



TRURO AND PENWITH COLLEGE CORPORATION



Minutes of the Corporation meeting on Wednesday 30 September 2020 via Teams

Members: Mrs K Ashworth, Mrs L Batchelor, Mr R Bray, Mr P Callen, Mr D Collins, Ms K Cook, Mr M Cooper, Mr R Crossland (Chair), Mrs L Gooding, Mr F Hilsdon, Sir Robert Owen, Mrs S Sanderson, Dr E Sheridan, Ms D Skinnard, Mr R Townsend, Mr M Tucker (Principal) and Mr A Young

Also Present: Mrs L Bradley (Director of Quality), Ms J Cashmore (Director of Operations), Mr S Cryer (Finance Director), Ms L Maggs (Director of Operations, Penwith College), Mrs C Mewton (Director of Studies), Ms V Pearson (Director of Teaching and Learning), Mr A Stittle (Director of Partnerships) and Mrs A Winter (Clerk to the Corporation)

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
20/15	Welcome The Chair welcomed new governors and members of the Senior Management Team to their first meeting.	
20/16	Appointment of Student Members for 2020/21 The Corporation APPROVED the appointment of Finn Hilsdon as the Truro FE Student Member of the Corporation and of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Committee for 2020/21.	
20/17	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair Governors noted that the appointments of the current Chair and Vice-Chair of the Corporation were due to end on 31 December 2020 and nominations for the roles had been invited. Bob Crossland and Lizzie Sheridan had expressed a willingness to continue in the roles for an additional six months. No other candidates had been proposed. The Corporation duly APPOINTED : (i) Bob Crossland as Chair of the Corporation until 31 July 2021 (ii) Lizzie Sheridan as Vice-Chair of the Corporation until July 2021.	
20/18	Register of Members Interests Members were reminded of the requirement to ensure the Register of Members' Interests remained correct and to notify the Clerk of changes.	Governors to notify Clerk
20/19	Chair's Business The Chair reported that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Chair's Action had been used to finalise the College's bid to the government's Getting Building Funds towards the establishment of a STEM Skills Centre (due to the very tight deadline)	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the College's autumn 2020 graduation ceremony had been postponed until March 2021 due to the Covid crisis the Governors' Annual Conference would also be postponed until 2021 – revised date to be advised in due course Governor engagement in a range of College activities was being sought, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxbridge mock interviews Bus tender panel Building tender panel for STEM Skills Centre Virtual Learning Walks AoC Online Governance Conference and webinars Ofsted Visit (which was likely during 2020/21) the former Principal, David Walrond, had asked that his thanks were conveyed to governors for their kind retirement gift. <p>On behalf of the governing body, the Chair thanked staff for their remarkable response to the Covid crisis and the way in which they had adapted to the unprecedented challenges in recent months.</p>	Principal to thank staff on behalf of governors
20/20	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>The Principal provided an update on national policy and latest developments including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an FE White Paper (due for publication autumn 2020) was expected to set out significant policy changes for colleges an expansion of FE Adult Skills Funding to support the pandemic recovery had recently been announced the College had been successful with its bid to the government's Getting Building Fund to support the development of a STEM Skills Centre on the Callywith site an Ofsted visit to review the College's Covid response was likely in 2020/21 which would include input from governors – if concerns arose, the 2 day visit could become a full inspection regular dialogue and data sharing was taking place with the Principal of Callywith College the Principal was also maintaining contact with the CEO of Cornwall College, Cornwall Council and local MPs start of year arrangements were dominated by the pandemic with rapid changes to comply with latest guidance - students were pleased to return to the College and despite significant logistical challenges, induction processes had gone well at this early stage, full time FE enrolment numbers this year were looking very positive the numbers of new Apprenticeships had reduced significantly as local businesses, particularly in the hospitality sector, had been severely impacted by the pandemic HE recruitment was showing a decline, as expected recruitment to part time courses had also fallen the publication of exam results, U-turn and award of Centre Assessment Grades had been very difficult, causing stress and disappointment for some students and a number of complaints 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> autumn resit opportunities were being provided for around 40 A level entries and over 300 GCSE entries transport had raised significant concerns and complaints – additional buses had been added to alleviate issues pressure on car parking had risen due to restrictions on car sharing and reluctance to use public transport – the situation was being monitored and managed summer maintenance works had been completed and premises staff had helped to re-organise classrooms and other areas to maximise circulation space and facilitate one-way routes. <p>In reply to questions, the Principal explained the continual reminders, consistent messaging and ways in which extensive Covid-safety measures were being implemented. Staff had been dealing with a range of complaints and concerns, especially from members of the public about students failing to wear face coverings during bus journeys.</p> <p>The Principal also explained there was good communication with Public Health England (PHE) which directed the College's response if a case of Covid was identified. Three students had tested positive so far and relevant groups were self-isolating as determined by PHE.</p> <p>The Corporation noted with interest the summary of the start of year activities for each programme area and College statistics for September 2020.</p>	
20/21	<p>Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2020 were APPROVED as a correct record.</p>	
20/22	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>22.01 Governor Recruitment (Minute 20/02)</p> <p>Three new governors had started and the Search and Governance committee would be continuing to monitor membership and vacancies.</p> <p>22.02 Staff Pay for 2020/21 (Minute 20/08)</p> <p>The pay award had been implemented from 1 September and was very well received by staff.</p>	
20/23	<p>Update on Current Risk Issues</p> <p>The Principal presented a detailed risk management update highlighting the key risk areas and how these were being addressed. The Covid situation presented a range of risks and was continuing to evolve. Constant updates to guidance and policy changes had significant, immediate and longer term implications.</p> <p>The Corporation also discussed the risks relating to recruitment, particularly Apprenticeships, partnership activities and collaboration as well as curriculum developments in new areas such as T Levels.</p> <p>Issues were being proactively addressed to mitigate against the potential consequences and Governors were reassured that risks were being appropriately managed.</p>	

20/24	Safeguarding Update	
	<p>The Director of Studies provided a detailed update on safeguarding and explained how the full range of services and provision had been maintained during the pandemic.</p> <p>The teaching timetable had continued as usual for remote delivery and student participation had been monitored. Any non-engagement or other concerns were promptly addressed and staff were continuing to liaise and to refer to external agencies where necessary. The most vulnerable learners were contacted regularly and received extensive remote support from staff.</p> <p>Policies and procedures were adapted to the remote mode of delivery and an annex to the Safeguarding Policy was developed in response to the Covid crisis. Also, a range of resources had been produced to help students, staff and parents on topics such as online safety and dealing with anxiety.</p> <p>In addition, support for staff wellbeing had also been promoted with a programme of online CPD courses as well as Health, Wellbeing and Sport sessions.</p> <p>In September the emphasis had shifted to supporting the transition to onsite delivery and helping learners and staff adapt to the Covid-related measures and manage anxiety. Safeguarding files relating to new students were being transferred from schools for significant numbers of new students. This term there appeared to be a rise in the number of notifications (via Operation Encompass and VIST reports) concerning police incidents where a student was present.</p> <p>In response to questions, the ways in which services had been adapted to social distancing were explained, for example, by 'Walking & Talking' conversations.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to note the assessment for the Matrix award (for the quality of information, advice and guidance) had been successfully completed online during the spring/summer.</p> <p>The Corporation recognised that it had been an incredibly busy period for the Safeguarding team and noted the ongoing pressure and capacity of the team was under review.</p>	
20/25	Capital Projects	
	<p>The Principal provided a confidential update on capital projects:</p> <p><u>Stadium</u> – government investment towards the stadium was still expected and the Council and LEP were continuing to support the project. An independent evaluation of the business case was underway and legal processes to establish a Community Interest Company (CIC) were progressing.</p> <p><u>Institute of Technology</u> – the Valency building was four weeks behind schedule due to a manufacturing error with the roof. Completion was now due in January 2021.</p>	

	<p><u>STEM Skills Centre</u> – following confirmation of government funding towards the Centre, the project was due to go to tender in October. A panel would assess tenders on 26 November 2020 for work to begin early in 2021. The new Centre would enable Truro and Penwith College to deliver Engineering, Digital and Health Sciences courses from the Callywith site. The relationship and logistics with Callywith College were being discussed.</p>	Volunteers to join tender selection panel to notify Chair or Clerk
20/26	<p>Financial Update</p> <p>26.01 Management Accounts and Cashflow</p> <p>The Director of Finance provided a confidential update on the College's financial position for the period from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. Members noted that the end of year accounts were 'draft' at this stage as invoices relating to the 2019/20 financial year were still being received and processed. Also, there had been a number of recent changes due to the impact of the pandemic on both income (eg. reduced bus pass sales) and expenditure (exam fee savings). The switch to remote delivery had also impacted the budget with savings on utilities but higher IT costs.</p> <p>The overall position had improved as a result of the variations and an underlying surplus achieved. The College had retained its ESFA financial grading of 'Outstanding'.</p> <p>Cashflow projections for the coming two years remained positive.</p> <p>Governors CONCLUDED that overall the College was in good financial health and agreed that, based on the evidence provided, the continued solvency and safeguarding of assets remained satisfactory.</p> <p>26.02 Bus Pass Proposal</p> <p>The Corporation was informed that new methodology for the calculation of Learner Support Funds (giving greater weighting to travel costs) would result in a substantial increase in the College's LSF allocation. The increase would be phased in over the next five years. A recommendation to use the additional funding to significantly reduce the costs of student bus passes was put forward.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the potential benefit of a price reduction and noted the full bus pass price was currently £530 annually, with lower price bands of £260, £130, £50 or free, depending on household income. For some young people the travel costs presented a barrier to accessing college education and a price reduction would be hugely beneficial for many learners and families.</p> <p>The financial implications and cost projections for the revised pricing as well as wider impact were discussed and clarification was provided about the way the phased introduction of the LSF increase would be utilised. Governors noted that the College's substantial transport subsidy could be steadily reduced over the next 4/5 years, as the higher rate of LSF was phased in.</p> <p>Following discussion of the proposal, the Corporation APPROVED the implementation of reduced bus pricing from 2021/22.</p>	

20/27	<p>Review of College's Educational Character and Mission</p> <p>Members noted that it was a requirement of the Instruments and Articles of Government that the Corporation regularly reviewed the Educational Character and Mission of the College. The Principal presented a paper summarising key developments and policy changes since the last review in 2018.</p> <p>Following consideration, Governors concluded that the main aims of the College, the ethos and values remained unchanged.</p> <p>The Corporation CONFIRMED the College's continuing commitment to operate as a broad-based tertiary college and supported the mission: <i>To provide the best possible learning experience, leading to the highest possible level of achievement by our students.</i></p>	
20/28	<p>Reports from Corporation Standing Committees</p> <p>28.01 Remuneration Committee – 8 July 2020</p> <p>The Committee Chair confirmed that the remuneration of the senior postholders and the Clerk were duly considered and decisions authorised.</p> <p>28.02 Employment Policy Committee – 21 September 2020</p> <p>The Committee Chair reported on the range of issues discussed, including staff development activities, recruitment and the impact of the pandemic on policies, practices and staff wellbeing.</p>	
20/29	<p>Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT)</p> <p>The Chair provided an update on recent meetings with the Regional Schools Commissioner as well as the TPAT Chair and CEO. Discussion had included a proposal to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between TPAT to provide greater clarity for both parties.</p> <p>Initial consideration of the scope and content of the MoU were underway and Governors would be involved as the work progressed.</p> <p>To support mutual understanding and closer working, the Principal would attend the next TPAT Board meeting and the TPAT CEO would attend the next Corporation meeting.</p>	Clerk to invite TPAT CEO
20/30	<p>Callywith College Trust</p> <p>30.01 Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>The Principal reported on recent discussions with the Callywith Principal concerning the operational issues and wider implications of the establishment of a new STEM Skills Centre on the Callywith site. A more comprehensive MoU between the two Colleges was being developed to clarify practical arrangements and relationships.</p> <p>30.02 Callywith Land</p> <p>The Principal also reported that negotiations had been finalised to improve access to a site intended for housing adjacent to the Callywith campus. The College is now waiting on the relevant legal documentation from the Council.</p>	

	<p>30.03 Callywith Member Appointment</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the appointment of Martin Tucker as a Member of Callywith College Trust.</p>	
20/31	<p>Annual Report on the Payment of Expenses to Members</p> <p>A summary of the course/conference fees and travel/subsistence expenses for governor activities during 2019/20 was presented. The Corporation NOTED that expenditure remained very low.</p>	
20/32	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>32.01 College Nursery</p> <p>The Director of Studies confirmed that the College Nursery at Truro had re-opened with appropriate Covid-safety measures in place and staff returning after a period of furlough.</p> <p>32.02 Music Tuition</p> <p>The Student Governor asked about cuts this year in the individual instrumental music lessons provided by the College.</p> <p>A brief explanation of the basis for the decision was provided and Governors noted that a financial review of all curriculum areas had highlighted expenditure on unfunded, extra, enrichment provision was considerably higher in some areas, particularly Performing Arts. Every student on a music course was assigned a one-to-one lesson but these were often poorly attended. As a result of funding pressures, in consultation with relevant staff, ways to achieve cost savings were explored and the withdrawal of one-to-one music lessons was identified. The 14 specialist Academies within Performing Arts would continue to be supported.</p> <p>It was also explained that the pandemic had influenced the decision due to the requirement to minimise visitors on site and a shortage of small, Covid-safe practice rooms.</p> <p>Governors expressed concern about the withdrawal of music lessons, particularly the impact on the student experience for those with lower incomes and asked that additional information about the context and rationale was provided for further consideration.</p>	Principal to provide additional information
20/33	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The Corporation would next meet at 4.30pm on Wednesday 16 December 2020 via Teams.</p>	All to note