



THE CORPORATION OF CROYDON COLLEGE

Wednesday 7 July 2021 at 6.00pm

Virtual Meeting

PART ONE MINUTES

PRESENT: Tony Stevenson (Chair)
 Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)
 Tom Hesmondhalgh (Vice Chair)
 Jean Cook
 Nasim Jivani Hemani
 Andrew Gilchrist
 Catherine Boyd-Maunsell
 Claudine Reid
 Frederick Law
 Soumick Dey
 Andy Wilson
 Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon Campus)
 Fiona Brennan (Staff Governor, Coulsdon Campus)
 Shyam Pillai (Student Governor, Croydon Campus)

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

CLERK: Clare Mitchell (Director of Governance)

QUORUM: The meeting was quorate

	Item
1.	<p>PRELIMINARY BUSINESS</p> <p>i. Apologies for Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Lowe and Abbigail Azirou (Student Governor, Coulsdon Campus). The Chair welcomed Frederick Law, Soumick Dey and Andy Wilson to their first Board meeting. <p>ii. Declarations of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Gilchrist is a Governor at Brooklands College. Tom Hesmondhalgh declared an interest in Item 6.i as the current Vice-Chair of the Board. <p>iii Decisions taken between meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two decisions to submit bids for additional funding had been taken by Chair's action because of the short timescales specified by the DfE.

	<p>The Corporation RATIFIED the decisions taken by Chair's action to submit bids for College Collaboration Funding (CCF) and Post 16 Capacity Funding.</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the decision taken by written resolution to appoint Soumick Dey and Andy Wilson as members of the Corporation and members of the Croydon College and Coulsdon Learning and Quality Committees with effect from 1 June 2021.</p>
2.	<p>EVALUATION OF STANDARDS</p> <p>i. Principal's Report including KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The P&CEO expressed her thanks to staff for their dedication over the last year. Despite the pandemic there was evidence of significant progress and many reasons to be optimistic about the College's performance going into 2021/22. • The College was awaiting the outcome of four bids for capital funding; the outcome of the Post 16 Capacity Funding had now been delayed until Autumn 2021. The College's allocation of small group tuition funding for 2021/22 was not yet known, nor was the outcome of the bids for CCF and Skills Accelerator Funding. The College was also in the process of developing bids for the FE Development Fund Pilot and the Higher Technical Education Fund. Delivering the successful bids would be in addition to the College's core deliverables for 2021/22. • Applications for the new nursing degree were looking strong for 2021/22. The College was planning for an increase of 105 16-18 year olds in 2021/22. Any growth above this would be accommodated through increasing class sizes where possible, as the increase in student numbers would not be funded until the following year. • The College planned to deliver 103% of its GLA Adult Education Budget (AEB) in 2021/22, anticipating that there would be some growth in year. However, the College had only been allocated £230K for delivery of the GLA's Good Work Scheme, despite bidding for £500K of funding. Demand was higher than budget for Londoners AEB. • Frederick Law noted that the attendance KPI was RAG rated as red and asked if this was simply a result of lockdown and whether this would impact on funding. The P&CEO responded that funding was linked to achievement,. Although there was a link between attendance and achievement, it was not a direct correlation. However there was robust plans in place to improve attendance in 2021/22, particularly at the Coulsdon Campus. <p>The Corporation NOTED the P&CEO's report.</p> <p>ii. Higher Education Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPTSHE presented the update on progress against the OfS B3B conditions. Progress was being made on both continuation and progression rates. Applications for places for 2021/22 had increased compared to the same point the previous year. All actions arising from the validation of the College's HE courses with the University of Roehampton had been completed and the construction of the Clinical Simulation Centre was well underway. • It was proposed that the HE Group should continue to meet for a further year, by which time it was hoped that the OfS conditions would have been lifted. <p>The Corporation NOTED the progress to date, APPROVED the attached B3B actions and APPROVED the continuation of the HE group for a further 12 months until July 2022.</p> <p>iii. Student Governor's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Governor from the Croydon Campus reported that he had now completed his degree and would be starting a Master's Degree in 2021/22. He and the other L6 students had felt they had been supported very well by the College in terms of careers and employability information and advice as well as academically. As a Business and

	<p>Management student he had been very well supported in deciding his next steps and his degree had been focused on progression/employment from the start.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, having to study entirely online had been difficult and the feedback from other HE students was that that they were keen to return to face to face teaching in 2021/22. <p>The Corporation NOTED the Student Governor's Report.</p>
3.	<p>STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS</p> <p>i. Strategy Update 2020/21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The P&CEO presented the update on progress against the College's five strategic objectives in 2020/21. Despite the pandemic there had been good progress across all strategic objectives. There was considerable progress on Strategic Objective One at the Croydon Campus, with significant improvements leading to good student outcomes and very good student feedback. After a slow start, this year had also seen a significant increase in the pace of change and improvement on Strategic Objective Two, Coulsdon Campus, and Strategic Objective Four, staff are our greatest asset. The College had undertaken a staff survey and would be working to achieve Investors in Diversity accreditation. The College's core values had been key in making sure that students were at the heart of decision making during the pandemic. • In terms of Strategic Objective Three, further work needed to be undertaken to develop the College's role as an anchor institution and to strengthen the College's apprenticeship provision. SMEs' capacity to deliver apprenticeships had been impacted by the pandemic. Apprenticeships were also costly and complicated to deliver. The VPTSHE was developing an apprenticeship strategy with a focus on developing apprenticeships in specific areas. Development of delivery strategies for the ESFA AEB funding had also been slower than anticipated. • Significant progress had been made against Strategic Objective Five. The pandemic had been an impetus for change with processes such as enrolment being brought online and the use of online tools such as Teams and Zoom. Achievement of cyber security certification had been delayed slightly but cyber insurance was now in place. • The Board asked whether the apprenticeship strategy needed to be part of a wider employer engagement strategy. The P&CEO agreed that this would be useful. She confirmed that the College did not have an alumni strategy. This would be very resource intensive. However, the P&CEO was keen to recruit more Governors who were College alumni. The Chair indicated that he had spoken to the Chair of Croydon University Hospital and there could be further opportunities for the College to provide training for their non healthcare staff. <p>The Corporation NOTED the Strategy Update for 2020/21.</p>
4.	<p>BUSINESS PLANNING & MANAGEMENT</p> <p>i. Budget 2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R presented the budget for 2021/22, which showed a surplus of £167,000 derived from an income of £29.1m, just over £1m higher than the expected 2020/21 outturn, arising primarily from increases in the main 16-18 allocation and the GLA AEB allocation. The budget anticipated that the College would recruit 105 unfunded 16-18 learners in 2021/22. • Pay costs included a 2% pay rise for all established staff. Non-pay costs were expected to increase by £500K as normal activities resumed post Covid. Good Financial Health was forecast for 2021/22.

- The budget was underpinned by the expected 2020/21 outturn and the curriculum plan. For the first time, each course leader had been asked to specify the type of teaching space they required. This would inform the development of Track 2 of the Property Strategy.
- The income that the College would receive in 2021/22 from the 16-18 Small Group Tuition Fund and the L3 Skills Fund was not yet known but these grants had a very low margin and would have little impact overall.
- The most significant unknown risk was the impact Covid might have in 2021/22 on student attendance, achievement and retention.
- The Staff Governor at the Coulsdon Campus raised a concern that the proposed 2% pay rise in 2021/22 did not meet the 5% pay rise demanded by the Universities and Colleges Union. The P&CEO responded that the 2% proposed pay rise was likely to meet the AoC's pay recommendation, was ahead of most of the public sector and was affordable for the College.
- The VPF&R was asked about the second highest risk to achieving the budget. She indicated that this was delivery of the ESFA AEB funding. However, overall this was fairly low risk as delivery of the College's own distance learning courses had improved since December 2020.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the budget for 2021/22.

ii. **Financial Forecast 2022/23**

- The VPF&R noted that the CFFR model had not been circulated with the papers. The model presented to the F&R Committee was circulated to members during the meeting.
- The VPF&R highlighted the debt service ratio, which was below the KPI. The VPF&R reminded Governors that the Board had taken the decision to keep the proceeds of the Barclay Road building sale as reserves rather than paying off the College's variable rate loan. The College's reserves were being used as matched funding, enabling the College to bid for further capital funding. The forecast included the College's expenditure on all four of its current capital bids. It was not yet known which bids would be successful.
- The forecast included a 2% inflationary increase for non-pay costs for 2022/23 and included a sensitivity analysis against the main funding lines. The changes to the delivery of learning post pandemic would impact on the use of the estate and the Master Plan for the Croydon Campus would come back to the Board towards the end of the year.
- Under the key assumptions set out in the paper, Good Financial Health was recorded throughout the forecast period. EBITDA remained above 5% of income and the debt service ratio improved as the bank loans were repaid.

ACTION: VPF&R – Master Plan for the Croydon Campus to come back to the Board towards the end of 2021

The Corporation **APPROVED** the key assumptions and the financial forecasts to 2022/23

iii. **ESFA AEB Subcontracting Rationale and Tender 2021/22**

- The VPTSHE outlined the changes to the rationale for subcontracting ESFA AEB funding in 2021/22 and the proposed increase in the value of the subcontract for 2021/22 from £159K to £297K (44% of the value of the funding), with £159K (24%) being subcontracted in 2022/23.
- In response to a question, the VPTSHE confirmed that the College undertook quality assurance checks on the subcontracted provision to ensure that learners were properly enrolled and that the provision was of a high quality. The quality of the subcontracted provision was supported by those Governors who had been involved in the quality assurance meetings with the subcontractor.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the proposed amendments to the ESFA AEB subcontracting rationale for 2021/22 and to subcontracting £297K of the ESFA adult education grant for provision to non-Londoners in 2021/22.

iv. Internal Audit Plan 2021/22

- The VPF&R set out the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22. The plan was made up of a mixture of mandatory reviews as required in the ESFA Audit Code of Practice, annual reviews of high risk areas such as Learner Number Systems, regular reviews of other high risk areas which did not require annual review and reviews of areas where there had been changes in activity e.g. there would be an internal audit of capital projects in 2021/22.
- Annual internal audits of learner number systems would be particularly important due to a change in the Audit Code of Practice. From 2020/21, the ESFA's annual statement of grant payments for the relevant funding year would not constitute assurance over the funds earned by Colleges. As a result, the External Auditors would now need to review the internal audit work in this area. This would result in some additional cost, which was expected to be in the order of one additional day's work.

ACTION: VPF&R to meet with Nasim Jivani-Hemani to review the learner number systems Internal Audit Reports. The Board noted that the reports had been reviewed by the Audit Committee.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21 and the associated fees.

v. External Audit Strategy 2020/21

- The VPF&R presented Buzacott's external audit strategy for 2020/21. The external audit strategy had been reviewed by the Audit Committee and was recommended to the Board for approval.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the External Audit Strategy for 2020/21 and the associated fees.

vi. Bank Loan – Changes to Use of LIBOR Rate

- The VPF&R explained that the LIBOR rate would be discontinued from 31 December 2021. The Finance and Resources Committee was recommending that the College should move to the alternative SONIA rate for both of its existing bank loans.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the SONIA rate as the alternative to LIBOR for the College bank loans and agreed that the amended bank documentation should be signed by the Chair of the Board and the P&CEO as required.

vii. Property Update

- The VPF&R provided a progress update on the Property Strategy. The DfE had delayed publishing the outcome of the bids for FE Capital Transformation Funding and Post 16 Capacity Funding. This delay would impact on the timescales for delivery of the associated works; assuming that the bids were successful. The outcome of the T level bids was still expected by the end of July 2021.
- The College was in discussions with Croydon Council about establishing a permanent SEN centre within the Coulsdon Campus building. The timing of this development would depend on the outcome of the Science T Level bid and the Post 16 Capacity Fund bid to extend the refectory at the Coulsdon site. The temporary planning permission had been extended for the current SEN centre on the Coulsdon site until September 2022 and licence extensions were awaited from the Council. These three

	<p>projects would impact on the ground floor of the Coulsdon Campus building and would need to be carefully timed. Following a question from the Coulsdon Staff Governor, the VPF&R confirmed that every effort would be made to minimise disruption to students and staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R confirmed that the contract budget for the Clinical Simulation Centre was expected to be in excess of the initial cost. However, current demand for places meant that an expansion in student numbers was anticipated in Year 2 and any underspend against budget could be used to purchase the additional equipment required for growth in student numbers. <p>The Corporation NOTED the progress update on the Property Strategy and DELEGATED AUTHORITY to the Chair of the Board to approve any Stage 2 application for the FE Capital Transformation Fund and to approve the Extension to the Licence to Occupy the Temporary SEN Centre at the Coulsdon Campus with the London Borough of Croydon to September 2023.</p>
5.	<p>RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020/21 SUMMER UPDATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R presented the updated risk management plan, which had been reviewed by the Audit Committee. Coronavirus had had less impact this term as case numbers had been low until recently and students and staff had taken part in mass testing; with sites on both campuses. There had been no movement in the net scores of each risk this term but there had been significant progress in a number of areas; including the staffing risks identified in Strategic Risk 4. • The Spring Internal Audit review had recommended further improvements to the risk management plan. Board training on risk was scheduled for October 2021 and Committees were starting to undertake deep dive reviews of specific risks. • The Vice-Chair welcomed the more proactive approach towards risk at Committee meetings. <p>The Corporation NOTED the update to the Risk Management Plan.</p>
6.	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>i Vice-Chair Election Process and Review of Role Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DoG presented the proposed process for electing the new Vice-Chair at the October 2021 Board meeting. The role description for the Vice-Chair had been reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee. The Committee was recommending that there should only be one Vice-Chair, to avoid any confusion or conflict about who should take on the responsibilities set out in the role description. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the election process and the revised role description for the Vice-Chair.</p> <p>ii Committee Chair Role Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DoG set out the proposed changes to the role description. It was proposed that the paragraph on time commitment should be amended to read “<i>The time commitment may amount to up to one day per term, in addition to other duties as Committee Chair and as a Governor.</i>” <p>The Corporation APPROVED the Committee Chair role description subject to the amendment detailed above.</p> <p>iii Board and Committee Schedule of Business 2021/22</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DoG presented the Board and Committee Schedule of Business and reminded Governors that this was a live document and would be subject to change during the year. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the Board and Committee Scheduled of Business for 2021/22.</p>
7.	<p>POLICY UPDATES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The VPF&R presented updates to the following policies: Health and Safety Policy Supply Chain Charges and Fees Policy Fees Policy <p>Covid risk assessments would be kept up to date with the expected changes to restrictions. The HSE was undertaking visits to College to review their Covid arrangements.</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the amendments to the above policies.</p>
8.	<p>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>i. Croydon College Corporation Minutes of 24 March 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED by the Corporation. <p>ii Matters Arising (Action list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DoG undertook to circulate the full action list as the version provided with the papers was incomplete. <p>ACTION: DoG to circulate full action list to Governors</p>
9.	<p>FOR INFORMATION PAPERS</p> <p>i Management Accounts for May 2021</p> <p>ii ESFA Correspondence – Financial Dashboard for 2019/20 and Lifting of NTI</p> <p>iii Unconfirmed minutes of the Coulsdon Campus Learning and Quality Committee meeting on 9 June 2021</p> <p>iv Unconfirmed minutes of the Audit Committee meeting on 10 June 2021</p> <p>v Unconfirmed minutes of the Croydon College Learning and Quality Committee meeting on 16 June 2021</p> <p>vi Unconfirmed minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting on 23 June 2021</p> <p>vii Unconfirmed minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting on 30 June 2021</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the papers provided for information. No questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.</p>
10.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair thanked both Student Governors for their contribution and engagement with the work of the Board over the year. The Board noted that Abbigail Azirou had been offered a university place and that she had been a great ambassador for students at the Coulsdon Campus. • The Chair noted that this would be the VPE&Q's last Board meeting as she was retiring at the end of the Summer. He thanked her for contribution to improving teaching and learning at the College and particularly on the development of the quality dashboard and the use of this data to inform decision making. The VPE&Q thanked the Board for the flowers and said how much she'd enjoyed working at the College. She thanked Jean Cook for her support as Chair of the LQCs and the Lead Governor for Safeguarding and wished Martin Silverwood all the best in his new role. • This was also the Vice-Chair's last meeting. The Chair thanked him for his work over the last four years, including taking on a number of roles at short notice, and wished him and his family well with their move. The Vice-Chair said that it had been a privilege to see the changes at Croydon and that the College had an exciting future ahead and he continued to be willing to assist in any way he could.
11.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Wednesday 20 October 2021</p>