

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
HELD AT 5.30PM ON THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER 2021 VIA TEAMS**

Present: Dr S Morton (Chair) Mx L Johnson (Principal)
Mr A Brown Dr J Guth
Professor J Craig Ms P Ralph
Mr E Drake Mrs J Rogers
Mr M Stone

In attendance: Mrs A Lall (Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality)
Mr G Dixon Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources)
Mrs J Matthews (Director of Governance)
Ms S Laycock (Chair of Staffing and Remuneration Committee – to M21/63)
Ms K Rae (Armstrong Watson – M21/67)

ACTION

	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>M21/47 There were apologies for absence from Mr Langton, Mrs Woodhall and Dr Birkinshaw. The Chair welcomed Ms Ralph to her first meeting as Teaching Staff Governor.</p> <p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>M21/48 There was a declaration of interest from Mr Brown in relation to Craven District Council and Professor Craig in relation to the University of Hull where he was carrying out some validation work.</p> <p>MINUTES OF 14 OCTOBER 2021</p> <p>M21/49 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2021 were approved.</p> <p>REVIEW OF ACTION TRACKER AND MATTERS ARISING ON THE MINUTES</p> <p>M21/50 Governors had received the action tracker and noted the updates on previous actions.</p> <p><i>M21/14 and M21/27 – Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan</i></p> <p>M21/51 It was reported that the Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan were being revised with inclusion of metrics and would be presented to the Board at an additional meeting in January 2022.</p> <p><i>M21/18 – recruitment report</i></p> <p>M21/52 The Principal confirmed that the report on recruitment would be presented to the Board meeting in January 2022.</p> <p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>Reports from Committees</p> <p>M21/53 The Board had received reports from Committee Chairs and approved the Policy on the Remuneration of Senior Postholders and the Remuneration Committee Report 2020-21 which were presented by Ms Laycock. Governors noted the disappointing results in relation to the Staff Survey which had been discussed by the Staffing and Remuneration Committee at its recent meeting. It was recognised that there was a lot of work to do and Governors requested that the staff survey report be presented to the next Board meeting for further discussion.</p> <p>M21/54 The Board noted that the Search and Governance Committee continued to actively seek an external Governor with land-based experience and the Chair had recently written to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The Board approved the proposal to establish special interest Governors and any Board members interested in assuming the Health and Safety Governor role were invited to contact the Director of Governance.</p> <p>M21/55 It was noted that the Finance and Resources Committee had recommended that, in light of the Committee’s concerns over recruitment and its impact on funding, planning of the curriculum</p>	
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Principal

and budget for 2022-23 should commence as one process as early as possible in the new Calendar year. The Principal confirmed that this work would start in January 2022.

PRINCIPALSHIP REPORT

M21/56 The Board had received the Principalship report and the Principal highlighted the emerging AEB risk. Governors noted that a meeting was being held with managers the following week to discuss a comprehensive recovery plan. Work also continued on how the curriculum might be developed.

M21/57 A Governor challenged what the timescale was to offer new courses to make up the AEB shortfall and how confident the Principal was that the additional activity could be achieved. The Principal reported that work had already started with new and renewed offers with targeted advertising, and with every effort being made to maximise the contribution. The Principal reported that the data reporting in College had not been sufficiently prompt to identify the issue at an early stage and they were not confident that the shortfall could be made up due to the volume required. The focus was now on controlling costs in relation to the North Yorkshire allocation and driving activity in relation to the West Yorkshire allocation.

M21/58 A question was asked about whether this was a problem for this year only or on an ongoing basis, and the Principal confirmed that it would be a perennial issue.

M21/59 Governors expressed concern about the shortfall in overall delivery in AEB, apprenticeships and HE and requested a paper to the next Board on the proposed strategy to ensure that the target was at least met the following year. The Principal confirmed that they were disappointed that applications had not translated into enrolments but the size of study programmes were being maximised to ensure each student had as much value as possible. They reported that the curriculum planning cycle would not have been progressed sufficiently by the time of the next Board to provide any assurance at that time, however Governors requested a written report to demonstrate the early-stage work around Level 1 recruitment, with comparisons to previous years, and how this would then feed through into subsequent levels. The Chair acknowledged that some of that information would be within the modelling exercise taking place, as requested by the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee, but agreed that short-term assurances about the in-year retrieval and mitigations being put in place should be provided for the January 2022 meeting.

Principal

PAY REVIEW PROPOSAL

M21/60 The Principal presented a paper on the proposed pay review which had been considered and recommended by the Staffing and Remuneration Committee. Members expressed regret that a pay award for all staff was not affordable but agreed that the proposed course was the most pragmatic in the circumstances. Some concern was expressed that it would be challenging to implement the remainder of the harmonised pay scale in the long term although it should remain the College's aspiration.

M21/61 A question was asked about whether, combined with the ESFA clawback, this would impact the College's financial health and the Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) confirmed that both the ESFA clawback and pay award had been provided for in the control budget.

M21/62 Members agreed that this would need to be carefully communicated to staff and the Principal reported that a question and answer session was to be held with staff the following day and a detailed communications plan had been prepared. It was requested that the communications plan be shared with the Chair of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee and Chair of the Board before implementation.

Principal

M21/63 With regret that a full pay award could not be implemented, the Board **approved** the pay review proposal as presented.

Ms Laycock left the meeting at this point.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT AND ACTION PLAN 2021-22

M21/64 Governors had received the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual report and Action Plan for 2021-22, which had previously been considered by the Staffing and Remuneration Committee and noted the contents.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Financial Position Summary

M21/65 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

Audit Committee report to the Board

M21/66 The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the Committee's report to the Board and highlighted a number of key points. It was noted that the Committee had worked hard alongside management to ensure that audit actions were completed in a timely way and there were now no overdue actions. The Board **approved** the Audit Committee's report as circulated.

Management Letter

M21/67 Ms Rae from Armstrong Watson joined the meeting to present the Management Letter in accordance with the new ESFA requirement. It was noted that the Management Letter had already been considered at a joint meeting of the Audit and Finance, Resources and Investment Committee the previous week. Ms Rae highlighted a number of points and confirmed that there was a clean unmodified audit opinion alongside a clean opinion on regularity. Thanks were expressed to both Ms Rae and the finance team in College for their hard work and the Board **approved** the Management Letter as circulated.

Management Representation Letters

M21/68 The Board received the Management Representation Letter which was **approved** for signature by the Chair, and noted the Regularity Representation letter which would be signed by the Principal.

Financial Statements 2020-21

M21/69 The Board had received the Financial Statements 2020-21 which had been considered by the Audit and Finance, Resources and Investment Committees and **approved** them as circulated. Governors commented that the pensions assumption of 2.6% inflation was likely to be below the actual position and that could have a significant impact on future figures.

Control budget 2021-22

M21/70 The Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources) presented the control budget 2021-22 and the component factors. A question was asked about whether the staff structure required review since pay costs were above target and it was reported that the priority was to increase income since the funding within the sector was insufficient. It was reported that there were not many colleges able to achieve 65% pay costs. A Governor challenged the impact of small group sizes and the implications of that, and the Vice-Principal (Curriculum and Quality) reported that work was taking place with managers on staff utilisation and class sizes. Classes had been merged where possible but it may be necessary to look at the estate as many of the classrooms had limited capacity. The Board **approved** the control budget 2021-22 as circulated.

High Street sale

M21/71 An update on the High Street sale had been circulated and Governors noted the contents, **approving** the use of the seal when required for exchange and completion of the sale.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Learning and Teaching report

M21/72 The Vice-Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented the Learning and Teaching report, including destination information, and highlighted key points which had been discussed in detail at the recent Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee.

Self-assessment report 2020-21 and Quality Improvement Plan 2021-22

M21/73 Governors had received an update on the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2020-21 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2021-22 and noted that the College was self-assessing itself as Grade 2. The final SAR and QIP would be presented to the Board meeting in January 2022 for approval following some amendments.

Annual report on complaints and compliments 2020-21

M21/74 The annual report on complaints and compliments for 2020-21 had been circulated and it was noted that only one appeal had been received against the Teacher Assessed Grades in the summer, confirming the robustness of the process. It was noted that most complaints related to the Caring Professions and it was confirmed that these accounted for most of the complaints regarding quality of teaching. It was reported that a number were as a result of the curriculum restructure and the Covid-19 pandemic when students who would have preferred to come into College were unable to.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Health and Safety Annual Report 2020-21

M21/75 The Health and Safety annual report 2020-21 had been circulated and its contents noted.

Health and Safety Policy

M21/76 The updated Health and Safety Policy had been circulated and was **approved** on the recommendation of the Finance, Resources and Investment Committee.

Annual Environmental report 2020-21

M21/77 The Board had received the Annual Environmental report 2020-21 and Governors expressed disappointment that the boilers in Ingleborough had been replaced with similar systems. It was confirmed that efforts had been made to explore other options, without success. In noting that the report provided good information on carbon reduction and the curriculum, it was felt more could be done in relation to the campus and it was agreed further work was needed in pulling together the different strands in this area.

Mr Brown left the meeting at this point.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding Annual report 2020-21

M21/78 The Safeguarding Annual report 2020-21 had been circulated and its contents noted.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

M21/79 The updated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy had been circulated and was **approved** on the recommendation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategic Risk Register

M21/80 The Strategic Risk Register and Action Plan had been circulated and the Principal highlighted that there was one new risk and two risks that were now very high in relation to student recruitment and devolution of the AEB. The Principal reported that it was intended to review all risks and their wording, and that all strategic risks were now referenced to KPIs. A Governor queried inconsistencies between the risk register and the risk appetite in relation to student satisfaction and the Principal reported that the risk appetite referred to more holistic categories whereas the risk register was more specific.

Risk Management Policy

M21/81 The updated Risk Management Policy, incorporating the Risk Appetite, had been circulated and was **approved** on the recommendation of the Audit Committee. It was noted that it was proposed to bring an annual risk appetite statement to the Board.

REVIEW OF MEETING

M21/82

Governors reviewed the effectiveness of the meeting and noted that it had been a long agenda with a number of statutory requirements. An additional meeting had been included in January 2022 to discuss some of the further items requested by the Board.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

M21/83

It was noted that the next meeting was an additional meeting on 19 January 2022 at 5.30pm, with the Away Day scheduled for Friday 28th January 2022.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm