

THE CORPORATION OF CROYDON COLLEGE

Wednesday 7 December 2022 at 3.15pm

Room 405B, Croydon Campus

PART ONE MINUTES

PRESENT: Tony Stevenson (Chair)
 Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)
 Jean Cook
 Andrew Lowe
 Nasim Jivani-Hemani
 Andrew Gilchrist
 Frederick Law
 Andy Wilson
 Niral Patel
 Mike Fisher
 Yvonne White (Staff Governor, Coulsdon Campus)
 Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon Campus) – Items 1-2.iii only
 Mario Cuba (Student Governor, Coulsdon Campus)

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

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 Catherine Boyd-Maunsell, Soumick Dey and Sally Andrews (Student Governor, Croydon Campus). Lucia Guetcherian (Staff Governor, Croydon Campus) would need to leave the meeting at 4pm. <p>ii. Declarations of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following declarations were noted; Andrew Gilchrist is a Governor of Brooklands College, Caireen Mitchell is a Governor of Wandle Learning Trust. <p>iii Elected Student Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair confirmed that Mario Cuba had been elected as the Student President for the Coulsdon Campus for 2022/23 and would therefore serve as the Student Governor for the Coulsdon Campus for 2022/23. Sally Andrews had been elected as the HE Student Executive Officer for 2022/23 and would therefore serve as the Student Governor for the Croydon Campus for 2022/23.

	<p>iv Governor Appointment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On behalf of the Search and Governance Committee, the Chair recommended the appointment of Louise Cretton as a Governor. Louise was also recommended for appointment as Chair of the Coulsdon Learning and Quality Committee (LQC) and as a member of the Croydon College LQC. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the appointment of the Louise Cretton as a Governor for a four year term of office, to serve as Chair of the Coulsdon Campus LQC and as a member of the Croydon College LQC.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>EVALUATION OF STANDARDS</p> <p>i. Principal’s Report including College KPIs for 2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The P&CEO presented the report noting that there was a separate report on the Coulsdon Campus elsewhere on the agenda. The P&CEO thanked the Board for their interest in the presentation from the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing during the Governor Day, which had set out the size of the challenge. 30% of Croydon College’s 16-18 year old students were either care leavers or looked after children, with a higher proportion of students in these groups at the Croydon Campus. The P&CEO drew the Board’s attention to the ONS’ decision to reclassify FE Colleges as public rather than private sector with immediate effect. At the current time there was no financial upside to this decision, which would result in increased regulation. Financial resources were likely to become tighter from 2023/24 as a result of lower 16-18 student numbers in 2022/23. An external company would be undertaking a review of the College’s marketing strategy as a result of concerns about lack of impact on student recruitment. Staff recruitment continued to be an issue, particularly at the Coulsdon Campus. Steps were being taken to make roles more flexible to attract candidates. The Board asked about the results of the November 2022 QDP student survey. The P&CEO reported that Croydon College as a whole continued to score in Quartile B for teaching and learning but there were still distinct differences in the scores between the two campuses. A complete set of reports was not yet available. The P&CEO undertook to circulate a full summary of the November 2022 QDP survey results to the Board prior to the next meeting. <p>Action: P&CEO to circulate a full summary of the November 2022 QDP survey results to the Board prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Corporation DISCUSSED the P&CEO’s report.</p> <p>ii. Coulsdon Principal’s (CP) Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CP reported that the data provided in the appendix built on discussions at the November Coulsdon Campus LQC meeting about which metrics it would be useful for Governors to monitor. Student behaviour continued to be good and attendance was improving, with some areas at over 80%. Staff were embracing change and opportunities for staff development. However, there were risks relating to staff vacancies and difficulties recruiting permanent staff to both teaching and support roles. This, combined with staff sickness, resulted in the management team spending more time teaching, reducing the management time available.

- Overall, the position at the Coulsdon Campus was significantly improved on 2021/22 and improved achievement rates were expected in Summer 2023.
- There was still considerable work to do and the next step was the development of the senior management team. This would be followed by training for middle managers in 2023.
- The Board noted that a number of managers were on performance improvement plans and asked whether this was a particular concern. The CP indicated that he expected to see the numbers reduce through next term.

The Corporation **DISCUSSED** the Coulsdon Principal's report.

iii. Croydon College Group SAR 2021/22

- The P&CEO reported that the draft SAR had been reviewed in detail at the Croydon College LQC meeting on 9 November 2022. A number of amendments had been made following this meeting, including changing the format to make the key information more accessible.
- The P&CEO drew the Board's attention to the context in which the College operated and the high levels of support required by its students. At the Croydon Campus, students' levels of prior attainment were generally very low, with a significant proportion of students needing additional learning support. The College had grown its Entry Level and Level 1 provision to meet the needs of the local population. Levels of prior attainment were higher for students at the Coulsdon Campus, but were relatively low for a Sixth Form College.
- The quality of education had been self-assessed as good for adult students, apprentices and high needs students. There was evidence of good attendance and a strong relationship between teachers and students at the Croydon Campus.
- The Coulsdon Campus had been identified as a key area for improvement along with the School of Building, Engineering and Technical Professions (BETP). The risk to student achievement in these areas had not been identified early enough because teachers had not been consistently using central systems to record student progress. Achievement rates in the School of BETP were impacted by the withdrawal of a significant number of students who had joined the College aged 18, and were enrolled on a two year qualification rather than two one year programmes to avoid them having to pay fees once they turned 19.
- Leadership and management was assessed as strong at the Croydon Campus but an area for improvement at the Coulsdon Campus.
- The Chair of the Croydon College LQC expressed concern about low ALPs scores, particularly for 16-18 years olds. The P&CEO responded that the data on ALPs scores was not reliable for the last two years because of the impact of centre and teacher assessed grades. 16-18 tuition funding continued to be available in 2022/3 and was being used to boost student achievement, particularly in English and maths. However, there had been a significant underspend on this funding in 2021/22 because of difficulties staffing small group provision and because students were working additional hours outside the College because of the increased cost of living and were not available for additional contact hours.

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Croydon College Group SAR for 2021/22.

iv. Operational and Quality Improvement Plan (OQIP) 2022/23

The Corporation **NOTED** the OQIP for 2022/23.

v. Ofsted Preparation – Meeting Local Skills Needs

- The P&CEO reported that Ofsted now gave Colleges six days' notice of inspection. The inspection team would include additional inspectors who would focus on this aspect of the inspection.
- The College had a track record of bidding for any additional AEB funding available and using this to support local skills needs. Much of the local demand was for courses below L3, resulting in lower demand for the L3 courses available through the National Skills Fund . A meeting of the Employer Reference Group had recently taken place and discussions were taking place about shaping the curriculum to meet the needs of local employers. In apprenticeships, the focus was on expanding in the areas of construction and STEM, which had traditionally been strong areas for recruitment. Further work needed to be undertaken to map local employers and stakeholders.
- BusinessLDN (previously London First) would be taking forward the Learning and Skills Plan for London and the College was linked into this. However, London was behind other parts of the country in articulating its skills needs.

The Corporation **DISCUSSED** the briefing, which had previously been considered by the Croydon College LQC.

vi. Safeguarding Annual Report 2021/22

- The Board noted the increased demand for mental health support from students in 2021/22. Demand for this support was still rising in 2022/23. Specific questions on students' experience of safety and sexual harassment on campus had been included in the November 2022 QDP survey. A centralised tutorial framework had been introduced to address issues such as consent and appropriate language with students at both campuses.
- The Board noted that the presentation from the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing had highlighted gaps in support from external agencies and asked what action was being taken to raise concerns about this. The P&CEO reported that concerns were raised with the individual organisation and/or the Local Authority Safeguarding Board. It was possible that Croydon Council's recent section 114 notice could result in increased disruption to Local Authority support. The P&CEO would liaise with the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team to monitor this.

Action: P&CEO to liaise with the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team to monitor the support provided by the Local Authority

The Corporation **DISCUSSED** the Safeguarding Annual Report for 2021/22.

vii. Student Governors' Report

- The Student Governor from the Coulsdon Campus reported that "Wellbeing Wednesdays" had been introduced. These were run by students, with a member of the wellbeing team, to give students an opportunity talk about their mental health.
- Students who identified as a different or neutral gender would like to be able to change their name badges/pronouns to reflect their gender identity, to avoid confusion and embarrassment. The CP reported that progress had been made in this area and students could now change the name on their ID badge.
- The Student Executive team was keen to organise a cross campus sports day to raise money for charity, as well as a Prom and a graduation event.
- The Student Governor had undertaken a survey of students which showed that student were generally happy with the teaching provided but there was a need for more enrichment

	<p>activities in free periods. A few students had reported not feeling safe on campus but this was generally because of issues specific to that individual.</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the Student Governor's report.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair also drew the Board's attention to the ONS' decision to reclassify FE Colleges as public sector, backdated for the purposes of ONS statistics to April 1993. There was general disappointment that the government's rhetoric on the importance of skills development had not been backed up by increased funding for Colleges. • The Chair reported that he and the P&CEO had met with the elected Mayor and that he was also due to meet with Councillor Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. Spending on education/children's' services was ringfenced and should not be impacted by the Section 114 notice issued by Croydon Council. • The Labour Party had recently published the Report of the Commission on the UK's Future "<i>A New Britain</i>", which contained proposals for greater Local Authority control over adult education. <p>The Corporation NOTED the Chair's update on strategic developments.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>BUSINESS PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT</p> <p>i. Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair of the Audit Committee presented this report, which would be submitted to the ESFA. The College had been selected at random for an audit of its GLA AEB funding. The final report from Mazars had now arrived and the audit opinion was satisfactory. • The Chair thanked the Chair and members of the Audit Committee for their work during the year. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2021/22</p> <p>ii. Croydon College Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R presented the self-assessment which would also be submitted to the ESFA. Additional questions on governance had been included in 2021/22. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the completed Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire for 2021/22 for signature by the Chair and P&CEO</p> <p>iii. Audit Completion report 2021/22 and Letter of Representation to the External Auditors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R presented Buzzacott's audit completion report, noting that all Governors had had the opportunity to join the November Audit Committee meeting when the report was presented by the Audit Partner. Buzzacott had issued an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements. <p>The Corporation NOTED the report and APPROVED the letter of representation for signature by the Chair.</p> <p>iv. Croydon College Financial Statements 2021/22</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R presented the financial statements, noting that the statements and accompanying report had been reviewed by the Finance and Resources and Audit Committees as well as being subject to external audit by Buzzacott. • The VPF&R was not currently aware of any post balance sheet events that needed to be reported. The College was not currently renegotiating its bank loans. Therefore, there was no immediate impact from the ONS decision to reclassify FE Colleges as public sector. • The lower than expected achievement rates at the Coulsdon Campus were reflected in increased student recruitment and experience, financial and staff recruitment and turnover risks in the annual report. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the Financial Statements for 2021/22 for signature by the Chair and P&CEO.</p> <p>v. Strategy Progress Report 2021/22</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the Strategy Progress Report for 2021/22.</p>
5.	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>i. Governance Self-Assessment 2021/22, Governance Action Plan and Board Development Plan for 2022/23</p> <p>The Corporation reviewed the outcomes of the 2021/22 Governance Self-Assessment and APPROVED the statement on the Corporation’s performance included in the SAR and the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2021/22.</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the Governance Action Plan and Board Development Plan for 2022/23.</p> <p>ii. Membership of the Coulsdon Campus LQC</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the amendments to the terms of reference of the Coulsdon Campus LQC, removing the co-opted Staff Member role.</p>
6.	<p>RISK MANAGEMENT</p> <p>i Risk Register Autumn 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VPF&R presented the report. The VPA&HE would be focusing on risks relating to HE provision in 2022/23. Enrolments on both Croydon College and University of Roehampton (UoR) HE provision were lower than budgeted and the reasons for this were being identified and addressed. The HE group had reviewed 2022/23 recruitment and plans for future recruitment at its meeting on 1 November 2022. • The Board noted that HE provision in Colleges had declined generally in favour of Universities since the cap on student numbers had been removed but further actions needed to be taken to encourage existing College students to progress onto College HE courses and to make entry onto College HE courses easier for potential students to avoid losing them to competitors. It was agreed that risks in HE would be an area of focus at the next meeting of the Croydon College LQC. <p>Action: VPA&HE – risks in HE to be an area of focus at the next meeting of the Croydon College LQC</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were new risks relating to unbudgeted expenditure for increased energy costs and increased insurance premiums, which now reflected the full reinstatement value for the Croydon Campus. <p>The Corporation DISCUSSED the updated Risk Register.</p>
7.	<p>POLICIES</p> <p>i. Safeguarding and Prevent Policy Annual Update</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the annual updates to the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy for 2022/23.</p> <p>ii. Annual Review of the Financial Regulations</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the amendments to Financial Regulations.</p> <p>iii. Conflict of Interest Policy</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the amendments to the Conflict of Interest Policy to include all members of the Senior Management Team, whether interim or permanent.</p> <p>iv. HE Fees 2023/24</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the HE tuition fees for 2023/24.</p>
8.	<p>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>i. Minutes of the Part One meeting on 19 October 2022</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the minutes of this meeting subject to rewording point 4 of item 2.i to make it clear that the Executive Team could authorise a further pay increase in 2022/23, providing this was within the budget approved by the Board in July 2022 and the College's financial position justified the award.</p> <p>ii. Matters arising from the minutes not covered on the agenda (see action list)</p> <p>The Corporation NOTED the updated action list.</p>
9.	<p>FOR INFORMATION PAPERS</p> <p>i. Annual Risk Report 2021/22</p> <p>ii. Annual Health and Safety Report 2021/22</p> <p>iii. Sustainability Strategy Report 2021/22</p> <p>iv. HR Annual Report and Gender/Ethnicity Pay Gap Reports 2021/22</p> <p>v. Annual Remuneration Committee Report 2021/22</p> <p>vi. Search Committee Annual Report 2021/22</p> <p>vii. Management Accounts for October 2022</p> <p>viii. Confirmed minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting on 5 October 2022</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ix. Unconfirmed minutes of the Coulsdon Learning and Quality Committee meeting on 2 November 2022 x. Unconfirmed minutes of the Croydon Learning and Quality Committee meeting on 8 November 2022 xi. Unconfirmed minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting on 9 November 2022 xii. Unconfirmed minutes of the Audit Committee meeting on 24 November 2022 <p>The Corporation NOTED the papers provided for information. No questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of other business.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Wednesday 29 March 2023 – as part of the Governor Day from 10am to 5pm at the Coulsdon Campus.</p>

Signed:

Date: