

THE CORPORATION OF CROYDON COLLEGE
Wednesday 8 July 2020 at 6.00pm
Virtual Meeting

PART ONE MINUTES

PRESENT: Tom Hesmondhalgh (Vice-Chair of the Corporation)
Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)
Jean Cook
Nigel Dias
Andy Booth
Penny Wycherley
Rahel Haque
Andrew Lowe
Nasim Jivani Hemani
Andrew Gilchrist
Catherine Boyd-Maunsell
Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon Campus)
Fiona Brennan (Staff Governor, Coulsdon Campus)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ann-Christine Harland (VP Finance & Resources)
Fadia Clarke (VP Training, Skills & HE)
Richard Beales (Principal, Coulsdon College)

CLERK: Clare Mitchell (Director of Governance)

QUORUM: The meeting was quorate

	Item
1	<p>PRELIMINARY BUSINESS</p> <p>The Vice-Chair explained that he would be chairing this meeting as the Chair of the Board was unable to attend. The Vice-Chair noted that this would have been the Student Governors' last meeting. He thanked them for the contribution they had made to the Board prior to lockdown and wished them well for the future.</p> <p>The Vice-Chair welcomed Catherine Boyd-Maunsell to her first Board meeting as a new Governor following her appointment on 4 June 2020.</p> <p>i. Apologies for Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordon Smith (Chair), Evelyn Bayerlein (Student Governor), Arnold Amoako (Student Governor) and Angela Edwards. <p>ii. Declarations of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Gilchrist declared that he was a Governor at Brooklands College. The Vice-Chair declared an interest in Item 6.ii.as a potential candidate. <p>iii. Croydon College Corporation Minutes of 18 March 2020</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED by the Corporation. <p>iv Croydon College Corporation Minutes of 4 June 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED by the Corporation subject to two minor amendments. <p>v Matters Arising (Action list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted the update on the matters arising. The P&CEO would pull together the existing KPIs, which were currently held in a number of different places, for the next Board meeting. There were still plans to implement a balanced scorecard. The revised version of the Operational and Quality Improvement Plan would be available for the first Learning and Quality Committee (LQC) meetings in the next academic year. The DoG confirmed that no Chair's action had been necessary following the Board meeting on 18 March 2020.
2	<p>EVALUATION OF STANDARDS</p> <p>i. Principal's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted that the KPIs had not been included with the report and would be updated for the next Board meeting. • The P&CEO reflected that the report did not sufficiently express her thanks to staff for their excellent response to the Covid 19 pandemic; the associated move to online learning and the subsequent development of plans to reopen the College. • The Vice-Chair also echoed his thanks to staff for providing the best education possible to students in circumstances that could not have been anticipated twelve months ago and to students for rising to the challenge. • The Board asked when apprenticeship performance could be expected to improve. The VPTSHE explained that a number of legacy apprentices had taken longer than anticipated to complete their apprenticeships, which had impacted on the College's performance. The assessors' job description had been updated to ensure that their performance monitoring not only included apprentices' overall achievements but also apprentices' achievement by planned end date. The way in which apprenticeship achievement was measured for the current year had also been impacted by Covid 19. • The Board noted that timely achievement of apprenticeships had been a concern for some time and asked for further scrutiny from the Croydon LQC. <p>ACTION: Chair of Croydon LQC - Croydon LQC to undertake further scrutiny of the actions being taken to improve timely achievement of apprenticeships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board noted the planning that was taking place for full reopening in September 2020. A number of working groups had been set up, co-ordinated by a central Covid 19 working group which met weekly and was chaired by the P&CEO. • The P&CEO indicated that she was concerned about the impact local incidents of Covid 19 might have on the operation of the College; particularly at the Coulsdon Campus where the mix of subjects studied made it harder to keep students in separate bubbles. The Local Authority had not yet issued guidance on how local incidents of Covid 19 should be handled by secondary schools and Colleges. <p>The Corporation NOTED the P&CEO's report.</p> <p>ii. Terms of Reference of the HE Group This item was taken in the confidential session.</p>

iii. Update on OfS Improvement Plan – OQIP and Specific Ongoing Condition 3B

- Members noted that this update paper had been reviewed by the Croydon LQC. Some of the actions that had been planned to improve progression and continuation had been impacted by Covid 19.
- The Board queried whether providing HE students with work experience opportunities would help the College to deliver the OfS requirements in terms of the progression of graduates into professional and managerial jobs and postgraduate study. The VPTSHE indicated that previous experience had shown that work experience was an effective way of improving progression. There was now a focus on getting HE students “work ready”. The College had sought guidance from the AoC on how to improve the employability of HE students and the provision of work experience had been encouraged. The College was also working with the membership sections of the relevant professional bodies to align courses with their membership requirements. It was noted that the impact of these actions on student outcomes could take up to 18 months to show.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the update on the OfS Improvement Plan

iv. HE Access and Participation Statement

- The Board noted that the College’s HE tuition fees were currently set at £6K per annum. This was described as a “low fee” in the statement. The VPTSHE clarified that this fee was low in comparison with the majority of other HE institutions. The VPTSHE agreed to review the wording of the statement in relation to the fees to emphasise value for money.
- The Board also asked for the statement to reference support for students with learning disabilities.
- The Board noted that setting tuition fees at their current level meant that the College was not required to submit a full Access and Participation Plan to the OfS. Achievement against the College’s Access and Participation Statement would be measured, reported to the OfS and published on the College website.

ACTION: VPTSHE to review the wording of the Access and Participation Statement in relation to fees to emphasise value for money and to reference support for students with learning disabilities.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Access and Participation Statement.

3. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

i. Detailed Property Strategy

- The Board noted that a two track approach was being recommended. The first track would progress a number of pressing projects at both campuses. Three of these projects involved funding or deadlines with third parties; the nursing and creative lab facilities at the Croydon Campus and the relocation of a permanent SEN centre at the Coulsdon Campus.
- The second track would investigate the possibilities for disposal of the East Wing of the Croydon Campus following a full title review. The space review had shown that, even providing for growth in student numbers, the Croydon Campus was approximately 11,000 sq. metres over capacity. This could represent a significant opportunity for the College.
- The College was required to submit a detailed estates strategy to the DfE by 31 July 2020 as a condition of the merger grant received in 2018. The detailed estates strategy was broadly in line with the high level estates strategy submitted at the time of the merger with Coulsdon College.

- The VPF&R reported that the College’s Property Adviser had given a presentation on the proposed strategy to the Finance and Resources (F&R) Committee at its last meeting. The strategy that had been presented to the Board was still in draft but no significant changes were expected.
- External funding was available for some of the projects in Track 1. The remainder would be funded through the capital budget for 2020/21. The VPF&R clarified that as part of the approval of the budget, the Board would be approving an overall capital spend on property of £1.4m, but the Board was not being asked to approve expenditure on specific projects within Track 1 at this stage. The VPF&R confirmed that there would be no capital investment in the East Wing of the Croydon Campus until the outcome of Track 2 was defined.
- Where the projects in Track 1 fell within the financial limits delegated to the P&CEO they would be taken forward by the Executive and progress reported to the F&R Committee. In the case of the larger projects, where the costs exceeded the P&CEO’s financial limits, e.g. the nursing facility, a detailed business case would be brought back to the F&R Committee for approval.
- The Board noted that LSBU was also planning to launch a nursing degree in Croydon in September 2021. The P&CEO indicated that she was confident that there was a market for a nursing degree at the College and this would form part of the business case for the development of nursing facilities.
- The Board asked whether there was an ambition to have a permanent SEN centre at the Croydon as well as the Coulsdon Campus. The P&CEO clarified that SEN students with the highest needs would be catered for at the Coulsdon Campus but there were plans to improve facilities such as disabled access at the Croydon Campus so greater numbers of SEN students could attend.
- The Board supported the plans for Track 2 but emphasised the need for the implications of the Covid 19 pandemic to be thought through as part of the development of any business case. The likely increase in online learning and the impact on the College’s space requirements also needed to be considered. The P&CEO indicated that the results of a recent student survey showed that although online learning had the potential to increase in some areas, e.g. HE and adult education, the feedback from students in the 16-19 age group was that they would prefer to be onsite. 92% of students at the Croydon Campus came from disadvantaged households and adequate facilities to study at home were not always available. This age group also needed structured contact with tutors and other students to prepare them for employment.
- The Vice-Chair expressed an interest in joining the College’s Sustainability Group.
- The Board noted that the final version of the Property Strategy would be submitted to the Transaction Unit on 31 July 2020 and circulated to Governors.

ACTION: VPF&R to contact the Vice-Chair re joining the College’s Sustainability Group

ACTION: VPF&R to submit the final version of the Property Strategy to the Transaction Unit on 31 July 2020 and circulate to Governors.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the conclusions outlined in the draft Property Strategy and the recommendations in relation to Track 1 and Track 2, subject to business cases being presented to and approved by the Finance and Resources Committee for any projects which exceeded the P&CEO’s delegated financial limits.

4. BUSINESS PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

i. Budget 2020/21

- The VPF&R introduced the budget for 2020/21. Income was projected to increase as a result of increased student numbers at the Coulsdon Campus in 2019/20, an increase in funding per learner for 16-18 year olds from the Government. The increased

programme weighting and the additional premium for maths and English were also assumed.

- The budget was based on a break even position at year end with good financial health forecast throughout the year. The VPF&R explained that if the College achieved break even during 2020/21 it would need to repay 20% of the grant for restructuring costs received as part of the merger with Coulsdon College. This had been factored into the budget and discussed and agreed by the Board when the IFMC was approved in February 2020.
- A 1% pay rise for all staff had been included within the budget. However, the Executive were hoping to make further savings so this could be increased to 2%.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the budget for 2020/21

ii. Financial Forecast 2019/22

- The VPF&R introduced the financial forecast, which extended a year beyond the budget to 31 July 2022. The forecast was a prudent one and included only a minimal increase in 16-18 student numbers with HE student numbers remaining static and modest apprenticeship growth.
- There were a number of risks to the forecast; particularly the uncertainty about the number of students who would enrol in the Autumn term following the pandemic
- Subcontracting was forecast to reduce in value over the three years in line with the ESFA consultation on subcontracting.
- The Chair of the F&R Committee reported that the Committee had been keen that the recruitment of the staff member included in the budget to work with SMEs to maximise apprenticeship opportunities was expedited. The VPTSHE indicated that she was working on the job description for this role and the new structure of the department. The number of applications for apprenticeships from SMEs via the DAS system had been lower than expected because of the pandemic.
- The P&CEO noted that the most significant reason for the drop in the College's income from apprenticeships was the move to the new levy system for funding apprenticeships.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the financial forecast for 2019/2022

iii Internal Audit Plan and Letter of Engagement 2020/21

- The Board noted that External Audit services had recently been re-tendered. The Audit Committee would be reviewing the provision of Internal Audit services in due course. The VPF&R indicated that a number of smaller internal audit firms did not have the expertise to undertake the complex learner number audits required by the ESFA.
- The Board queried the metrics for the staffing audit which focused on utilisation rather than attrition rates or other non-financial metrics. The VPF&R indicated that internal audit focused on systems and process. Information on staff engagement would come through to the F&R Committee through the results of the recent staff survey.
- The Board noted that although the next cybersecurity internal audit was not scheduled until 2022/23, the next step would be for the College to obtain cyber security essentials certification. This would take place within the next 12 months. The VPF&R indicated that the College might need to consider whether to take out insurance against cyber security attacks.

ACTION: VPF&R to confirm the length of the internal audit contract with RSM to the Audit Committee

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Internal Audit Plan and Letter of Engagement for 2020/21.

<p>5.</p>	<p>RISK REGISTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board noted that the updates to Risks 1, 2 and 5 had been considered by the LQCs and the F&R Committee. The changes to Strategic Risk 3 would be taken in the confidential session. A separate risk assessment was in place for the impact of Covid 19. • The Board asked how it would receive assurance that the College had addressed the risks relating to full reopening in September 2020. The P&CEO indicated that the Health and Safety Group would be meeting in August to review the guidance and the risk assessment and the Lead Governor for Health and Safety would be invited to attend that meeting. • The P&CEO confirmed that any changes to the high level risk assessment for Covid 19 would be shared with the working group on staffing and the unions. • The Vice-Chair asked that a mechanism for providing assurance to Governors that the College was complying with the guidance on full reopening and risks had been mitigated as far as possible be put in place outside of the meeting. <p>ACTION: VPF&R to invite Lead Governor to the Health and Safety Group meeting in August 2020</p> <p>ACTION: P&CEO/Clerk/Chair to put in place a mechanism for providing assurance to Governors on the full reopening of the College in September 2020.</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the revised risk register.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>i Review of Committee Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DoG reported that the Audit Committee, F&R Committee and the Search and Governance (S&G) Committee had reviewed their terms of reference and the amendments were presented to the Board for approval. • The Learning and Quality Committees and the Remuneration Committee would review their terms of reference in the Autumn term. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the amendments to the terms of reference of the Audit, F&R and S&G Committees</p> <p>ii Appointment of a new Chairman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DoG reported that following the decision to delay the recruitment of a new Chair because of the pandemic; a new timescale had now been agreed. The current Chair had agreed to continue in post until the end of the Autumn term 2020. The search would restart on 27 July and close on 7 September. Interviews would take place at the end of September and the S&G Committee would make a recommendation on the appointment of a new Chair to the Board at its meeting on 21 October 2020. The new Chair would be appointed as Chair elect and would take over after the December 2020 Board meeting. <p>The Corporation NOTED the revised timescale for the recruitment of the new Chairman.</p> <p>iii Annual Schedule of Business 2020/21</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the annual schedule of business for the Board and its Committees for 2020/21.</p> <p>iv Updated Scheme of Delegation</p>

- The DoG outlined the main changes to the Scheme of Delegation; including the removal of specific delegations to the Chair relating to a previous capital project and the power to dismiss staff being delegated to the members of the Executive Team with the Principal reserved for hearing appeals.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the updated Scheme of Delegation.

v Board and Committee Effectiveness Review Process

- The DoG outlined the proposals for the annual Board and Committee Effectiveness review which had been considered by the S&G Committee. A draft report on Board effectiveness would be considered at the November meeting of the Search and Governance Committee. This would then be taken to the Board meeting in December 2020 and would inform the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control in the 2019/20 Annual Report.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Board and Committee effectiveness review process

7. POLICIES

i Supporting Positive Student Behaviour Policy

- The CP reported that this was a new policy bringing together the previous Student Disciplinary Policy and Student Code of Conduct. It had not been possible to take the policy to the LQC meetings in June because of the need for staff consultation. The aim of the policy was to reinforce positive behaviours with an emphasis on inclusion rather than exclusion of students. The implementation of the policy would be embedded within the new Student Services structure.
- The Board commented that there needed to be greater emphasis on supporting students and preparing them for the workplace and that the tone and structure of the policy still reflected that of a disciplinary policy. The policy was too detailed and complex for everyday use and a student facing version needed to be produced with a flow chart.
- The P&CEO indicated that the current policies were not fit for purpose and a new policy needed to be in place for September 2020. It was agreed that Penny Wycherley and Nigel Dias would work with the CP to revise the policy with the aim of producing a policy statement emphasising how positive student behaviour would be supported. This would provide the context for a separate procedure for dealing with unacceptable student behaviour.
- In the meantime the procedure set out in the policy presented to the Board would be approved so that it was in place for September. The Coulsdon Staff Governor emphasised the need for staff training on the operation of the new procedures.

ACTION: P&CEO/CP to revise the Supporting Positive Student Behaviour Policy with input from Penny Wycherley and Nigel Dias

The Corporation **APPROVED** the procedures set out in the Supporting Positive Student Behaviour Policy subject to revisions to the policy emphasising how positive student behaviour would be supported

ii Updated Health and Safety Policy

- The VPF&R reported that the Health and Safety Policy was reviewed annually and had been updated to include a section on pandemic management and more detail on staff wellbeing.

	<p>The Corporation APPROVED the updated Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>iii Supply Chain Charges and Fees Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The VPF&R reported that the Supply Chain Charges and Fees Policy had required updating prior to going out to tender for a subcontractor for non GLA adult education provision in August. Further changes to the policy might be necessary depending on the outcome of the ESFA consultation on subcontracting, which had been published earlier in the week. Any further changes to the policy would be taken to the F&R Committee meeting in November 2020. <p>ACTION: VPF&R to take any further changes to the Supply Chain Charges and Fees Policy to the F&R Committee in November 2020</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the Supply Chain Charges and Fees Policy</p>
8.	<p>FOR INFORMATION PAPERS</p> <p>i Management Accounts for May 2020</p> <p>ii ESFA Correspondence – Financial Health Grade for Croydon College 2018/19</p> <p>iii Minutes of the Coulsdon Learning and Quality Committee meeting held on 3 June 2020</p> <p>iv Minutes of the Croydon Learning and Quality Committee meeting held on 10 June 2020</p> <p>v Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 18 June 2020</p> <p>vi Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 24 June 2020</p> <p>vii Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 29 June 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 Governors’ Liability Insurance Renewal Declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DoG reminded Governors that the College was in the process of renewing this insurance and all Governors had been asked to inform the VPF&R if they were aware of any circumstance or incident that might give rise to a claim by Friday 10 July 2020. Board and Committee meetings for the Autumn term would continue to be held using Zoom. This would be reviewed as the term progressed. The proposed date for the Governor day in the Autumn term was Wednesday 9 December (the same day as the December Board meeting). This would be confirmed after the Summer break. The Staff Governor for Coulsdon asked that Governors produce short videos to introduce themselves to staff in advance of any lesson observations. <p>ACTION: DoG to confirm the date of the Governor day in the Autumn term and to arrange for short introductory videos of Governors to be produced.</p>

8.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Wednesday 21 October 2020 – via Zoom

Signed:

Date: