



Minutes

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Full Governing Body Minutes

Meeting Time and Date	1500 on Wednesday 27 September, 2023	
Meeting Location	Enfield House	
Members	Roger McClure (Chair) Heather Barrett-Mold OBE (Vice Chair) Joanne Roxburgh (Chair Designate) Aaron Davis Sheila Cunningham Darrell DeSouza Peter Doble Lorna Fitzjohn	Guy Jones-Owen Joanne Laban Heather Marks Alex Lane Mei Lim Ralph Luck OBE Sarah Moreland MBE Stephen Way
Principal	Peter Brammall	
Observers	Nolan Smith (Fusion) James Bryan (HR) Denise Lloyd (Vice Principal / Academic) Paul Smith (Deputy Principal / Finance)	
Minute Taker	Joanne Coffey (Clerk)	
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	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies 1.1. The Chair welcomed Aaron Davis as a new Governor to the Board meeting. 1.2. Apologies were received for Darrell DeSouza, Guy Jones-Owen, Joanne Laban and Heather Marks.	
2. Declaration of Interests 2.1. None.	
3. Minutes (Decision) Resolved to 3.1. Approve the minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 12 July 2023 as a correct record and authorise the Chair to confirm them.	
4. Matters Arising (Information) 4.1. No matters arising from the minutes were discussed.	
5. Report of the Principal (Discussion) 5.1. The Principal provided an overview of the key issues facing the College.	

<p>5.2. Direction of travel is positive, still work to be done on apprenticeships.</p> <p><u>Achievement</u></p> <p>5.3. There were improved achievement outcomes, both for 16-18 year olds 81.2% (70.1% prior year) and adults 89.1% (81.4%), providing an overall outcome of 85.4% (75.3%).</p> <p><u>Apprenticeships</u></p> <p>5.4. Achievement outcomes for apprenticeships showed a decline to 58.2% (75.9%), reflecting decisions taken at the end of 2021-22 to carry learners with little chance of completion into the subsequent year.</p> <p>5.5. The End Point Assessments (EPAs), currently outstanding, could provide a further increase to 62.9-66%, dependent upon a successful submission of a business case to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), based around the exclusion for 5 Landscape Technician students, where no EPA Organisation existed. This had prevented them from formally completing their apprenticeship.</p> <p>5.6. A full time Apprenticeships Manager came into post in January 2023, who had since made significant progress in clearing up such anomalies. Management voiced their confidence that the outcomes for 2023-24 would show a significant increase, as all apprenticeships were now operating under the new guidance and processes.</p> <p>5.7. It was clarified that the lack of a formal EPA for the Landscape Technician apprenticeships had been raised by the College, with the ESFA, 8 months ago.</p> <p>5.8. The College's Internal Auditors, Scrutton Bland, had carried out a Funding Assurance audit on Apprenticeships which the Audit Committee received in September 2023. This had resulted in a Reasonable Assurance (third highest) and 'green shoots' were beginning to be evident.</p> <p><u>Overall</u></p> <p>5.9. The 16-18 uplift was mainly attributable to the improved English and maths results, which had been facilitated by improvements in tracking during the learner journey.</p> <p>5.10. Higher grades had reduced for functional skills, however. This was due to the shift to GCSEs, with more precision grading than City and Guilds.</p> <p>5.11. Governors congratulated the Vice Principal and her staff on the improvements in achievement. Now that better tracking was in place, interventions will begin earlier, which should provide further increases in 2024.</p> <p><u>Enrolment</u></p> <p>5.12. 16-18 enrolment stood at 934, against this year's ESFA allocation of 963 and the curriculum plan stretch target of 1061. Adult enrolments stood at 1406, against the curriculum plan target of 1099. The</p>	
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<p>current HE enrolment was 40, against a target of 59 and the previous year's outturn of 42.</p> <p>5.13. Many new interventions were being made via tracking, and the College is endeavouring to maximise every lead, but there remains a clear need to grow more 16-18 students.</p> <p>5.14. The average increase in 16-18 enrolments across 6 years was 6%.</p> <p>5.15. Management felt that there was now a more positive, cohesive recruitment picture.</p> <p>5.16. Governors noted the improvements in recruitment tools, eg. with the use of QR codes to provide instant links to the online application system.</p> <p>5.17. It was clarified that the low course numbers for: Business Skills were due to this being a brand new course; and: Garden Design were due to the adult numbers who join later in the year.</p> <p>5.18. If any courses are deemed to be under-recruited for, decisions to continue the provision would be assessed as part of the annual curriculum planning.</p>	
<p>6. Update on Mottingham Project monitoring (Information)</p> <p>6.1. The Board were updated on the Mottingham capital project which will provide 17 new teaching spaces, at the cost of £9m, to be delivered by September 2024.</p> <p>6.2. Capital grants had meant that the College had not needed to use its own reserves.</p> <p>Nolan Smith of Fusion (the Project Manager) joined the meeting.</p> <p>6.3. Nolan Smith updated Governors on the latest asbestos and Japanese Knotweed situation.</p> <p><u>Asbestos</u></p> <p>6.4. The demolition in July 2023 revealed an initial finding of a significant amount of buried asbestos that was safely removed in mid-September 2023 at a net cost of £625k.</p> <p>6.5. A more recent, reduced-level, dig had revealed more asbestos, along with glass contamination, behind a large concrete retaining wall. Lorries were being supplied by the contractor to remove this by the end of the current week (September 2023).</p> <p>6.6. The project had been delayed by 6 weeks, with the projected end date for the 'Linear' block now at 8 August 2024 and the 'Welcome' block at the end of August 2024. Any delays to students using the full campus may require an initial use of the Crystal Palace Park campus or online studying.</p> <p>6.7. Layers of dumped asbestos had also been found in the Car Park and it was expected that the whole Car Park would have been contaminated.</p> <p>6.8. Due to a high pressure gas main under the main Car Park, removal via a dig was not an option.</p>	

<p><u>Japanese Knotweed</u></p> <p>6.9. Japanese Knotweed had also been discovered and removed from the site. More, mature Knotweed had now also been found close to the Car Park. Further checking had confirmed that this was the only Knotweed left to deal with.</p> <p>6.10. Governors queried why the Knotweed had not been noticed by Fusion. As the areas where it was found had not been part of the main plans, it was not included in the initial scoping of the area.</p> <p>6.11. Governors queried if the mature Knotweed was a risk to the gas main pipe, in that it could cause structural damage. Fusion agreed that it could be a risk and should be sprayed as soon as possible.</p> <p>6.12. It was confirmed that the owners of the gas main were aware of the Knotweed and were now informed about the asbestos.</p> <p><u>Options</u></p> <p>6.13. Governors discussed the options for removal and/or capping of the asbestos in the Car Park and how to deal with the Knotweed.</p> <p>6.14. The Chair of Estates suggested that, as the site was the College's own freehold site, that more extensive removal should be done in Phase 1, to avoid further inflation expenses in a potential Phase 2 project.</p> <p>6.15. Due to the high pressure gas mains, no safe removal options, via digging, remained.</p> <p>6.16. As the Car Park would always retain that use, Fusion recommended laying bound gravel to cap the contaminated area that contained the layers of asbestos which would remove any further risk.</p> <p>6.17. The retention of the asbestos would be logged on the Asbestos Register to ensure that no future landscaping would take place.</p> <p>6.18. Removal of the Knotweed roots was not possible, due to the inability to dig near the gas pipe, so the only option was to carry out a treatment spraying programme over the course of one year, using a specialist consultant.</p> <p>6.19. It was confirmed that the owner of the gas pipe was not responsible for any costs.</p> <p>6.20. As the initial drainage works were due to be laid under the Car Park, the plans would be redesigned to bypass this area.</p> <p><u>Safety</u></p> <p>6.21. Significant safety measures were being taken to protect Students and Staff at Mottingham during the asbestos removal and testing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An Asbestos Consultant had been appointed. b) Air quality was being continually tested and all results had shown safe levels. c) Further testing of the site would be carried out during Half Term. 	
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<p>6.22. A Japanese Knotweed consultant was also being appointed to ensure safety during the spraying of the toxic chemicals which would be carried out under a controlled environment, during the weekends.</p> <p>6.23. There had been a low level concern by the on-site Staff at Mottingham, due to the awareness of asbestos, compounded by the visual dust necessary during capital works. The College were committed to reassure Staff that safety was their number one priority.</p> <p>6.24. The College were also putting measures in place to manage the quality of the student experience during the capital works.</p> <p><u>Costs</u></p> <p>6.25. The next focus, after safety and managing the student experience, was on minimising expenditure, which equated to £800k in total, including the removal and testing costs. This was currently contained within the £9m project budget.</p> <p>6.26. The original idea to use cut and fill across the site was less likely now, due to the breadth of contamination. However, the surrounding area, if tested safe, could still be used in this way. This had not significantly affected costs.</p> <p>6.27. It was agreed that the Car Park asbestos should be capped with bound gravel, and that the spraying programme should commence for the Japanese Knotweed.</p> <p>6.28. Following the Half Term asbestos testing, if any further asbestos was found, the Estates Committee would assess any new findings at its meeting on 21 November.</p> <p>6.29. It was also agreed that all of the College's sites should now be checked for Japanese Knotweed.</p> <p>Nolan Smith left the meeting.</p>	<p>Estates (Completed)</p>
<p>7. Report of the Clerk (Decision)</p> <p><u>Strategy Committee</u></p> <p>7.1. The advisory focus of the Strategy Committee had been to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Assess enrolment and achievement figures against the current College strategy b) Provide a further sounding board for new College strategies. <p>7.2. As strategy had always remained the responsibility of the entire Board, it was agreed that the Committee meetings created additional repetition that was not necessary.</p> <p>7.3. Governors agreed that strategy was better discussed at the annual Strategy Away Day, usually held in February, which could then include a Full Governing Body meeting to confirm any decisions.</p> <p>7.4. On this basis, it was agreed to remove the Strategy Committee.</p> <p>Resolved to</p>	

<p>7.5. Remove the Strategy Committee from the Governing Body's Committees and amend all documentation, as necessary.</p> <p><u>External Review of Governance</u></p> <p>7.6. The External Review of Governance was close to completion. Governors requested to see a copy of the draft, to allow them to also make final checks on accuracy.</p> <p>7.7. The action plan of the report would be considered at the autumn 2023 meetings of the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee and the Audit Committee, prior to any recommendations being made to the Board.</p> <p><u>Chair's Action</u></p> <p>7.8. Chair's Actions was taken on 23 August 2023 to proceed with the asbestos removal at the Mottingham development site, at an additional cost of £645k with a contingency of up to £160k.</p> <p><u>College Seal</u></p> <p>7.9. The College seal had not been applied since the previous Governing Body meeting on 12 July 2023.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Clerk (Completed)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Clerk (Completed)</p>
<p>8. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) (Information)</p> <p>8.1. The College's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) consisted of annual targets that were monitored monthly by SLT. The actions that sat below the QIP were reviewed by Heads of Schools.</p> <p>8.2. As Governors expressed an interest in attending the monthly quality performance reviews, they were invited to register their interest with the Clerk.</p> <p>8.3. More staff awareness, to support students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), was being enhanced through the sharing of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) via the College's ProMonitor system. This would mean that all staff, including business support, would be able to immediately identify any special requirements.</p>	
<p>9. Management Accounts (Information)</p> <p>9.1. The College's operating deficit currently stood at £91k, a significant improvement from £107k which was forecast in June 2023.</p> <p>9.2. Student income was currently £200k below forecast. It was recognised that the forecast had been ambitious and, year on year, it was higher by £20k. Plans were in place to continue to grow student income.</p> <p>9.3. The Period 12 (31 July 2023) outcome resulted in an ESFA financial health grading of 'Good'.</p> <p>9.4. As Farming and Catering were not currently breaking even, fundamental changes were being considered by Management.</p> <p>9.5. The focus for 2023-24 was to improve academic delivery, whilst prudently managing finances.</p>	

9.6. The Deputy Principal and his team were thanked for the data provided in the final management accounts for 2022-23.	
10. AOB: College Dashboard 10.1. The Deputy Principal shared the first draft of a Balanced Scorecard live dashboard, which provided a live snapshot of the latest College data, including quality, people, enrolment figures and finances. 10.2. Governors were content with the draft layout and expressed how useful having immediate access to the latest data would be, for them to be able to provide more dynamic support.	
11. Date of Next Meeting 11.1. The next scheduled Full Governing Body meeting would be on Wednesday 13 December, 2023.	

APPROVED MINUTES			
CHAIR:	Roger McClure	DATE:	13 December 2023
APPROVAL:	Remote confirmation: Approved. Or signed:		