



Board Meeting

Monday 23rd March 2020

Minutes

Present:

Independent Members:

Lynn Blades
Pamela Chowdhury
Del Cooke
Funmi Esuola
Delia Goldring
Peter Green (Chair)
Lucy Harrison
Angela Hille
Matthew Konneh
Marco Macchitella
Adrian Marrocco
James Marshall
Milton McIntosh
Zubair Shaikh

1.	Amendment to Instrument & Articles
2.	COVID-19
3.	Risk Management
4.	Governance
5.	Minutes
6.	Matters Arising
7.	Principal's Report
8.	Finance Report
9.	Reports from Committees
10.	Confidential Item
11.	AOB
12.	Dates of Next Meetings

Parent Member:

Indira Warwick

Staff Members:

Jo Large

Student Governors:

Yasmin Jedidi
Olivia Opara

Principal:

John Rubinstein

Clerk to the Governors:

Beth Yap

In Attendance:

Ian Hooper
Carol Kirkland
Olivia Stanton
Peter Thompson

Minute	Decision /Action	D/A
1.	To approve two additions to the College Instrument & Articles; 1) to expand the definition of ‘meeting’ to include the use of telephone and video conferencing and 2) to agree that, where appropriate, decisions may be made via written resolution.	D
3.	Principal to include COVID-19 in risk register.	A
4.3	To appoint Heidi Dixon as a Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee for a further term of four years.	D
4.4	To approve a formal leave of absence for Pamela Chowdhury whilst she is on maternity leave.	D
6.4	Aisha Adesanya to contact Alumni to understand what additional support would have helped them during their time at the College.	A
7.	College to look into the issues raised around student toilets.	A
8.1	To approve the management accounts for the first six months of the 2019-20 financial year.	D
9.	Governors to contact Peter Green if they have any concerns regarding their place in the governance structure of the new MAT.	A

1. Amendment to the Instrument & Articles

The Clerk explained that, with the outbreak of COVID-19, it may not be practical for the Board and its committees to meet over the coming months, but decisions relating to the College still need to be made. Therefore, the Board is being asked to approve two additions to the College Instrument & Articles; 1) to expand the definition of ‘meeting’ to include the use of telephone and video conferencing and 2) to agree that, where appropriate, decisions may be made via written resolution.

The Clerk outlined the process for written resolutions, explaining that the Board would be sent an email informing them of the decision that needs to be made and governors then have 3 days to respond. Once a quorum has been reached (50% of Board members or 3 committee members) then the decision can be taken as approved.

There being no questions, the Board agreed to approve the amendments to the College Instrument & Articles.

Decision

2. COVID-19 Update

The Principal updated the Board on the current COVID-19 situation at the College. John Rubinstein explained that the College was open today for staff but from tomorrow it would be closed for two weeks. John reminded the Board that, due to the age of its students, the College does not need to remain open for the children of key workers. The Board was also informed of the work the College is doing to look after its vulnerable students, which includes arranging free school meals funding to be paid by standing order directly to the student.

John went on to outline the financial impact to the College, explaining that all lettings have now been stopped, two overseas trips have been cancelled and canteen staff must continue to be paid despite the College being closed. These factors are expected to impact the College budget negatively by around £80k. John confirmed that there will be some small savings on invigilators and staff

sickness during this time and these are factored into the £80k net figure.

The Board noted concerns about next year's admissions, as the College over-offers the number of places each year, and if all students achieve their predicted grades then there will not be enough places. John reminded the Board that no detailed information about grading has been published but that overall grade profiles are expected to be similar to previous years.

John also informed the Board that it is likely that a longer induction process would be required next year, as students may not have been in school for six months by September. The Board agreed that there is no guarantee that the College will be open in September and noted that some students may choose to take autumn GCSEs or A Levels.

Following the discussion around predicted grades, **governors questioned** how hard College staff graded students during the January mock exams. John explained that many students are concerned about their mock grade being their final result, but this would not be a fair prediction. However, it is expected that any predicted grades must be backed up with evidence.

In response to a question from governors, John explained that the College is expecting some backlash from students wanting a higher result, as students are already contacting staff asking for their predicted grades. John explained that there is an appeal process and that students also have the option to take the exams in the autumn.

Finally, **governors questioned** how the online teaching and learning is going so far. John explained that it is still early days but feedback from staff is positive, with many staff using Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom. The Board also noted that student attendance is being monitored and students who are not actively engaging are being chased.

3. Risk Management

The Board noted the risk management plan, paying particular attention to the risks for which it had responsibility and focusing on the impact of COVID-19. John reminded the Board that this risk management plan is for 2019-20 but COVID-19 will have an ongoing impact on the next academic year.

Under safeguarding, the Board was informed that there has been a safeguarding issue which has resulted in a disciplinary hearing for a member of staff.

John went on to explain that safeguarding has had to be considered whilst organising online learning, such as ensuring that students' webcams are off during lessons.

In response to a question from governors, John confirmed that some students are also being monitored by the Safeguarding Team, with each member being issued a caseload of students.

The Board discussed the business continuity plan going forward and suggested that the COVID-19 risk is included in new iterations of the risk management

Action

plan.

Governors questioned what the College is doing to monitor staff wellbeing. Ian Hooper confirmed that staff are working out how to communicate with each other directly during this time and agreed that the College could do more to lead on this such as checking in with staff members, especially those who are more vulnerable, on a weekly basis as well as organising book or fitness clubs.

The Chair thanked the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and all College staff for their hard work and support of the institution during this difficult time.

4. Governance

4.1 Apologies for Absence

Aisha Adesanya, Helen Pettifor and Lubna Hussain.

4.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

4.3 Heidi Dixon

The Board was reminded that Heidi Dixon, MIS Manager for the College, is a co-opted member of the Audit Committee and governors find staff input at these meetings extremely valuable. Therefore, it was agreed to appoint Heidi Dixon as a Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee for a further term of four years.

Decision

4.4 Pamela Chowdhury

The Board was informed that Pamela Chowdhury is now on maternity leave and has taken a step back from governor duties. The Board approved a formal leave of absence for Pamela during her maternity leave.

Decision

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5.1 The minutes of the meeting of 9th December 2019 were approved and would be signed by the Chair.

5.2 As minute 5 was deemed to be confidential, this would be removed prior to the minutes being uploaded to the College website.

6. Matters Arising

4. Ian Hooper confirmed that Aisha Adesanya is currently contacting alumni to understand what additional support would have helped them during their time at the College.

Action

7. Principal's Report

As the Principal's report had been circulated in advance, the Chair invited governors to ask questions.

In response to a question from governors, Olivia Stanton confirmed that, as

she is due to leave the College at the end of the spring term, she has begun her handover with much of her work being passed to Bethan Mor, Head of Professional Development.

Ian Hooper had nothing further to add to his report but updated the Board on the progress of current vacancies. Peter Thompson had nothing to add to his report but thanked the maths department for its hard work this year.

In response to a question from governors, Carol Kirkland confirmed that the repair to the sports hall roof is currently on hold, as this work cannot be completed whilst the College is closed. Carol informed the Board that, as there would be no exams this summer, this leaves a larger window during which the work can be completed.

In response to a final question from governors, Carol confirmed that, whilst the College campus is closed the Senior Caretaker will continue to visit the site to ensure security.

Finally, the Board discussed the Student Governor report, noting that this was extremely detailed. The Board requested that the College look into the issues raised around student toilets.

Action

8. Financial Reports

8.1 Management Accounts 2019-20

John Rubinstein presented the management accounts for the first six months of the 2019-20 financial year. John reminded the Board that this was always going to be a difficult year financially prior to the outbreak of COVID-19.

The Chair reassured staff that the Board is aware the College is doing all it can to manage its finances at this difficult time and acknowledged that many of the factors are out of the College's control.

The Board approved the management accounts for the first six months of the 2019-20 financial year.

Decision

9. Reports from Committees

9.1 Audit Committee

The minutes of the Audit Committee of 27th January 2020 were noted.

9.2 Search & Governance Committee

The minutes of the Search & Governance Committee of 3rd February 2020 were reviewed. The Board noted that the feedback from the Annual Strategy & Training Event in January was extremely positive and it has been agreed that a session with College students should be included in future events.

9.3 Special Panel

The Board was informed that a special panel was convened to hear a permanent exclusion appeal on 12th February 2020 and that the panel

upheld the decision to permanently exclude the student.

9.4 Quality & Standards Committee

The minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee of 24th February 2020 were noted. The Committee discussed the College Self-Assessment Report and has since received an updated action plan from the maths department.

9.5 Extraordinary Finance & Operations Committee

The minutes of the Extraordinary Finance & Operations Committee of 25th February 2020 were noted and the Chair confirmed that the IFMC has been submitted to the ESFA.

9.6 Finance & Operations Committee

The minutes of the Finance & Operations Committee of 9th March 2020 were noted and the Chair confirmed that the College Accountant is looking into a reserves policy for the College.

10. Confidential Item

Confidential Minute.

11. AOB

The Chair of the Audit Committee informed the Board that the internal audit has been postponed this year due to COVID-19 but reminded governors that this is not mandatory for colleges.

The Board was reminded of the Extraordinary Board Meeting that has been arranged for 27th April 2020 to approve the dissolution of the Corporation and the creation of the Frontier Learning Trust.

The Chair informed the Board that future governor meetings will take place via Microsoft Teams (video conferencing) and the Clerk will be in touch to inform of the next steps.

Finally, the Board noted that this is the last meeting of Olivia Stanton and wished her all the best for the future.

12. Dates of Next Meetings

6th July 2020

BOARD

The meeting concluded at 8:05pm