



**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
HELD REMOTELY ON WEDNESDAY 17th JUNE 2020**

Present: Anna Barnish, Lucy Barrow, Gary Doyle, Sue Higginson (Principal), Lorraine Jones, Tim Kelly (Chair), Richard Mawdsley, Joe McArdle, Phil McKeown, Paul Smith, Jayne Winders, Vix Wrigley.

In attendance: Michael Norton, Deputy Principal
Christine Carter, Vice Principal – Curriculum
Philip Jones, Vice Principal - Quality
Joseph Finneran, Director of Estates
Pooja Furniss, Director of People and Organisational Development
Nikki Leising, Financial Controller
Kenny Scott, Health & Safety Manager
Lesley Venables, Clerk to Governors
Louise Scott-Kelly, Administrator to Governors

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

277. Apologies for absence were received from Michael Taylor (Student Governor).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

278. The following standing interests were declared:

- Lucy Barrow – on secondment to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.
- Tim Kelly – any matters relating to the Merseyside Pension Fund.
- Richard Mawdsley – any matters relating to Peel Holdings.
- Joe McArdle – any matters relating to the University of Chester and as a parent of a student who attends the College.
- Paul Smith – employed by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council and that his spouse was employed at the College.

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN, RISK ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

279. The Principal presented the College's comprehensive Covid-19 Strategy and Risk Assessment. This was based upon 11 standards that were underpinned by the Government's guidance on arrangements for educational establishments to return to work safely and included:

- A detailed Action and Implementation Plan
- Risk Assessment (including individual-specific assessment)
- Equality Impact Assessment
- 9 corresponding Method Statements that detailed controls.
- A revised Curriculum Strategy.

280. Thorough risk assessments and Method Statements had been prepared to provide sufficient information to ensure staff and students health and safety and to support them in the revised ways of working required as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

281. The Principal reported that consultations on the Strategy with the recognised trade unions continued. It was noted that the strategy was a working document and would be updated in line with any further government guidance being issued.

282. A governor enquired about the expectation of all staff downloading the Government "Track and Trace App". As this was not yet available, the Track and trace refers to the physical process in place and when an app is available would expect staff and students to engage in that.

283. A governor enquired about staff or students who may have reservations about downloading the app due to data sharing. The Principal responded that any staff and students with Covid-19 symptoms were obliged to follow the NHS Track and Trace guidance and to inform the College's HR department. If the app was available by September 2020, this would be incorporated into the student induction process.

284. A governor referred to the Standard on financial and business continuity risks and asked if any of the College's sub-contractors were highlighted as a risk. The Principal responded that the College had secured its in-year subcontractor allocation for both 16-18 and adults from the ESFA. However, the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on enrolments and funding would not be realised until next academic year.

285. In response to questions from governors, the Director of People and Organisational Development, reported that there were 16 members of staff across the College who were considered to be at high risk and were currently 'shielding' in accordance with Government guidance.

286 The Principal added that some staff within this group had asked if they could return to work. The College had informed the staff that they must follow Government advice and the College would not support their attendance, against such advice. Any staff who were shielding and wished to return to work would need to provide formal, written confirmation from their doctor.

286. The Director of Estates informed that the College had invested significantly in health and safety measures to ensure social distancing, including implementing a one-way system at all sites, erecting protective screens between desks, providing a supply of Personal Protective Equipment, hand sanitisers and signage across all campuses to reinforce. All members of the Facilities and Cleaning Teams had also undertaken specialist Covid-19 training.

287. A cohort of students would be required to undertake final assessments at the end of June in order to achieve their qualification. The Estates Team was thoroughly preparing these areas so that this work could take place.

288. A governor asked about the use of the College lifts. The Director of Estates reported that the lifts were all fully operational and had been repaired using the grant funding that the

College had received. Staff and students would be encouraged to use the one-way system stairwells to enable the lifts to be used by only those who could not navigate the stairways.

289. The Curriculum Strategy had been remodelled to reflect the move of some sessions to remote delivery and to ensure the safety of staff and students. Vocational classes would be scheduled to avoid multiple commutes for students, with smaller class sizes to achieve the appropriate level of socially distancing. For theory classes, some would move to online and a smaller class of students would be scheduled to remain in one room, with only the teaching staff moving classrooms to reduce travel around college. Cleaning sessions had also been timetabled between class changes. Remote teaching, learning and support would continue to be delivered online, where possible.

290. Managers in each curriculum area were addressing the needs of their own areas. Based upon the 11 Standards, managers would inform the departmental Risk Assessment and create a blended learning model for their curriculum area to mitigate risks.

291. The Vice Principal – Quality updated governors on the College’s arrangements for remote learning. There had been a concerted effort to provide students with IT resources and connectivity to engage online. “Digital Poverty” had been highlighted as a national issue and the College was in the process of acquiring and distributing laptops to loans to students, with parent/carer support, to ensure that no student was disadvantaged by the lack of IT capability at home.

292. Learner Portals were being developed to enable students to access their learning plan and bespoke learning resources remotely.

293. Governors were reminded that the Principal had previously presented the e-safety update on live-streaming to the trade unions, which was designed to ensure that staff used safe working practices online. The Principal also confirmed that Public Health representative, The Local Authority and Unison were all content with the processes and Public Health had contributed. There remained some issues with UCU which had been addressed and information returned. Local Branch was content, but regional UCU had raised some issues. These would be resolved through consultation and, in the event the College could not seek agreement, the Board was content to proceed based upon information provided.

294. When students returned to on-site classes they would have access to their own stationery, anti-bacterial gel and tissues, for their personal use, which would remain on site at all times. Hard copies of any work or evidence they completed during their course must also be filed and remain at the College.

295. **Resolved**
- 1 That the Covid-19 Strategy be approved.
 - 2 That the Principal be given delegated authority to proceed and make any amendments in accordance with changes to Government guidance.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

296. Governors received a draft version of the Health & Safety Policy which had been updated to reflect the Covid-19 Strategy. The Director of Estates reported that a robust review of all overarching Health & Safety policies had been undertaken to ensure that the risks and changes to processes resulting from Covid-19 were captured.

297. **Resolved** That the updated Health & Safety Policy for 2020 be approved, with a further review scheduled for December 2020.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

298. The Principal informed that the College's submission of a bid to the Liverpool City Region for capital funding for the refurbishment of the Treasury Building in Hamilton Square (in partnership with Wirral Borough Council) had been successful.

299. A Capital Project Working Group had been established at the previous Board meeting and would oversee the property, strategic and financial aspects of the refurbishment.

300. The Board of Governors thanked the Principal and Deputy Principal for their work on this application.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday 15th July 2020

Signed:  Date: 15th July 2020

Chair