

**THE CORPORATION OF CROYDON COLLEGE***Wednesday 19 October 2022 at 6.00pm**Room 405B, Croydon Campus*

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**PART ONE MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Tony Stevenson (Chair)  
Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)  
Jean Cook  
Andrew Gilchrist  
Claudine Reid  
Catherine Boyd-Maunsell (Vice Chair)  
Frederick Law  
Andy Wilson  
Soumick Dey  
Niral Patel  
Yvonne White (Staff Governor, Coulsdon Campus)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ann-Christine Harland (VP Finance & Resources)  
Martin Silverwood (VP Education & Quality)  
Natalie Garner (VP Principal Adults & HE)  
Stuart Barlow (Coulsdon Principal)

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

**QUORUM:** The meeting was quorate

	<b>ITEM</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>PRELIMINARY BUSINESS</b></p> <p>The Chair noted that there had been a pre-meeting of the Governors on the Coulsdon LQC to discuss the issues raised in the paper relating to the Coulsdon Campus. He welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Yvonne White, Stuart Barlow and Natalie Garner in her new role as Vice-Principal Adults and HE.</p> <p><b>i. Apologies for Absence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apologies for absence were received from; Andrew Lowe, Nasim Jivani-Hemani, and Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon Campus). Mike Fisher was not present at the meeting.</li></ul> <p><b>ii. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The following declarations were made; Andrew Gilchrist is a Governor of Brooklands College, Caireen Mitchell is a Governor of Wandle Learning Trust.</li></ul> <p><b>iii Confirmation of new Staff Governor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Chair confirmed that Yvonne White had been elected as Staff Governor for the Coulsdon Campus for a four-year term of office.</li></ul>

## 2. EVALUATION OF STANDARDS

### i. Principal's Report including College KPIs for 2021/22

- The P&CEO reported that the number of 16-18 year olds enrolled at the start of 2022/23 was below target and recruitment would continue in year. Two of the companies who had bid to provide marketing services had been asked if they could work together to provide FE targeted marketing support to the College.
- The main focus of the report was on the poor achievement rates in 2021/22 at the Coulsdon Campus, which were worse than had been predicted. There were two main reasons why results were worse than predicted. Firstly, BTEC qualifications had moved on to the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) over the period of centre and teacher assessed grades so that for the first time in 2021/22 at the Coulsdon Campus BTEC qualifications had unseen final examinations. Not all staff had understood the RQF changes and therefore students were not consistently prepared to sit summative assessment. The second main factor was that achievement was worse than had been predicted on the additional qualifications, EPQ and Laser progression. A decision had been taken late in the academic year to enrol c600 students on these qualifications; student attendance at these sessions was low and achievement has been very poor.
- Attendance at the Coulsdon Campus in the current term was now at around 72% and this figure was expected to improve as the remaining timetabling clashes were resolved and students withdrawn who have not attended.
- A pay settlement had been reached with both the UCU at the Croydon Campus and the NEU at the Coulsdon Campus. This had ended the industrial action that NEU members had been taking at the Coulsdon Campus. Should the College be in the financial position to do so, i.e. forecasting a surplus above that planned in the budget, the Executive Team would endeavour to make further pay award in year. This could be authorised by the Executive Team providing this was within the budget approved by the Board in July 2022 and the College's financial position justified the award.
- The P&CEO reported that Stuart Barlow had now been appointed to the substantive role of Principal at Coulsdon College.
- The Lead Governor for Safeguarding expressed concern that recruitment onto HE courses, both those run by Croydon College and the Nursing Degree run by the University of Roehampton (UoR) at the Croydon College site, had been lower than expected in 2022/23. The P&CEO reported that the V-P Adults & HE was undertaking a review of the admissions process for the Croydon College courses. A meeting had also taken place with UoR to discuss the College's concerns about their admissions process. A very small number of the Croydon College students who had completed the Access to Nursing had been offered a place on the UoR Nursing Degree. Many of these students were offered places on Nursing Degree courses at other HE institutions. It had been agreed that in future all Croydon College Access to Nursing students would have a conditional offer on the UoR nursing degree and would receive support on interview technique.
- The Chair of the Coulsdon Campus LQC asked about the impact of the poor results at the Coulsdon Campus on staff morale. The Coulsdon Principal indicated that he had been very clear with staff about the improvements that needed to be made and the speed and focus this would require, particularly from the new management team put in place at the end of 2021/22. The response from staff had been positive, but this would be a two to three year journey. The Staff Governor indicated that teachers had found the clarity about what was expected of them helpful.
- The Chair of the Audit Committee asked what action was being taken to tackle students' poor perception of their safety at the Coulsdon Campus as evidenced in the May 2022

QDP student survey. The P&CEO stated that a small number of students with poor behaviour had been withdrawn while she was acting Principal. The P&CEO continued to spend two days a week at the Coulsdon Campus and behaviour had noticeably improved this term with clear boundaries being set by staff. The results of the November 2022 survey were expected to be more positive in terms of student safety.

- The Vice Chair noted that a number of the issues related to systems and asked whether the College had the best systems in place to assist teachers. The P&CEO indicated that good systems were in place but they were not always deployed as effectively as they needed to be. Staff at both campuses had been instructed to use the Colleges' systems for monitoring student process and failure to do this would have consequences.
- The Board asked whether the changes at the Coulsdon Campus were likely to result in turnover of teaching staff and whether this would impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The P&CEO emphasised the importance of ensuring students received good quality teaching and tackling any performance issues. A Quality Manager was now in post at the Coulsdon Campus to assist with improvements.
- The P&CEO explained that staff absence had been a particular problem at the Coulsdon Campus in December 2021/January 2022 but since then it had reduced. However, there had been staffing challenges during the NEU strikes in the Summer and Autumn terms. The pay award agreed with the unions was above average for the sector and should be attractive. However, there continued to be national skills shortages in some areas such as construction, which continued to affect recruitment in some areas.

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

## ii. Coulsdon Principal's (CP) Report

- The CP assured the Board that clear expectations were now in place for both staff and students. Any inappropriate student behaviour was challenged and a few students had been withdrawn as a result.
- The Pathway Structure that had been put in place was the correct one to support students. The CP's role was to embed this and to model behaviours for the new management team. External coaching support was also being put in place.
- Three weekly reviews of at risk students had been instituted, involving the ALS team and the Wellbeing team as well as teaching staff to create a collaborative culture and provide support and intervention as early as possible. The effect of any timetabling clashes at the start of the term would be minimised as far as possible. Early engagement was now taking place with parents about any concerns.
- There was an increased focus on supporting teachers to provide a high standard of teaching and learning, which provided variety, was engaging and enabled students to participate.
- The Chair of the Croydon College LQC expressed concern about the low level of attendance at the Coulsdon Campus, which was at 72%. At this point in the term, attendance was one of the few KPIs available and even at 80% attendance students would be missing a significant amount of classes. The Coulsdon Principal indicated that it would be difficult to achieve 80% attendance for the year as a whole because of the poor start. However, he did expect weekly attendance figures to reach and exceed 80% as adjustments were made to timetabling. It was noted that attendance data would be a key focus for the Coulsdon Campus LQC. The VPE&Q reported that attendance figures had improved by approximately 2% since this paper had been written.
- Governors asked whether there were expert teachers within the College who could provide coaching for staff at the Coulsdon Campus. The CP indicated that there were expert

	<p>teachers but not in large numbers. The new Quality Manager post at the Coulsdon Campus would be a permanent role and would provide this support to staff once a baseline assessment had been undertaken, along with the Teaching and Learning Mentors.</p> <p>The Corporation <b>DISCUSSED</b> the Coulsdon Principal's report.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair reported that he and the P&amp;CEO had met with the Chair and Vice-Chancellor of the UoR and had a positive discussion about the provision of further L4 and L5 courses. Despite issues at the start of 2022/23 with enrolment on the UoR Nursing Degree run at the College, which were being investigated, at the most senior level, the UoR were keen to develop a strategic relationship with the College.</li> <li>• A further date had been scheduled for the Chair and P&amp;CEO to meet with Croydon's elected Mayor to discuss how the College could assist with meeting skills priorities for the local area.</li> <li>• The ONS was expected to make a decision at the start of November as to whether Colleges would be re-classified as public sector bodies. The Association of Colleges was lobbying to minimise the impact of any change in classification from the private to the public sector, but there could be significant implications for Colleges as outlined in the paper for agenda item 4.iii.</li> <li>• The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) was currently recruiting for a new Chief Executive. It seemed likely that the ETF's future direction would be as a commissioning organisation for the sector, rather than delivering training itself.</li> <li>• The AoC had issued a consultation on the Governors' Council. This had been circulated to members in case they wished to make an individual response. Concerns had been raised about the purpose of the Governors' Council and its visibility, which the proposals in the consultation sought to address.</li> </ul> <p>The Corporation <b>NOTED</b> the Chair's update on strategic developments.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>BUSINESS PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p><b>i. Strategy Progress Report 2021/22</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair of the Audit Committee expressed concern that this paper and the associated item on amendments to Strategic Objective 2, raised under agenda item 8 AOB, had been circulated very late. Not all Governors had had the opportunity to review the progress report and it was agreed that this paper would be brought back to the Board meeting in December 2022 with the OQIP for 2022/23</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: DoG – Strategy Progress Report for 2021/22 to be brought back to the Board meeting in December 2022 with the OQIP for 2022/23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The P&amp;CEO reported that relatively good progress had been made against Strategic Objective 1 relating to the Croydon Campus, while progress towards achieving Strategic Objective 2 at the Coulsdon Campus had been much slower. Progress against Strategic Objective 3, the local economy, had been mixed. The focus in 2022/23 would be on HE provision. Strategic objective 4 focused on staff and while progress had been good at Croydon Campus, less progress had been made at the Coulsdon Campus. In terms of Strategic Objective 5, the College Core, finances remained healthy and progress was being made on implementing the IT strategy.</li> </ul>

- Changes were proposed to the wording of Strategic Objectives 2.1 and 2.3 (agenda item 8). Over time, it had become apparent that SO 2.1 did not accurately reflect the needs of all students at Coulsdon College. Coulsdon College had a wider focus than some other Sixth Form Colleges with a significant number of students progressing from Level 2 (GCSE) to Level 3 (A Level). The revised wording for SO 2.1 included the whole range of possible destinations for students rather than focusing solely on progress to further study or higher level apprenticeships.
- The wording of Strategic Objective 2.3 has also been amended so that it reads more clearly and to confirm the intention that the Coulsdon Campus will be achieving above national benchmarks in the areas identified by the end of 2023/24.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the revised wording for Strategic Objectives 2.1 and 2.3.:

#### **ii. Student Numbers for 2022/23 and impact on 2022/23 budget**

The Corporation **NOTED** that the number of 16-18 enrolments was lower than contract and that enrolment would continue in year.

#### **iii. National Office of Statistics Classification of FE Colleges**

The Corporation **NOTED** the report.

#### **iv. Additional SEND provision at Croydon College**

- The VPF&R reported that discussions had been taking place between the College and Croydon Council who had a requirement to accommodate 75 SEND students aged 19-24 from September 2023. The current Pathway Centre at the Coulsdon Campus had capacity for 31 students and was full.
- The Council was considering a number of options for accommodating the additional SEND students and the College was keen to provide this additional capacity. There had been a good turnout of SEND students and their parents at the Pathway Centre open day at the Coulsdon Campus, who were keen to know if additional capacity would be available from September 2023.
- The College had planned to submit a bid for Post 16 Capacity Funding to extend its SEND provision, but the necessary information had not been provided by the Council and it was now unlikely that a bid would be possible for this round of funding as the deadline was 11 November 2022. If the College wished to increase its SEND provision, it might need to submit a bid for the next round of funding without direct input from the Council.

#### **v. Appointment of Subcontractor for 2022/23**

- The VPF&R reported that the tender run for the subcontracted AEB provision in 2021/22 had included the option of extending the contract on an annual basis for up to three years to July 2024.
- The contract for 2021/22 had been awarded to The Skills Network (TSN). TSN met financial due diligence requirements and their student achievement rate for 2021/22 for this provision had been high.
- The proposal was that the contract with TSN was extended for 2022/23 with a cap of 228 students, in line with ESFA requirements to reduce subcontracting.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the appointment of The Skills Network to deliver £159,000 of the College's ESFA AEB grant, with a cap of 228 learners.

5.	<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p><b>i. Committee Membership 2022/23</b></p> <p>The Corporation <b>APPROVED</b> the Committee membership for 2022/23.</p> <p><b>ii. Amendments to Committee Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The Corporation <b>APPROVED</b> the amendments to the terms of reference for the Finance and Resources, Audit and Search and Governance Committee meetings.</p> <p><b>iii. Governance Self-Assessment 2021/22</b></p> <p>The Corporation <b>APPROVED</b> the amendments to the governance self-assessment process for 2021/22.</p> <p><b>iv. External Governance Review 2022/23</b></p> <p>The Corporation <b>APPROVED</b> the proposals for selecting a reviewer, agreeing the scope of the review and the timescale for the external governance review process.</p>
6.	<p><b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p><b>i. Minutes of the Part One meeting on 13 July 2022</b></p> <p>The Corporation <b>APPROVED</b> the minutes for this meeting.</p> <p><b>ii. Matters arising from the minutes not covered on the agenda (see action list)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VPF&amp;R noted that the budget for free school meals for 2022/23 had decreased because of lower numbers of students claiming free school meals in previous years. To date this term, 875 students were receiving free school meals. The budget included funding for free school meals for approximately 300 students. The remainder were funded through the College's discretionary bursary scheme.</li> </ul>
7.	<p><b>FOR INFORMATION PAPERS</b></p> <p><b>i. Management Accounts for July 2022</b></p> <p><b>ii. Use of the Seal 2021/22</b></p> <p><b>iii. Governance Attendance Report 20221/2</b></p> <p><b>iv. A summary of changes introduced by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (published by the NSPCC).</b></p> <p>The Corporation <b>NOTED</b> the papers provided for information. No questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.</p>
8.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda item 8, proposed amendments to Strategic Objectives 2.1 and 2.3 was taken under item 4.i.</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p>

<p>Wednesday 7 December 2022 – as part of the Governor Day from 10am to 5pm at the Croydon Campus.</p>
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