



CAPITAL CITY COLLEGE GROUP BOARD: 8th JULY 2020

TELEPHONE CONFERENCE MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS	Alastair Da Costa (Chair), Roy O'Shaughnessy (CEO), Amelia Sussman, Maarten Zuurmond, Amanda Dickens, Mel Brookstone, Anthony Smith, Chris Hyams, Shane Chowen, Sharon Saxton, Sanna Jordansson, Lord David Triesman, Keyan O'Donnell, Anthony Impey, Lisa Weaver-Lambert
IN ATTENDANCE	Graham Drummond (Clerk), Kurt Hintz, Rachael White
APOLOGIES	Sarah Ebanja
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	None

Anthony Impey was welcomed to his first meeting.

It was noted that this was Keyan O'Donnell's last meeting. Keyan was thanked for the valuable contribution he has made to the Board, as a student member since his appointment in December 2018.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22nd MAY 2020

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

2. MATTERS ARISING

The Board noted the following:

- With respect to item 2 and the final report from the FE Commissioner, a copy has been provided within item 10 of the agenda;
- With respect to item 3, the inaugural meeting of the quality oversight group had taken place on Thursday 2nd July;
- With respect to item 5, a workshop took place on 26th June, the notes for which are provided within item 15.

All other matters arising were included within the agenda.

3. QUALITY UPDATE

A quality update was considered. It was noted that:

- A successful continuing professional development (CPD) day had been delivered to all staff on the previous day, the focus of which had been the further development of a blended approach to teaching and learning;
- Included within the report was a breakdown of student attendance across the group, which showed that average attendance was 84.9%, which is below target. Retention has been 93.5% which is 0.5% above target. However, it was further noted that this monitoring data is only relevant up until when the lockdown started. Despite this, the improvement in attendance continues to be a key operational target for the Group;
- Further analysis indicates that in some curriculum areas participation rates have improved since teaching was delivered via online means, with rates of 90% or over being experienced. However, for some students e.g. for adults, participation has been more problematic with around one third of students unable to access the internet or use a laptop. This is a barrier to learning for a significant proportion of the Group's students and will be a strategic focus for the next academic year;

- The work associated with the submission and internal validation of estimated grades for public qualifications such as GCSEs and A Levels is now complete and results will be issued in August in line with normal practice;
- A COVID-19 working group consisting of senior staff and trade union representatives continues to meet regularly with the purpose of considering ways in which college sites can re-open to staff and students in a safe manner. Government expectations are that normal class sizes will resume, but that students will be taught in groups of 8 or 9 (bubbles);
- The quality oversight group has considered issues surrounding the delivery of blended learning and the Board will need to be kept informed of further discussions in order to ensure that the Group's strategy is focussed on the continued improvement of the learning experience.

KH
/GD

The Board discussed issues raised within the report and noted that online learning suited some subject areas more than others. Whilst for the teaching of maths online methods are well suited, for some areas such as creative arts, an online approach is more difficult. It was further noted that funding regulations may need to adapt to the new learning environment, for example the claiming of funding through guided learning hours necessitates some evidence of supervision which sometimes is not possible in the case of online learning. The ability to differentiate during an online class is limited and teachers have been developing flipped learning techniques in order to address this. Teachers have also been using some innovative learning materials which have been developed for vocational and occupational subjects; this has been welcomed by students.

The importance of developing partnerships was emphasized and it was noted that within the HE sector e.g. at John Hopkins University some creative approaches to teaching and learning have been developed, which might help to inform the Group's approach. It was further agreed that Lisa Weaver Lambert would contact Kurt Hintz in relation to possible partnerships that could be formed to further develop the Group's approach to blended and online learning.

KH/
LWL

The Board commended staff for their hard work in ensuring that students continue to receive teaching and learning in such challenging times.

4. **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)**

The Chair and Director of Governance introduced this item and explained that the aim of the agenda item was to gauge the Board's view as to how it should develop and make further improvements to its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. Members were asked to consider this item as a governance issue. A short discussion report was considered.

The following views were noted:

- The delivery of training to the Board will assist members in agreeing an appropriate and relevant vision with respect to equality, diversity and inclusion. Further consideration in relation to whether the group forms a partnership with an external stakeholder is also an important issue;
- Student achievement is a key metric and analysis shows that the Group does not have significant differences between students on the basis of protected characteristics, unlike the HE sector where for many institutions the 'awarding gap' for BAME students is considerable. CCCG has a good story to tell with respect to the progression and achievement of its students, a significant proportion of whom are BAME; for example, many BAME students who have underperformed whilst at school, often respond well to a college learning environment and meet their progression aspirations;
- The way in which the Board provides leadership on this issue should be integrated into its schedule of business and processes. For example, all papers presented to the Board should include consideration of EDI issues, and EDI is to be a standing item on the Board's agenda. The Board's monitoring of EDI is to improve with respect to the student experience;
- The Board and the Group Leadership Team needs to be more representative of the student population, not just in relation to ethnicity but also with respect to other protected characteristics such as disability.

GD

GD

It was agreed that the Search and Governance Committee would consider this issue and bring a report back to the Board for consideration. GD

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented his report. The following was noted:

- Included within the report was a rag rating of the group's performance and in the view of the CEO the Group is an 'amber'. A key determinant of whether this improves, is the success of enrolment in August / September;
- Strategic focus will be placed on the Group's core activity and because of this, current structures are being reviewed; for example, the way in which Capital City College Training (CCCT) forms part of the group is being reviewed. The Board will be updated on proposed changes to CCCT at its next meeting; RO
- Amanda Cowley has been appointed to the HR Director role on a permanent basis;
- The CEO has been exploring possible partnership arrangement with other colleges and universities. The Board will be kept informed of developments in this regard. RO

The budget for next year has not yet been finalised and the finance oversight group will need to consider it prior to approval by the Board. Further savings will be needed if a break-even position is to be achieved.

With respect to a pay award, the CEO explained that a variety of options were under consideration. The issue of whether a pay award is included within the budget was further discussed and the Board agreed that a pay strategy is to be approved, following its consideration by the Finance Oversight Group and the Remuneration Committee. The strategy is to clarify the Group's approach to agreeing a general pay award for staff, as well as the intended approach to retain talent at a senior and middle management level. RO/GD

The Board was informed that it was the CEO's intention to move to a leadership structure which included an Executive Principal and Deputy Executive Principal. A proposed structure chart was included within his report. The intention is that Kurt Hintz becomes the interim executive principal from 1st August, with Gary Hunter (currently the WKC Principal) filling the deputy position. Recruitment for the executive principal role will commence in September, with a view that a permanent appointment will be made prior to Christmas. This approach was endorsed by the Board. RO

Included within the report was a request to draw down a loan from Reliance Bank of up to £2m which would be used to pay costs associated with the proposed development of the Regents Park site. It was noted that:

- The interest rate would be 3% above the base rate which is currently 0.75%;
- Due to the Group's operating deficit position, banks were less willing to provide loan finance and that this arrangement would allow loan funds to be accessed as and when is needed up to the limit of £2m;
- The loan would have limited impact on the Group's financial health status as calculated by the ESFA.

The Board approved the loan in principle and delegated the responsibility of signing the loan agreement to the Chair of the Board, the Chair of Audit Committee, the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer. GD/RO

With respect to Regents Park it was noted that members of the Group Leadership Team are due to consider proposals from architectural firms within the next week, after which an appointment decision would be made. The Board will be informed and asked to approve the next stage of the project in early September. RO/GD

6. FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

The management accounts for the end of May were considered and received. The following was noted:

- Significant progress has been made to address the financial sustainability of the Group. In absence of the pandemic an operating deficit of only £2.6m would have been reported

for this financial year; however the impact of COVID-19 is forecast to impact the Group negatively by £2m in the year, with the full year operating deficit now forecast at £4.6m;

- The EBITDA remains a positive £5.7m and it is forecast the Group will move into the good financial health category as at the end of July 2020.

A paper outlining the parameters for the 2020/21 budget was received. The paper has been considered by the finance oversight group who were of the view that a break-even position must be planned for and therefore significant cost savings will need to be implemented. This view was endorsed by the Board and it was agreed that a budget would need to be further considered by the finance oversight group prior to the end of July, with approval by the Board as soon as practicable after that.

RW
/GD

7. EXTERNAL AUDIT APPOINTMENT

The tender process for an external audit service is ongoing. An update report was received and it is anticipated that a recommendation for appointment will be made in the next two weeks.

GD

8. FEES POLICY

A revised fees policy was considered. It was noted that the significant change to the policy was the inclusion of the principle of free tuition for all adult students up to and including level 2 (which has been in place in CONEL for the past two years and at CIC for one year). The policy was approved.

The subcontracting and charges policy for 2020/21 was considered. Included within the policy is a statement that the management fee charged will be between 15% and 30% dependent on the level of risk and therefore the amount of support that will be needed to ensure that quality standards are met. The Greater London Authority (GLA) sets a maximum of 30% for a management fee and in the majority of cases a fee of 20% will be charged in line with best practice. The subcontracting and charges policy for 2020/21 was approved.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The revised version of the group's risk management policy was considered and approved.

10. FURTHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

The final version of the diagnostic assessment report was received. It was noted that a draft update response had been included within the CEO report (item 5).

It was agreed to submit the response once comments had been received by the Board by the end of the week. A covering letter from the Chair and CEO would be included.

GD

11. SOCIAL MOBILITY COMMISSION REPORT

A recent report from the social mobility commission on apprentices was received.

12. DASHBOARD

The Group dashboard was received.

13. BOARD MEETING DATES: 2020/21

The proposed board dates for 2020/21 were received. Invitations via outlook would be sent out in the next 10 days.

14. BOARD SELF ASSESSMENT

In line with best practice, board members will be asked over the summer to complete a short online questionnaire in relation to the performance of the Board, as part of the annual self-assessment process.

GD/
ALL

15. NOTES FROM WORKSHOP: 26th JUNE 2020

The notes from the recent workshop were received.

16. ANTHONY IMPEY: CV

Anthony Impey's CV was noted.

The next formal meeting is scheduled for 22nd October – however a special meeting will be scheduled before that in order to approve the budget.

Signed as a correct record: _____

Alastair Da Costa, Chair of the Board