



CAPITAL CITY COLLEGE GROUP BOARD: 13th MARCH 2020

MINUTES OF A TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

PRESENT	Alastair Da Costa (Chair), Roy O'Shaughnessy (CEO), Amelia Sussman, Lord David Triesman, Maarten Zuurmond, Amanda Dickens, Mel Brookstone, Chris Hyams, Shane Chowen
IN ATTENDANCE	Graham Drummond (Clerk), Kurt Hintz, Rachael White <i>Gary Hunter, Kim Caplin and Neil Scott were in attendance for item 11</i>
APOLOGIES	Sarah Ebanja, Keyan O'Donnell, Anthony Smith, Sanna Jordansson, Sharon Saxton
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	None

Due to the emerging national Coronavirus pandemic, the meeting was held via telephone conference.

The Chair started the meeting by explaining that the agenda had been altered and consideration of some aspects of the workshop section would be postponed. An update on the Coronavirus and how the leadership team were mitigating its impact had been added to the agenda.

1. MEMBERSHIP

Interviews had taken place on 24th February and the following recommendations for membership were made by the Search Committee:

- Sanna Jordansson
- Sharon Saxton
- Anthony Impey (as of the start of the board meeting on 8th July)

Both Sharon and Sanna were unable to make this meeting.

Rohini Bhattacharya had also been interviewed and the recommendation was that she joins the CCCT education board.

The Board approved these recommendations and noted that CVs had been attached to the report.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted and approved as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

With respect to item 8 the CEO's and Director of Governance's performance targets would be circulated to the Board.

GD

4. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE – AMENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE

A report which recommended alterations to the term of reference of the remuneration committee was considered and received. The amended terms of reference were approved.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE – RECOMMENDATION TO APPOINT

Following interviews of four firms, it was the view of the audit committee that RSM provided the best fit in relation to the criteria specified within the tender documentation and it was recommended to appoint them as the Group's internal auditors, including the responsibility to carry out funding assurance internal audits.

The Board approved this recommendation and noted that an internal audit schedule would be brought to the Board once it has been considered by the audit committee. GD

6. CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Following the previous day's announcement by the Prime Minister that schools and colleges are to remain open, the CEO provided a verbal update on the mitigation plans that have been and will be put in place with respect to the Coronavirus. The following was noted:

- It is anticipated that sites may be forced to close in the next one to two weeks. If this is to happen, consideration is being given to keeping one site open for the purposes of ensuring the continued welfare of vulnerable students;
- Students were sent home at 1pm the previous day so that staff could receive training on how to deliver teaching and learning online;
- The outcome of a survey has indicated that whilst some students may not have access to a computer and / or broadband at home, the majority do have a mobile phone;
- Hand gel is available on entry to all sites, which staff and students have been asked to use when entering buildings;
- Daily updates are being provided to staff and students and their welfare is being monitored. Where possible, business support staff are being encouraged to work from home;
- Calculations are being carried out to ascertain the potential financial impact, if colleges are forced to close. For example, outcome based funding such as the work carried out in partnership with Job Centre Plus will not be received in the event of closure. Clarification around the potential impact on adult funding is also being sought. The Board will receive updates on this issue once more is known.

The Board further discussed issues surrounding the emerging situation and the following was noted:

- The disruption to learning is difficult to predict but could be between two and six weeks. Whilst a significant proportion of teaching can be delivered using online platforms, some provision e.g. vocational skills based learning, cannot. Learning may have to be postponed until July or August depending on the spread of the virus;
- The impact on the forthcoming exams schedule and the external verification of assessed work has yet to be clarified. Exams boards are working on contingency plans and announcements are expected in due course;
- Each site has an isolation room.

The Board thanked senior leaders for their work in ensuring that teaching and learning continues whilst mitigating the risk of the impact of the virus.

7. FURTHER EDUCATION COMMISSIONER

This item was subject to a confidential minute

8. QUALITY UPDATE

A quality update, including a summary of the post inspection plan was considered and received. The following was noted:

- WKC's Creative and Service Industries Directorate has been included within the Group wide rapid improvement plan to address concerns highlighted by the Ofsted inspection at the Kings Cross site;
- Progress against rapid improvement plans which is monitored on a bi-weekly basis, and a monthly basis by an oversight group which includes education board members, has been variable. Whilst better retention at the Sixth Form College is evident and there is some progress within A level provision at WKC, progress at CBAT is limited. A teaching and learning hub has been established at CBAT and the decline in attendance rates has been arrested, however the improvement in achievement for this year is expected to be limited. It was further noted that the change in leadership at CBAT is anticipated to result in improvement in achievement rates from 2020/21 onwards;
- A summary of the outcome of the Autumn learning survey was also included within the report. There has been some improvement in learner satisfaction, for example 95% of respondents agreed that teaching on their course was good as compared to 92% in the previous year. Also, satisfaction rates at City and Islington College are now in line with the rates demonstrated at the other two colleges. However, in some areas of the survey (at a group wide level) such as 'I have regular meetings to discuss my progress' there has been some deterioration in satisfaction (20% of respondents disagreed with this statement as compared to 16% in the previous year).

The Chair asked what the single most important aspect of the improvement strategy was in terms of impact on the quality of teaching and learning. In response, the implementation of the 'open classroom' policy was highlighted as having the greatest potential impact. It was further noted that at Westminster Kingsway College there has been good progress in agreeing with the Trade Unions the implementation of this policy, whilst at other centres more work is needed to ensure its full adoption in a timely manner.

The Board welcomed the adoption of the open classrooms policy, but challenged executives with respect to how improvements would be measured. It was noted that progress would be monitored through the Group's quality systems such as pro-observe and that KPIs such as student satisfaction, attendance, retention and learning outcomes would be the main visible indicators of improvement. The need for a consistent teaching and learning policy across the group was also recognised.

Whilst it was recognised that a holistic approach to assessing the quality of teaching and learning was important and that indicators only give a partial view, the Board asked that consideration is given to the development of a set of KPIs so that leaders and governors can judge the effectiveness of the open classroom policy.

KH

9. STRATEGIC PLAN: 2020-23

Members noted that if the meeting had been face to face this item would have been the focus of the workshop and it was agreed that further consideration by the Board and consultation with key stakeholders was needed prior to the adoption of the strategy. Kurt Hintz provided an overview of the GLT's and senior college leaders' views. The following was noted:

- Senior leaders, both at group and college level are of the view that the following priorities should form part of the strategic plan:
 - For our learners to enjoy exceptional educational experiences and achieve high quality outcomes;
 - To leave no one behind in the communities we serve;
 - To be a single and sustainable One College structure;
 - To become a globally recognised leader in vocational education;
 - To be London's education employer of choice;
- Other strategies such as the e-learning strategy, the estates strategy, the curriculum strategy and the Group's brand strategy will inform and sit alongside the Group's strategic plan. The Group will also need to consider how it attracts and retains highly talented staff.

In the context that the Group should continue to seek ways in which it can deliver education and training as efficiently as possible, it was the view of the Board that the leadership team should explore ways in which other countries deliver teaching and learning and whether there are improved approaches that can be replicated. It was further noted that:

- The Chief Executive has planned a visit to The Korean Polytechnic University (KOPO) in the May half term as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations and to learn more about their approach to commercial training, particularly the delivery of robotic training;
- The Group has hosted delegations from Sweden, Japan, Korea and New Zealand in the recent past, which has enabled the sharing of best practice;
- The format of the draft curriculum strategy is based on one adopted by a Scottish further education college.

It was further noted that one of the problems facing the FE sector is the ability to attract the necessary teachers and trainers of occupational subjects when salaries outside of education are significantly higher. The Chief Executive recently raised this issue with the Chair of the Education Training Foundation and discussed the possibility of initiating a project which would have the support of industry leaders and involve the delivery of high quality online learning. Other avenues to consider include the Master Class approach.

The Board emphasized the importance of innovation as a central strand of the draft strategic plan, particularly the increased delivery of online learning which it was noted might be forced by the developing situation with respect to the Coronavirus. Amanda Dickens expressed interest in providing support in developing the Group's thinking in this regard.

AD

The Board noted that the draft curriculum plan was a five-year plan but its contents would be reviewed on an ongoing basis as the needs of employers and learners alter. It was further noted that the context section of the curriculum plan is based on the current situation within which the

Group operates. The curriculum plan will be reviewed by the College Education Boards at their forthcoming meetings.

It was agreed that a further draft of the strategic plan would need to be considered by the Board after its contents had been consulted with key stakeholders, including all local boroughs within which the Group operates. The intention is to approve the strategic plan at the Board's meeting in July.

GD

10. FINANCE UPDATE

The management accounts as of the end of January 2020, along with a cashflow forecast and a forecast balance sheet as of the end of July 2020 was considered and received. The following was noted:

- The net operating position as of January is a £7.5m deficit against a forecast of £7.8m;
- The revised end of year forecast is a net operating deficit of £4.1m (and a positive EBITDA of £6.3m);
- Subsequent to a recent GLT meeting, revisions had been made to an in year savings plan which was attached to the report and provided a summary of the actions that will be put in place to find additional savings prior to the end of the financial year, with the aim of bringing the anticipated deficit closer to a break even position. A working group consisting of GLT members will be meeting next week to identify these savings as a matter of priority. For example, the intention is that agency costs will be closed off in April;
- Due to the Coronavirus, it is estimated that international income is down by £400k already;
- Invoices from the last financial year are still being received, however the level of knowledge and control with respect to committed expenditure has improved significantly, in fact it was further noted that it was variances in income e.g. Higher Education income that were resulting in the deterioration in financial performance, not variances in costs for which there is an improved level of understanding;
- A financial oversight group consisting of board members, the CEO and the Chief Financial Officer have been meeting on a bi-weekly basis to monitor and advise on the measures being put in place to improve the financial performance of the Group. A focus for forthcoming meetings will be to consider ways in which the quality of reporting to the Board can be improved, in line with a recommendation made by the FE Commissioner;

10. PAY AWARD

This item was subject to a confidential minute.

11. ESTATES

This item was subject to a confidential minute.

The next meeting will be on Friday 3rd April 2020 at 9:30am.

Signed as a correct record: _____

Alastair Da Costa, Chair of the Board