



**MINUTES – PART 1
CORPORATION BOARD**

Date: Tuesday 06 October 2020

Time: 6:00pm

By Microsoft Teams

Chair	Martin Cumella
Corporation Members	Andrew Edwards, Andrew Hughes, Bobby Seagull, Claire Helman, David Surdeau, Irfan Umarji, James Beckles, Lorraine Reader, Lloyd Johnson, Mubin Ahmed, Paul Stephen (Principal), Quintin Peppiatt, Richard Matovu
In Attendance	Deputy Principal: Jamie Purser Chief Operating Officer (COO): Judith Abbott Executive Director, Strategy & Innovation: Matt Fawcett
Clerk to the Corporation	Judith Nelson

Item No	Item of business
PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
1.	Chair's Welcome & Opening Remarks The Chair welcomed Jamie Purser, Deputy Principal and Matt Fawcett, Executive Director, Strategy & Innovation to their first board meeting.
2.	Apologies For Absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Andrew Hughes ▪ Lloyd Johnson ▪ James Beckles
3.	Declaration of Interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Martin Cumella / Paul Stephen, Quintin Peppiatt: in respect of the Learning Revolution Trust ▪ Quintin Peppiatt: in respect of the London Borough of Newham
4.	a. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 14 July 2020 <i>RESOLVED: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.</i> b. Matters Arising and Action Points from the Meeting All matters were covered during the meeting.
CORPORATION BUSINESS	
5.	To Corporation Board noted the resignation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julianne Marriott, who stepped down as a Councillor of the London Borough of Newham. the Chair on behalf of the Board extended his thanks to Julianne for her commitment as a Governor of Newham College • Daniel Abraham (Student Governor), who is no longer a student at the College. A replacement student governor will be elected amongst the student parliament cohort.
6.	Governor Recruitment Update The Board noted the Clerk has actively engaged with AoC Executive Recruitment. The update from the AoC is as follows:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The vacancies are live and the closing date for applications is Monday 19 October 2020. ▪ AoC have targeted and approached relevant leaders in the FE sector, secondary schools / academies (in East London specifically), HE institutes (in London), training providers / Learning & Development, talent management in business and consultancy. ▪ On Thursday 1 October AoC are sending out an eshot via their AoC database to all relevant Curriculum & Quality leaders (VP / DP and Principal levels) in colleges in London and Eastern Home Counties. ▪ Messaging via LinkedIn and other social media, and also advertised on the AoC website and AoC Jobs. ▪ 19 individuals have expressed an interest but yet to receive confirmation if they intend to apply. ▪ To enable a wider pool of talent, the Executive in agreement with the Chair has suggested that the governor recruitment should not be exclusive to the AoC. The Clerk is in now liaison with FE Associates (FEA) and will feedback to the Chair and Principal. ▪ FEA will focus on skills and diversity, with an interview organised for Friday 9 October with two prospective female candidate of ethnic minority. <p>The Corporation RESOLVED to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>For the Clerk to continue working with the AoC Executive Recruitment, liaising closely with the Chair and Principal.</i> ▪ <i>For the Clerk to also engage with FE Associates to widen the talent pool and liaise closely with the Chair and Principal.</i>
7.	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student attendance was at 87% at the time of writing this report and now reporting 93%. Staff and students have, in the main, complied with the measures introduced to manage the risk or incidence of Covid-19. There has been a very limited number of positive cases, and for a couple of weeks all SEND provision reverted to home study. With the support of the DfE and Public Health England. ▪ The Principal is holding weekly live video Q&A sessions with all staff to ensure consistent messaging. ▪ Work continues to ensure all learners are engaged on their programmes of study, and to understand their ability to work remotely, so if a further period of lockdown is required, the switch to a blended/remote delivery model is seamless. ▪ The current strategic plan runs from 2017-20. The Executive team are proposing rolling forward the current plan for a further year, to allow the leadership team and governors time to consider the effect of Covid-19 on the way the College delivers its services. For 2020/21, an assessment will be made on the extent to which the College uses the pandemic to pivot from a pre-Covid to post-Covid world, with metrics around the future role of technology in learning; the College's role in leading collaboration; greater responsiveness of the curriculum offer to the external economy; creating a costed infrastructure strategy and implementation plan; and putting the College on a secure financial footing. Proposals will be presented to the December Corporation Board, which will inform the next Strategic Plan 2021-25, to be approved in July 2021. <p>Governors raised the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How is the College assisting those students without access to a laptop/device. <i>At enrolment 16-19 learners were asked to complete a form asking them if they had access to a device or smart phone; approximaely 260 16-19 year old students do not have a device at home. 180 laptops are being allocated fairly amongst the student cohort.</i> ▪ Student attendance rate: Is there threshold that will trigger alerts to Ofsted or is this removed because of COVID19. <i>Last week the student attendance was at 87% and this has risen to 93%. The College target is 90% with internal target being higher.</i>

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	<p><i>There is no attendance threshold that will trigger an Ofsted visit. Attendance is reported through the College's Self Assessment Report (SAR). Attendance during lockdown is slightly higher than pre-lockdown which is a real testament to the staff delivering the lessons on line.</i></p>
THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES, THE SOLVENCY OF THE INSTITUTION & SAFEGUARDING THEIR ASSETS	
8.	<p>Covid-19 Emergency Recovery Support Fund Application The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In August 2020, the College submitted a grant application for £200k (the maximum sum available) to the GLA Covid-19 Emergency Recovery Support Fund, to purchase capital equipment to mitigate Covid impacts. The College has since undertaken a survey of its WiFi, which indicated it is in a worse condition than initially thought and will cost approximately twice the sum included in the grant application. The additional amount will be funded from the College's IT capital budget. ▪ Funding was requested to upgrade the College WiFi (£65k) and procure laptops/laptop trolleys (£135k). Governors reviewed the excerpt from the grant application, indicating the purpose of the funds. ▪ The GLA has confirmed that the College has been shortlisted to receive the funding, which is now subject to Mayoral approval. Successful applicants will be notified by the GLA in October-November. ▪ A condition of funding for successful applicants is that there are Board minutes evidencing that the Board has approved the project. It was not possible to gain this in advance of submission since the window for submitting bids was very tight, so the Board is requested to approve this retrospectively. ▪ Governors requested that if time permit in the future prior to such grant bid submissions, they are consulted, in order to add their input into the bid, if appropriate. <p><i>The Corporation Board RESOLVED to approve the Covid-19 Emergency Recovery Support Fund Application which was submitted to GLA in August 2020. Governors fully understood this was a retrospective endorsement.</i></p>
9.	<p>Lloyds Bank Loan Covenant Changes The Board noted following discussions with Lloyd's Bank prior to year-end, the Bank has proposed an amendment to its loan facility letter to change the financial covenants as indicated in Schedule 2 of the draft letter. This is in the College's best interest since it removes a covenant that the College no longer meets (total reserves to remain above £10 million).</p> <p><i>As per Schedule 1 – Conditions Precedent: The Corporation Board RESOLVED to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) approve the terms of, and the transactions contemplated by, this letter and resolve that it execute, deliver and perform this letter (and provide to Lloyds Bank a copy of the resolution); (b) authorise Paul Stephen to execute this letter on its behalf; (c) authorise Paul Stephen and Judith Abbott, on its behalf, to sign and/or despatch all documents and notices to be signed and/or despatched by it under or in connection with this letter.
THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES, THE SOLVENCY OF THE INSTITUTION & SAFEGUARDING THEIR ASSETS	
10.	<p>FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE BUSINESS</p> <p>a. Finance Report - Provisional Outturn 31 July 2020 The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The provisional out-turn in the management accounts is based on R13, the penultimate Individualised Learner Record (ILR) return so is subject to change based on the final return (R14) and any audit findings.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The College provisional out-turn before pension costs is a deficit of £(798)k before exceptional items and restructuring and £(5,022)k after exceptional items. This is £686k better than forecast in July primarily due to lower non-pay costs, depreciation and restructuring costs. The out-turn assumes there will be no claw-back of shortfall in GLA AEB delivery since the College is predicting delivery in excess of 85% of contract (the threshold at which the ESFA had suggested it may implement a claw back). ▪ At the Group level, provisional out-turn prior to pensions adjustments is a deficit of £(3,576)k. Newtec is included in the I&E since it was part of the Group until July but excluded from the balance sheet since it exited the Group prior to 31 July. DSS loan write-off has a net zero effect on I&E at Group level. ▪ Financial health for the Group is Requires Improvement and year end closing cash balance was £5,810k or 60 cash days. This was £2 million higher than forecast primarily due to early receipt of Salix loan, lower expenditure on non-pay and restructuring and timing differences on capital expenditure. <p>It was pleasing to note the outturn is better than expected, noting the College is managing the finances on a prudent basis, expectations have been well managed, thus retaining the requires improvement financial health. The Board commended the COO and the finance team for the demonstrable work undertaken.</p> <p>b. Estates Strategy Development The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are 4 elements for consideration: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conditions of the buildings 2. Running costs 3. Having an estate that is the right size for our need 4. Having spaces which are fit for purpose and meets the needs for all stakeholders, learners and staff; a strand we will be working on to meet the timeline of the next tranche of grant funding. ▪ Making very fast progress on the first 3 of these 4 elements. In a very challenging year, considerable in-roads have been made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building condition – £1.3m government capital grant funding, has enabled the College to make a lot more progress on the 4 year plan, in addressing the building critical needs i.e. the boilers and CCTV. If the condition of the building improved, there is an opportunity to have a further conversation with the bank regarding a loan, should be we need to borrow money to match fund any further capital funds. ○ Salix loan – the College has managed to change approximately 800 lights. Further conversations are taking place with Salix regarding the DfE grants to improve / reduce the energy usage of buildings grant funding, which would not have a 4 year pay back. A potential grant of £10m to change the campus windows. This would have a significant impact on the running cost of the buildings. ○ The old school building at Stratford campus is on the market for sale. Looking to improve utilisation through timetable and room occupancy, not the same this year with COVID, with a view to mothballing the F block. ○ The College working with BARTS, has secured a grant £150k match funding with £100k and a share of £50k from the College. The moving parts of BARTS has slowed down a little with COVID, there is a hiatus of how much we can move in this year and space requirements. ▪ Working on the estate element in parallel with the curriculum and ensuring is fit for the future with a view to bringing it back to Finance and Resources / Board review and approval early in the new year. ▪ The curriculum will talk to the skills needs and the specialisms; how much generic space; flexibility and criteria.

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	Governors noted whilst reviewing the curriculum strategy, COVID has accelerated the blended learning approach and the implications for the future estate. The government funding is coming on stream and clear principles and touch points need to be established with governors.
11.	<p>AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE BUSINESS</p> <p>a. Risk Management Update The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The COO made the Board aware the risk register had been reviewed and scrutinised by the June Audit & Risk Committee, where the final year for risk position was presented. ▪ Governors asked for clarity on the background of risk 17, 'reputational risk'. The Principal made governors aware this related to June 2020 during the first lockdown. With the pressure to be open for SEND and Looked After Children (LACs). The College maintained daily contact with the learners, as the parents of the SEND students did not want their child to return to College. ▪ Enrolment at the College's community and outreach venues continues, with its challenges surrounding the timely opening of North Woolwich Centre. The College continues to work collaboratively and in partnership with the Borough to find solutions to the opening of community outreach centres, post Covid and lockdown. It is envisaged that the North Woolwich centre is likely to be opened in a partial capacity prior to the October half term break.
THE DETERMINATION AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE EDUCATIONAL CHARACTER AND MISSION OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE OVERSIGHT OF ITS ACTIVITIES	
12.	<p>CURRICULUM & QUALITY:</p> <p>a. Enrolment Position Update The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The enrolment position is a very successful picture in an unknown landscape. Learners are currently enrolling and receiving a good safe service. ▪ The enhanced GCSE results have affected demand for certain courses. ▪ Learners achieve less well on Level 1 functional skills than entry levels, in particular for both English and maths. Level 1 Functional skills rates for 16-18's are at 58%, with maths achievement at 39.8% currently. This is a priority area of focus for this academic year. ▪ Governors expanded this was a testament to the College and commended the staff who were undertaking this work in the current climate. ▪ Governors asked about post 16 education and at what stage will staff be aware if students are on the right level or if they are struggling. The Deputy Principal advised that nationally, the enhanced GCSE results have affected demand for certain courses. This has had a slightly detrimental affect with enrolling 16-18 years onto a level 1 programme at the College, compared to previous years. Learners achieve less well on Level 1 functional skills than entry levels, in particular for both English and maths. This is a priority area of focus for this academic year. <p>b. Safeguarding & Prevent Update The Board noted the following pertinent points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The College is in good shape with safeguarding, there have been a lot of changes, a review of the safeguarding team structure has been undertaken, this is ensure the College is compliant and safe, which is number 1 priority. The safeguarding and prevent policies will be reviewed the Curriculum & Quality Committee and by the Corporation Board for endorsement. ▪ Governors have a safeguarding link governor who meets with the designated lead. All cases were satisfactorily progressed. ▪ Impero software working quite well, with good level overall protection but also unwanted intruders to our systems.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student governor asked why the College had not introduced the temperature guns in the front of the College as people walk in. The COO advised the College has reviewed the evidence of how effective temperature guns are and there is no scientific evidence to support and substantiate the introduction of temperature guns.
13.	<p>Meeting Schedule for 2020-2021 @ 6:00pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 December 2020 • 30 March 2021 • 20 & 21 May 2021 (Annual Board Conference – venue tbc) • 13 July 2021
14.	<p>Any Other Business None.</p>
Students and Staff Governors were asked to leave for Part 2 of the confidential meeting	