

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on Tuesday 28 April 2020 at
4.00pm (virtual meeting)**

Present: Simon Perryman (Chair)
 Nick Bowen (Vice Chair)
 Helen Jaggard (Vice Chair)
 Yiannis Koursis (Principal and CEO)
 Kay Dickinson (Governor)
 Simon Taylor (Governor)
 Peter Clarkson (Staff Governor)
 David Shepherd (Governor)
 Chelle Charlesworth (Staff Governor)

In attendance: Heather Jackson (Director of Governance and Clerk to the Board)
 David Akeroyd (Vice Principal – Technical & Professional Education)
 Tony Johnson (Vice Principal – Corporate Services)
 Liz Leek (Vice Principal – Curriculum & Culture)
 Laila Lawton (Vice Principal – Finance)
 Ben Owen (Deputy Principal Development)
 Toni Rhodes (Vice Principal Quality & Access to Learning)

PART I – For Publication

Minute	
PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
B20/022	Agenda Item No. 1: Quorum The meeting was quorate.
B20/023	Agenda Item No. 2: Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Daniel Lea, Alexander Newton, Conor Moss and Suki Rai.
B20/024	Agenda Item 1.1 Covid 19 – College Overview Yiannis Koursis provided the Governors with an update on the wide range of activities that the College and its staff and students had been undertaking since the start of the lockdown including donating PPE to the

Minute	
	<p>hospital and making scrubs and visors which had been widely reported on Look North and in the Barnsley Chronicle. Staff across all functions had been working hard to ensure a continuous, quality learning experience for our students. He noted that the College was still on a learning curve but expected that it would leave some lasting changes in the way the College operates in the future.</p> <p>Yiannis noted that between 35%-50% of apprentices had been furloughed nationally with no new starts expected this academic year. T-Levels were still expected to start in September.</p> <p>There had been a big drop in HE applications for the 2020/21 academic year, a smaller drop in 16-17 year olds was expected.</p> <p>Yiannis Koursis noted that he had been asked to join the Sheffield City Region Recovery Advisory panel, who would be developing a range of scenarios for the future, post lockdown.</p> <p>He also noted that the senior leadership team had started to plan for the re-opening of the College, focusing initially on operational activities, seizing digital opportunities and focusing on a different curriculum model.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update.</p>
<p>B20/025</p>	<p>Agenda Item 1.2 – Teaching, learning and assessment</p> <p>Toni Rhodes noted that 350 virtual learning walks had taken place over the last couple of weeks into every curriculum area. There was 98% engagement and attendance remains consistent with a wide variety of innovative teaching and learning methods across all subject areas and levels.</p> <p>The College’s priority was to ensure that all learners are continuing to learn. Students had praised the increased 1-2-1 support and particularly the speed of online feedback</p> <p>Governors were invited to take part in a virtual learning walk and should contact Toni Rhodes (t.rhodes@barnsley.ac.uk) if they would like to take part.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update.</p>

Minute	
B20/026	<p>Agenda Item 1.3 – Staffing Update</p> <p>Tony Johnson noted that there were currently 13 staff self-isolating. At its peak a total of 73 staff were self-isolating (30th March).</p> <p>No staff had been furloughed as yet as there was a concern about double funding.</p> <p>9 agency staff were still being employed in shortage areas but Tony Johnson noted that managers had been instructed before the lockdown to reduce numbers as soon as possible. It was noted that agencies were pushing the responsibility for agency staff onto Colleges nationally rather than furloughing their staff.</p> <p>Simon Taylor noted a similar position at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU). He also noted that some staff had been furloughed at SHU in the sports and catering teams where funding had reduced.</p> <p>A support resource hub had been developed for staff and a remote coffee and chat was taking place every Wednesday and Friday for staff. The IT team had also sourced a wellbeing app which was being rolled out to all staff. HR were still actively supporting managers with a wide range of HR issues. Payroll was up to date and all reconciliations and data collections were being managed remotely.</p> <p>Governors discussed whether data was being gathered on mental health issues and Tony Johnson noted that Heads of Department were still responsible for ensuring regular engagement and monitoring with all of their staff. No mental health issues had been reported to date but this was continuing to be monitored. It was noted that social interactions were improving as staff got used to the technology</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update.</p>
B20/027	<p>Agenda Item 1.4 Vulnerable Student Provision and Student Support</p> <p>Liz Leek updated governors on the support being given to vulnerable students. Every young person had been contacted and all high needs and looked after individuals (including those leaving care) had been contacted on a daily basis initially. This continues although levels of contact depend on need.</p>

Minute	
	<p>Provision for 14-16 year olds continued over Easter and it was noted that although contact could not be made initially with 3 students it had been facilitated via their social workers.</p> <p>The College was providing support, food, internet access, laptops and other equipment to those students who needed it and online safeguarding was continuing.</p> <p>It was noted that much more fulsome communication had been noted by students and the College was looking at how this provision could be delivered in the future.</p> <p>The support pups were still working with students and staff were using emoji's as they took registers as another tool to assess student wellbeing and mood and prioritising support accordingly. It was also noted that learners liked the quick turnaround on feedback as staff were more 'available' online.</p> <p>Liz Leek noted the wide range of cultural capital activities that were being offered across the curriculum for learners.</p> <p>Governors then discussed the changes to the Safeguarding Policy (Agenda Item 1.8).</p> <p>Liz Leek noted the Government had increased the scope of the people considered to be at risk and increased the amount of reporting on these learners. A weekly report was also made to the Council.</p> <p>It was noted that the amendments were an addendum to the current policy and were meant as a specific response to Covid-19. Liz Leek noted the changes in chain of command and in particular that issues can now come directly to the designated lead (Liz Leek)</p> <p>Helen Jaggard asked if there had been any increases in learners 'on the edge' or in domestic abuse. Liz Leek noted that there had not been any great increase in the need for support. Any learners who do not attend are followed up and some groups are now working in smaller numbers to provide appropriate support. There had been no increase in the report of domestic violence, but staff and students had been provided with additional resources and guidance. Students had also been reminded on how to report concerns.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve the changes to the Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p>Simon Taylor had asked how many additional laptops had been provided, how need was assessed and at what cost. Liz Leek noted that staff had</p>

Minute	
	<p>started to plan for lockdown early and had identified any students who needed equipment and support before the College closed. There had been no costs as equipment used was already in the College and had been repurposed and need had been assessed on a case by case basis. After lockdown some equipment had been delivered directly to students.</p> <p>David Shepherd asked what plans were being put in place for the future if the feedback indicated the students like the feeling of individualised support. Liz Leek noted that plans were at an early stage however three key areas had been identified for future focus: Knowledge – online and face to face Skills – online and face to face Behaviour – face to face The College was looking at how best to address the future expectations and new normal for learners.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update.</p>
B20/028	<p>Agenda Item No. 1.5 Financial Update</p> <p>Laila Lawton presented the financial update. She predicted that there would be a £2.1m reduction in income with apprenticeship income declining by £1m, from £5.7m to £4.7m and commercial income declining by £1m. The EBITDA target was predicted to fall from £4m to £2.5m.</p> <p>The point score was predicted to fall from 210 to 140 which was mainly due to the reduction in EBITDA. It was also noted that this reduction potentially puts the covenants at risk with Santander and Barclays. Laila Lawton had already been in discussion with the banks.</p> <p>Governors were informed that expenditure had been stopped where appropriate and annual capital expenditure had been delayed. Heads of Department had been asked to reforecast for period 8 rather than period 9 and look at where costs savings could be made especially in staffing and non-pay costs. Laila Lawton anticipated being able to produce more detailed analysis for the Board in May.</p> <p>It was noted that the College had met with ESFA and outlined the financial position. It was pleasing to note that the ESFA had noted and expressed sympathy about the exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Laila Lawton noted that the cash position was acceptable currently but that she was keeping a close eye on it. It was anticipated that December would be a pinch point particularly around signing off the accounts and statement of going concern. She noted that she had spoken to Grant</p>

Minute	
	<p>Thornton (external auditors), at this stage they were not sure what additional work would be required and it was noted that the audit committee date may need to be moved to December.</p> <p>Helen Jaggar asked what the implications were if we breached our covenant with the banks. Laila Lawton noted that the bank had been supportive and had agreed that they would discuss it again, at the year end. It was also noted that the ESFA had noted the banks support. Laila Lawton stated that this was normally a red line which she would not want to go beyond but that these were exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>It was noted that supplier relief applied to the College and the survival of the supply chain were key. Colleges, as they were in receipt of public funding, were expected to continue paying suppliers as normal.</p> <p>The College continued to review guidance and eligibility for various funding paths but currently it was estimated that they would only be eligible for a maximum of £80k of funding (the College can evidence costs of £30k so far). Assessment was based on need and the College still had a bank balance of £6m plus access to over drafts of up to £2m. The College was not therefore proposing to apply for support but would continue to look at the funding available for ITS as this could have a significant impact on their operations.</p> <p>Yiannis Koursis noted that the College had received a letter from the FE Commissioner who had indicated that there would be no interventions this year.</p> <p>Simon Taylor noted that Sheffield Hallam was having the same conversations with the banks about covenants and with their external auditors along with a drop in their EBITDA.</p> <p>Laila Lawton noted that she had factored in around £1m of savings including £300k for catering and buildings but the College was still paying rates and utilities.</p> <p>Kay Dickinson noted that ITS should be supported wherever possible as they were quite different to the College. Yiannis Koursis agreed and noted that they were eligible for up to £36k which would make a difference to their operations.</p> <p>Yiannis Koursis proposed that the College had two choices currently with regard to its finances. It could let all of the agency staff go and cut its cloth accordingly or it could continue with its current approach valuing its reputation as a good employer and retaining the agency staff, who are filling important gaps and supporting students particularly those still on</p>

Minute	
	<p>apprenticeships. This will also help enhance our reputation as an employer of choice in the future.</p> <p>Simon Perryman noted that he felt it was important that the College ‘did right’ by its staff and that we should apply for funding and support if it was worthwhile and legitimate. He noted that it was disappointing that there was not much financial support available. He also noted that it was important to focus on the future, both the opportunities and challenges ahead and to ensure that the College was best placed to deal with them.</p> <p>David Shepherd asked if a budget had been set aside to bring buildings back into use safely (legionella etc.) Laila Lawton stated yes, this budget had been set aside.</p> <p>Helen Jaggar suggested that the letter from David Hughes regarding lobbying the government for funding could be circulated to the Board.</p> <p>Simon Perryman noted that the £2.5m EBITDA was disappointing and felt like a big drop. Yiannis Kouris agreed and noted the volatility in funding particularly around levy apprenticeships where funding was on a commercial basis and not eligible for government support.</p> <p>Kay Dickinson asked if there was a change in building usage, this would have an impact on VAT liability. Laila Lawton responded that it would have no impact currently but changes to future delivery models might.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update and to support the College in its current actions noting the changes in EBITDA, reductions in income and the work required to reduce costs whilst ensuring the importance of retaining its reputation as a good employer.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the possible changes to audit requirements and to agree a later date for the December Audit Committee. (subsequently agreed for 8 December)</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to apply for funding where worthwhile and legitimate for the College and ITS.</p>
B20/029	<p>Agenda Item 1.6 – Apprenticeships & Business Engagement</p> <p>Ben Owen updated the Board on apprenticeships. The College was continuing to support teaching and learning and working with employers with compliance issues reducing. They were continuing to sign up and sign off apprenticeships and it was noted that there were still bidding</p>

Minute	
	<p>opportunities available that the College was participating in. Work was continuing on higher apprenticeships in Telford and Shropshire.</p> <p>Simon Perryman asked how many apprentices had been furloughed and Ben Owen noted that the majority were still in learning. Most of those furloughed had been in retail-based apprenticeships.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update.</p>
B20/030	<p>Agenda Item No. 1.7 T-Levels and Sci-Tech Project</p> <p>David Akeroyd noted that guidance had been received on T-Levels and the College was working towards a September Launch. He noted that there were likely to be challenges with employer input into delivery elements of the programme especially in the digital and construction sectors. Employers may also need time to be ready for extended placements so the College was looking at the format of delivery. Some staffing was still required.</p> <p>David Akeroyd noted that there had been encouraging work on Sci-Tech and it was noted that there had been no decision made on the name of the new building.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the update.</p>
B20/031	<p>Agenda Item No 2. Fleets Project</p> <p>Laila Lawton presented the paper on the Fleets project to the Board and noted the previous discussion on the financial position of the College. Currently there are group of learners in sub-standard accommodation and it was important to note that money had been saved to finance this work and given the current circumstances the College may get to a position where we can no longer afford to undertake the work if it is not undertaken now.</p> <p>Helen Jagger asked what the building might be used for post Covid-19 and whether any other buildings had been considered. Laila Lawton noted that other buildings either don't have the space or are of sufficient quality. She noted that the College had engaged a property consultant to review the estates strategy and to consider delivery models. This would be brought to a future Board meeting.</p>

Minute	
	<p>Simon Perryman asked for Board views given the current financial challenges. Laila Lawton stressed the importance of investing in our learners.</p> <p>Nick Bowen noted the negative connotations of the Fleets site, it was vulnerable to break-ins and away from the rest of the College sites. Laila Lawton noted that this group of students had been based there before but the current plans provide a better range of facilities and support.</p> <p>David Shepherd noted that the council had a site nearby which had security issues and suggested a joint approach. Laila Lawton agreed to discuss this further.</p> <p>Kay Dickinson asked if the project had been planned for in the financial forecast. Laila Lawton noted that it had and that CCTV and access controls had been planned into the refurbishment costs. Additional estates resource had been requested by the team and the staff were supportive of the move which they viewed as a new start.</p> <p>Simon Taylor noted that the procurement process was based on indicative costs and queried whether the financial regulations allowed for this. He also asked that documentation be provided on costs at a future meeting.</p> <p>Laila Lawton noted that governor approval was needed to progress with the project proposal.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the report and approve the request to develop the Fleets site noting the changes to normal processes of procurement and approving the approach taken in this instance. More detailed costs would be provided at a future meeting.</p>
B20/032	<p>Agenda Item 3: Creative Session</p> <p>It was agreed that given the time pressures, further instructions would be provided to Governors on the Creative Session activity and an additional session would be held in May to agree a final position.</p>
B20/021	<p>Date and Time of the next meeting:</p> <p>Tuesday 19 May 2020</p>

The meeting closed at 6:15



Signed (Chair): Dated:
