.

ii. Update from the Principal on the arrangements for the new term

- The P&CEO introduced the report. Recent government announcements indicated that there was likely to be a phased reopening of schools and Colleges from 8 March 2021, but this might be dependent on the number of cases in the local area at that time. The P&CEO thanked all those staff who had been involved in setting up a test centre at Croydon College. The testing team were also conducting site visits to test staff at the Coulsdon Campus. Staff who were required to be on site would now be tested twice a week. The government's expectations *re* testing of students once they returned to the College were not yet clear. The plan to test staff and students who had come into close contact with a positive case daily, while allowing them to continue to come into the College, had been paused by the government and contacts of a positive case were still required to self-isolate for ten days.
- Since the report had been written the DfE had informed the College that it would be receiving 682 new laptops for disadvantaged students to enable them to access online learning. This was excellent news but would create some short term logistical issues for the IT team and there would be an increase in costs for both the set up and ongoing maintenance of these laptops.

The Corporation **NOTED** the P&CEO's report.

3. BUSINESS PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

i. Three Year Financial Plan 2020/21 – 2022/23 for IFMC submission to Education and Skills Funding Agency

- The VPF&R provided an update on the main changes to the College's key grants for the period to 2022/23, compared to the forecast provided to the Board in July 2020.
- On the positive side, the main 16-19 grant was assumed to increase by 36 students a year during this period. Some growth in grants for high needs learners was assumed and HE fees were forecast to increase slightly. The College had recently been notified that there would be an increase in the rates for adult English and maths courses, which would result in an additional £200K of AEB funding in 2020/21. The College had also bid for an additional £725K of AEB funding from the GLA to provide courses for the increased number of unemployed adults in the area as a result of the pandemic. The outcome of the bid was not yet known and was not included in this forecast.

- On the downside, it was assumed that the replacement build for the Pathway Centre would not be open until September 2023 (a year later than previously) because of the Council's poor financial position. Income from apprenticeships was expected to reduce because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Income from interest and full cost courses was also forecast to reduce.
- The forecast included a 1.5% pay increase in 2021/22 and 2022/23 and a 2% per year inflationary increase in non-pay costs.
- The College was still assessing what the new normal would be in terms of delivery of teaching and learning post pandemic. A blend of online and in person teaching worked well in some areas, such as HE, and the impact of continuing blended learning on space and staffing requirements would need to be factored into the forecast once this information was available.
- Using the assumptions above, the College would expect to achieve a Good Financial Health score during the whole three year period. The forecast for 2020/21 had changed from a break even position at year end to a deficit of £166K. The surplus for 2021/22 was forecast as £166K. However, there would be a significant increase in capital investment over this period, which would reduce cash reserves and the aim for the Executive team would need to be to generate a long term surplus of £300K to £500K to ensure financial stability as student numbers increased.
- The VPF&R reported that the DfE had indicated that there would be further capital funding available for building condition improvements from 2021/22. The grants would be made on a 50/50 matched funding basis. Initial expressions of interest had to be submitted by 15 March 2021. Further details would be provided to the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 24 February 2021.

ACTION: VPF&R to bring expression of interest for matched funding for building condition improvements in 2021/22 to the F&R Committee on 24 February 2021

The Board asked what scenario testing had been undertaken on the forecast to 2022/23. The forecast represented the most likely scenario and reflected the restrictions on growth in relation to grant income. The P&CEO emphasised that the purpose of the forecast to 2022/23 was to demonstrate the College's financial stability and that it did not necessarily reflect the Executive Team's aspirations to increase income where possible. The VPF&R drew the Board's attention to the sensitivity analysis included within the paper.

The Board asked whether the delivery of apprenticeships should be reviewed post pandemic with increased online delivery. The VPTSHE agreed that opportunities for online delivery should be pursued.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the forecast to 2022/23 for submission to the ESFA

ii. HE Fees 2022/23

- The VPTSHE presented the review of HE fees for the September 2022 intake, which proposed that degree course tuition fees should be maintained at £6,000, with a reduction in teaching hours to reflect the reduced academic content by the new validating university and that the tuition fees for HNC/D courses should be increased from £4,800 to £5,450 to match current expenditure.
- The Board queried whether the number of degree students was likely to fall as the number of HNC/D students increased. The VPTSHE indicated that she expected student numbers on the BA degrees to remain static. Growth was expected in the numbers of HNC/D and nursing degree students.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Staff Governor from the Coulsdon Campus emphasised the potential for existing BTEC and A Level students to progress to HNC/D and degree courses within the College and proposed that there should be increased marketing of higher level courses at the College to 16-18 year olds studying at the Coulsdon Campus. The VPTSHE stated that she was already discussing this with the Principal of Coulsdon College. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the proposed fees for HE courses for the September 2022 student intake</p>
4.	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>i Membership of the Croydon Learning and Quality Committee (LQC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director of Governance explained that with the resignation of Penny Wycherley, Andy Booth and Nigel Dias from the Governing Body, there were now two vacancies on the Croydon LQC. It was agreed that the Chair would become a member of the Committee on an interim basis while new Governors were recruited. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the appointment of the Chair as a member of the Croydon LQC on an interim basis.</p> <p>ii Amendments to the Standing Orders/Scheme of Delegation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This agenda item was withdrawn. <p>iii Ratification of Contract Approval – Appointment of Main Contractor for Property Works</p> <p>The Corporation RATIFIED the approval of the contract with Overbury PLC, which had been approved by the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee under Annex A of the Financial Regulations in December 2019.</p>
5.	<p>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>i. Croydon College Corporation Minutes of 9 December 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED by the Corporation subject to two amendments; one clarifying that the staff pay rise for 2020/21 was included within the budget for 2020/21 approved by the Board in July 2020 and a second indicating which of the Committee minutes provided for information were still in draft. <p>ii Matters Arising (Action list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members noted the updated action list. The VPF&R reported that the property strategy had recently been updated to include room utilisation data. The strategy would now require further updating to reflect the proposed bid for further building condition funding from 2021/22. The revised property strategy would be presented to the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 24 February 2021. <p>ACTION: VPF&R to present the updated Property Strategy to the Finance and Resources Committee meeting on 24 February 2021</p>
6.	<p>FOR INFORMATION PAPERS</p>

	<p>i Management Accounts for November 2020</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the papers provided for information. No questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.</p>
7.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>i There were no items of other business.</p>
8.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Wednesday 24 March 2021 at 6.00pm</p>

Signed:

Date: