

PUBLIC MINUTES



Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation of Yeovil College Held on Thursday 14 May 2020 at 1700 Using GoToWebinar

Members: Sam Best*; Mark Bolton [Principal]*; Paul Clowes*; Ken Comber*; Jacquie Dean [Vice Chair]*; Lee Harwood*; Jo Howarth*; Jessica Hughes [Student FE]*; Sam Leigh*; Rebecca Marshall*; Netta Meadows*; David Mills*; Paul Morey [Staff]*; Jagtar Ner*; Gayle Pogson [Staff]*; Scott Roy*; Issy Stanley [Student HE]*; Peter Thomas [Chair]*

In attendance:

Items 1-13: Steve Chattell [Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality]; Emma Cox [Vice Principal Finance & Resources]*

Item 4 only: Matt Hann [Director of Curriculum – Quality Assurance]*

Clerk: Kaz Corbett*

**indicates presence at meeting*

1. MEETING PRELIMINARIES

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Chattell, and Jagtar Ner had advised the Clerk that he would need to leave the meeting at 6pm. The meeting remained quorate throughout. There were no **Declarations of Interest** made on this occasion.

2. MINUTES

The Board **APPROVED** the following minutes as true and accurate records of the meeting held on:

- Thursday 23 April SPECIAL Public
- Thursday 23 April SPECIAL Confidential

The Chair's digital signature was applied to the records, which would be uploaded to the College website.

3. MATTERS ARISING

The Action and Query sheet was reviewed, updated and noted. All queries were either complete, included elsewhere on today's agenda or being appropriately tracked and carried forward.

4. T LEVELS

The Board welcomed Matt Hann, DoC Quality Assurance to the meeting. Matt's written report on teaching plans for T Levels was **noted** alongside a verbal commentary. Key points noted included:

- 3 routes awarded to Yeovil College for commencement in September 2021; Childcare and Education, Health and Science, and Digital
- T Level transition programme planned for learners below the entry standards, this will include Maths and English support
- T Level curriculum group meeting regularly since January
- Funding received for T Levels is less than expected for the substantial amount of hours being delivered
- Industry placements are key to a successful T Level process, the College has offered these since 2017 due to participation in the pilot scheme and has built strong links with local employers
- Capital investments are a huge benefit, and industry placements have already proven successful
- Main risks are the cost to run, and lack of understanding of the programme by learners and their parents

- One member commented that T Levels focussed on exams over course work, and asked how this would be supported. Matt responded that, just like some current courses, teaching will be geared towards assessment preparation

The Board thanked Matt for his report.

The Board moved on to discuss the detailed paper prepared by the Principal describing plans to bid for three phases of T Level capital funding over the next three years, and the significant campus improvements planned with this investment. The Board will consider the development of the College as a key focus at its June Strategy Day.

Matt Hann left the meeting at 17.30

5.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Corporation **noted** the Principal's Report. On this occasion there was particular emphasis upon:

- Multi Academy Trust
- New Student Recruitment
- Supporting our Community
- Budget Scenarios
- NART tables
- Stakeholder feedback
- Projects
- National and regional awards

The FE Student Governor commented on how well supported she has been supported by her tutors throughout the lockdown so far.

The Board **noted** the Operating Statement, and the Chair asked the Audit Committee to review the impact of Covid-19 on the targets and content within at its next meeting.

**Audit
Committee**

The Principal had prepared an additional paper in response to the Government request for Colleges to prepare for a possible re-opening at the beginning of June. The Board **noted** the paper, and the recommendation of the Principal to delay a physical re-opening until September. The Board discussed this recommendation at length, key points included:

- College is very much still 'open' at the moment, it is purely the physical campus that is closed to students
- College teaching finishes mid-June, so would be a small window for delivery
- Additional health and safety testing will be required for campus facilities (eg legionella testing) due to the extended closure
- To allow students appropriate distancing whilst completing physical activities would be extremely challenging, and would mean lecturers delivering the same lesson multiple times to small groups
- The current online delivery is excellent, on-site delivery will reduce the capacity to offer this delivery due to the extensive teaching hours necessary
- Social and refreshment areas will remain closed, campus will feel deserted
- Based on the current advice, the Principal would not feel comfortable asking students/staff on site without providing PPE
- Jo Howarth explained the challenges facing YDH, and how part of the challenge will be working towards a way to live alongside the virus as is the case with other infections. She reassured the Board that young people are much less likely to suffer a serious illness with this virus. As the College is not a clinical environment, the use of gloves and aprons would not be recommended, but it is possible that face coverings could help minimise spread

- It seems like a better use of staff time to focus on building a really strong provision for September, rather than on a very small delivery for June
- Members asked what other Colleges would be doing. The Principal commented that it seems that locally Colleges are considering a similar response
- Some vulnerable students may be accepted on site sooner than others, one member asked whether additional support would be needed. The Principal assured the Board that there will be strong hygiene practices in place, and the classroom will be placed near handwashing facilities
- The Board would like a clear roadmap of the delivery plan from September
- The Principal highlighted that as the information and guidance from the Government is changing fast, the College is ready to mobilise an action plan to reopen at very short notice if necessary

Following this discussion, the Board **supported** the Principal's recommendation to focus on re-opening the Campus in September. The Board would like to see a clear roadmap of the delivery plan from September at its next meeting.

Principal

6.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Board noted a verbal update from the VP F&R on the current financial position. Discussions on this item are recorded in the Confidential minutes.

The minutes of the Finance and Remuneration Committee's meeting on 7 May 2020 were **noted**. The VP F&R gave a short update on the current building conditions position, following discussions at the Committee. She assured the Board that all Health and Safety issues have either been addressed, or are in progress.

The Board **approved** the Utilities contract, following a tender process. Netta Meadows abstained from voting, due to lack of Governor involvement throughout. The VP F&R assured the Board that Governor involvement had been built into the tender procedure, and apologised that on this occasion it had been regrettably overlooked.

7.

Jagtar Ner left at 18.15.

IoT UPDATE

The Board **noted** a verbal update from the Principal on the current IoT position. The Board moved on to review the IT tender evaluation in detail, discussions on this item are recorded in the confidential minutes.

8.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Board **noted** a detailed paper prepared by the VP C&Q describing the current teaching provision and engagement throughout all teaching areas within the College.

The Chair commented quantitative data is needed to allow full analysis. The Principal advised that this data is due out tomorrow, and can be reviewed at the Board's next meeting.

Principal

9.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

The Board **noted** a paper prepared by the VP F&R detailing the proposed plans for appointment of Internal Auditors. Mazars were awarded both the internal and external audits at the last tender 3 years ago, however due to a recent change in policy it is no longer possible to appoint one Auditor for both audits. The VP F&R has worked closely with the Chair of Audit, who recommended the extension of the external audit contract with Mazars for 12 months. The Board **approved** this recommendation, and the commencement of tender process for internal audit. The Audit Committee would bring their recommendation for appointment to the Board's June meeting.

There were no other risk management items to note.

10.

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Board noted the Chair's report which focussed on plans for the Board's Strategy Day next month. This would include an update from the AoC Chief Executive, and discussions would centre around the College's vision and finance.

11.

Netta Meadows left the meeting at 19.15.

LEGAL, POLICY AND REGULATORY MATTERS

HE Student Charter

The Board **approved** the HE Student Charter.

HE Terms and Conditions

The Board **approved** the HE Terms and Conditions

12.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items to note on this occasion.

13.

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

Thursday 18 June 2020, at the end of Strategy Day.

Main meeting closed at 19.20

Discussions in relation to item 14 are recorded separately in the strictly confidential minutes.

