



**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting  
Tuesday 5 April 2022 at 15:30  
Coventry University**

Present: Prof Adam Boddison Chair  
Kamal Bodhanker Vice-Chair  
Anthony Gribben-Lisle Vice-Chair  
Rachel Barr  
Thomas Crane  
Di Crookes  
Rebecca Keeves  
Donna Kendall  
Jemma McKenzie  
Tony Minhas  
Sarfraz Nawaz  
Henry Seaton  
Carol Thomas

In Attendance: Robert Griffiths Turnaround Director  
Kay Kavanagh Head of Governance  
Gemma Knott Vice Principal Business Growth, Engagement & Partnerships  
Patrick Geary Vice Principal Curriculum Innovation, Quality & Performance

<b>Agenda No:</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action owner:</b>
1	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b> The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received from Tina Thorpe and David Busst.  It was noted that Kamal Bodhanker and Thomas Crane were attending remotely.	
2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Members were asked to declare any Interests, financial or otherwise, which they may have in any Agenda Item, there were no declarations made.	
3	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> Governors <b>approved</b> the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2022 as a true and accurate record.	
4	<b>Matters Arising</b> Governors monitored action taken and remaining to be taken in respect of Matters Arising from the Minutes of previous meetings.  CT advised that the advert is still live for the CFO position, with only 1 formal application made to date. The interview date will be 10 May. <b>Action:</b> AB and AGL to discuss the CFO recruitment process with CT.	AB / AGL

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	There is no further information on the Black FE Leadership Group. CT has joined the MWCA E&D Group, updates from this group will be presented to the F&R Committee.	
5	<p><b>Determination of any Other Urgent Business</b></p> <p>A governor would like to raise a question concerning safeguarding and DBS checks. This was noted to be covered during the meeting.</p>	
6	<p><b>Chair's Report</b></p> <p>AB advised that he and CT attended a Strategic Conversation with the ESFA and Deputy FE Commissioner. The call was positive with the ESFA being broadly happy with the progress made, and that continues to be made. They are sympathetic around the frustrations with funding and processes for bids.</p> <p>A letter has been received by all Chairs from the FE Commissioner. It specifically mentions Coventry College. <b>Action:</b> KK to circulate the FE Commissioner letter to all governors</p> <p>AB formally welcomed Kay Kavanagh, Head of Governance, to Coventry College.</p> <p>AB attends the AoC Chairs Network and advised that discussions have taken place around the Education White Paper and the SEND Green paper (still in consultation phase). Further updates will be provided in due course.</p>	KK
7	<p><b>Principal/CEO's Update</b></p> <p>CT provided a verbal update; governors noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coventry College was the first College to go through the PIMS process. CT confirmed that the process was challenging but supportive and the meeting, in which the Deputy FE Commissioner attended, was overall very positive.</li> <li>• A Strategic Development Fund bid will be entered for Engineering to fulfil the local need. As Coventry College is a Grade 3 college from Ofsted, we are unable to lead on the bid. We will explore the opportunity to work with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Warwickshire College Group</li> <li>○ North Warwickshire &amp; South Leicestershire College</li> <li>○ Solihull College</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy continues to be developed</li> <li>• Planning is underway for the Student and Staff awards</li> <li>• Covid cases are reducing, but remain high</li> </ul> <p>A governor <b>asked</b> if the Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy will be presented to the Corporation. CT confirmed that it will go to the Finances &amp; Resources Committee followed by Corporation.</p>	
8	<p><b>KPI Update</b></p> <p>The KPI report was discussed, with updates highlighted.</p>	

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owner:**

CT explained that the Green/Amber/Red is a decision CT makes based on that moment in time. There is no formula for the decision.

Given recent incidents in the media in relation to knife crime, a governor **asked** if the College briefed students. PG confirmed that each ½ term, 'stop and search' is used, with nothing found to date. A positive approach is taken, students and parents informed, and staff are updated during Staff Development Days.

A governor **asked** for an update on the DBS update service. CT explained that this is in progress, at a cost of £18k. All staff will be enrolled on the update service.

A governor **asked** why health and safety was Amber, as opposed to Green. CT clarified that action plans are in place, with progress being made. Further progress is still needed.

A governor **questioned** staff turnover levels. CT confirmed that staff turnover is currently at 4.5% YTD, with an expected end of year turnover of circa 12%. National average is 17%.

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### **Financial Report**

RG presented an overview of the Management Accounts and Financial Report.

Cash balance at the end of February was c.£5.9m. Income is slightly ahead of budget by £12k. Tuition Fees are currently £108k under budget in part due timing as ESOL students are now enrolled on a termly basis. Pay is currently running under budget. Overall net surplus position is showing a positive variance of £726k YTD.

The strong focus on cost control and income growth has led to a position where core 'trading cash generation has clawed back all of the £2.5m proxy cash absorption seen from Aug 19 to Apr 20. This shows that the College is sustainable.

Payroll costs are increasing, with annual staff pay increments paid from Aug 21 increasing the annual pay costs by approx. £9k per month (110k per annum).

FTEs rising at a teaching level back to same levels as this time last year. Still a significant drop in non-teaching FTE's in part from loss of Henley and also the Nursery.

A governor **questioned** how many vacancies the College currently has. CT confirmed that there are currently around 25 vacancies. This has increased overall for STEM, but for other areas, the vacancy levels are steady and in line with previous years.

A governor **questioned** if the agency costs were of concern. CT explained that due to the level of vacancies, the costs are not a concern – the alternative would be to close key areas of provision. CT added that agency costs for STEM are also rising. PG confirmed that most vacancies are being filled within 3 months, however, some areas, such as Construction, can have open vacancies for longer than 3 months.

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	<p>In relation to the balance sheet, RG suggested that the Corporation may want to consider depositing funds in a high interest account. CT suggested that it may be prudent to investigate options following discussions concerning the bank loan. The cashflow comparison for Aug-Feb 20/21 to 21/22, shows no material change. Apprentices and HE are the only material reductions. The comparison shows the benefits of the pay reduction driven last year, but also lower redundancy costs in current year.</p>	
	<p>A governor <b>questioned</b> the amount of £1,091,500 during January 2022, against Non-Recurring. RG confirmed that this was in relation to a Skills Grant. This was a one-off amount.</p>	
	<p>The latest forecast shows an operating surplus of £752,000.</p>	
	<p>A governor <b>questioned</b> if inflation had been factored into the forecast, along with electricity cost increases. RG confirmed that inflation had been factored, as had the rise in electricity costs.</p>	
	<p>A governor <b>asked</b> if there was a possibility of making an additional payment on the loan, given the surplus. RG explained that this could be considered and discussed later in the academic year when different scenarios could be considered. The loan is due to be re-negotiated in July 2023. The sale of the Henley Site should be completed by the end of December 2022, which will also be taken into consideration.</p>	
	<p>There were no further questions.</p>	
10	<p><b>Risk Register</b> AGL explained that the Risk Register is being considered and updated by a T&amp;F Group. Once feedback has been collated and the Risk Register updated, it will be shared with the Corporation.</p>	
11	<p><b>Reports from Committee Chairs</b>  <b>a) Education &amp; Standards</b>            HS provided an overview of the meeting held on 8 March 2022. Governors noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400 students were absent due to Covid during one week in January 2022, either with Covid, or self-isolating</li> <li>• <b>Action:</b> AB to send details of Commonly asked Ofsted questions to KK to circulate</li> </ul> <p>The student board has met. Governors proposed that a Vice-Chair be appointed for the student board, to assist when the Chair is absent. PG explained that a topic of interest was around the NUS Conference and the vote in favour of divesting or decolonising those organisations that Colleges partner with (Russian or 'extreme' organisations). PG will discuss this further with SLT. <b>Action:</b> PG to contact Leonie to ensure attendance and to inform of the need for a Vice-Chair for the Student Board.</p>	AB
		PG

Agenda No:	Item	Action owner:
	<p><b>b) Search &amp; Governance</b>  Governors <b>received</b> the minutes from the meeting held on 15 February 2022 noting that the main business was recruitment and updates had been provided during the subsequent Corporation Meeting.  A further meeting of the committee had taken place, although minutes were not yet available. AB provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of Reference had been reviewed and amendments recommended</li> <li>• Succession planning had been discussed, with an updated Skills Audit to be issued in the Autumn term</li> <li>• Various policies had been reviewed and recommended for approval</li> <li>• Governor appraisal will take place in the summer term, using a common format in order to provide baseline data for subsequent years</li> <li>• An External Review of Governance will take place during the 2022-23 academic year</li> <li>• An updated Code of Conduct was approved for circulation and acceptance</li> </ul> <p><b>c) Finance &amp; Resources</b>  Governors <b>received</b> the minutes from the meeting held on 14 February 2022 and noted that an update had been provided at the previous meeting.</p> <p><b>d) Audit</b>  Governors <b>received</b> the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2022 and noted that an update had been provided at the previous meeting.</p> <p>The issue concerning open audit actions was discussed, with governors agreeing that updates are required to give assurance that completed actions/recommendations are closed. CT added that most outstanding actions/recommendations are now closed.</p>	
12	<p><b>Any Other Urgent Business</b>  AB reminded governors of the upcoming 'We Will Rock You' student production, and to inform KK if they are able to attend.</p> <p><i>Non-Governors, Staff Governors and Student Governor left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
13-14	<p><b>Confidential Agenda Items</b>  See Confidential Agenda</p>	
15	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b>  Tuesday 8 July at 4pm, Boardroom, Coventry College</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 17:20</p>	