MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2020 via Microsoft Teams
17:00 – 19:00

The College is responding to COVID19 government advice and consequently this meeting was held via MS Teams.

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance 2019/20	Present at this meeting
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings (joined 3.10.19)	Independent	6 of 7	Yes
Tony Berwick	Independent	7 of 8	No
Rebecca Carrington	Independent	3 of 3	Yes
Alan Cook	Independent	8 of 8	Yes
Peter Cox	Independent	7 of 8	No
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	8 of 8	Yes
Liz Marr	Independent	7 of 8	Yes
David Meadowcroft	Independent	8 of 8	Yes
Julie Mills	CEO	8 of 8	Yes
Asad Mir (joined 6.11.19)	Student	6 of 8	Yes
Stephen Norrish	Independent	8 of 8	Yes
Ruby Parmar	Independent	7 of 8	Yes
Charlynne Pullen	Independent	7 of 8	Yes
Neil Sainsbury (joined 3.10.19)	Independent	7 of 7	Yes
Aniesa Shah	Staff	7 of 8	Yes
Gwynneth Tan	Independent	7 of 8	Yes
Manish Verma	Independent	6 of 8	Yes
Dotun Adeoye (resigned 2.10.19)	Independent	0 of 0	
Nathan Indge (resigned 28.2.20)	Staff	3 of 4	
Attendance % this meeting		88%	15 / 17
Attendance % year to date		91%	121 / 133

In attendance: Sally Alexander (Principal: Prison Services), Imelda Galvin (COO), Keith Turner (Assistant Principal: MK College), Alex Warner (Principal: IoT), Karen Brown (Head of Governance), Jess Annison (in part)

1.1 Apologies had been received from Tony Berwick, Peter Cox and Chris McLean. Lindsey Styles and Keith Turner were welcomed to the meeting.

1.2 There is a standing declaration from Peter Cox and Gwynneth Tan relating to the IoT.

The Chair of Governors congratulated the College on a successful Students of the Year online awards ceremony.

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Governance Development Item

2.1   Safeguarding and Prevent *(presentation and Paper 2.1)*

Lindsey Styles facilitated a governor development session on the Board's responsibility for Safeguarding and Prevent (anti radicalisation). Lindsey highlighted the following:

The Board's responsibilities include:
- Reading the relevant sections of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and ensuring that policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake the correct training and that all safeguarding officers are sufficiently trained to enable the College to recognise and respond to safeguarding issues.
- Not allowing people who pose a risk of harm to work with young people by adhering to statutory responsibilities e.g. DBS checks
- Ensuring that young people are taught about safeguarding, including online safety.

- KCSIE is published by the DfE and has been amended for September (it will be circulated for governors to confirm they have read Parts 1, 2 and Annex A).

- The duty for Prevent is part of the duty for Safeguarding and young people need to know how to keep themselves safe in modern Britain. The College works effectively with Thames Valley Police (TVP) and multi-agency partners. In Milton Keynes, hate crime, gangs, and knife crime are issues and led to the death of young people last autumn (which had a big impact on our students). College students are less likely to be involved in county lines activity because they are older.

- Support for students has carried on during lockdown (vulnerable students were contacted every week). The volume of work for the College increased during lockdown. 156 students (c450 incidents) were supported and many incidents were related to mental health, domestic abuse, home issues etc. There were a few issues relating to 'Black Lives Matter' and the College worked with the agencies and families.

- The College continually reviews its safeguarding strategy e.g. Lindsey is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) but three others are trained so there is always someone trained and available. There are also 16 trained safeguarding officers. Online training and support has continued throughout lockdown.

- The mental first aiders and the wellbeing and resilience team are preparing for September. The College has invested in BWW which is a peer-to-peer support community / counselling platform for mental health. BWW is predicting a spike in mental health as students are finding coming out of lockdown more of a challenge than going into lockdown. BWW will provide instant support to students which will take pressure off stretched resources (e.g. the College's wellbeing and resilience team and local agencies). ESOL and English & maths adult students have the most concerns and will need extra support.

- More Prevent issues are also expected to emerge and the College is preparing for this e.g. working with TVP to increase patrols around College.

Rebecca Carrington joined the meeting.

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- The Board receives assurance that the College is meeting its statutory duties from:
  - An annual (external) Safeguarding Audit; this year the College received the highest level of assurance.
  - The role of the Safeguarding Governor (Liz Marr) who meets separately with Lindsey and is kept informed of any major safeguarding incidents.
  - The Annual Safeguarding Report (Paper 2.1)
  - Governor challenge e.g. asking questions and receiving a satisfactory response and assurance that risks are being mitigated as much as possible.

Lindsey responded to Governors' questions:

How does the College ensure that students who have not been previously identified as vulnerable, share their concerns before issues arise?

Students likely to require extra support are identified through the interview process; late applicants may be more likely to have issues of which we are not aware. The week commencing 7th September will be induction week when all students will have the opportunity to get to know the College's wellbeing & resilience team. The team of eight Progress Mentors and teachers will highlight anxieties at an early stage.

The largest number of incidents are at Level 3. Is this in proportion to the size of the cohort?

Level 3 is the largest cohort, so the number of incidents is in proportion. However, E3 and Level 1 are the smallest cohorts but have a higher proportion of incidents (this cohort contains a greater number of young asylum seekers, looked after children (LAC) etc.).

The contextual information will be added to the report and the report will be recirculated.

Action 1: Lindsey Styles

How does retention compare between students who do / do not receive a bursary?

Retention for students with guaranteed bursary is 76% which is lower than retention overall. However, these students are at the highest risk of dropping out (young asylum seekers, LAC, carers etc.).

How does the College compare to other colleges?

Students in need of bursary and 'Free School Meals' payments have been well supported. Many students who had not previously disclosed were identified and supported financially (£25 per week). Progressing students will be funded over the summer.

Does the College need to protect bursaries despite financial challenges and if so, how will this be achieved?

We want to support vulnerable students to stay in education, achieve and progress. So far, we have had sufficient bursary funding and will ensure this continues. Other funds / support have been investigated e.g. foodbanks, local authority funding.

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How do you ensure that students are safe, and where they should be, even when they are engaging with online learning?

Laptops were loaned to the most vulnerable students and ESafe alerted the College to issues. At one stage, the police were carrying out daily welfare visits when students went missing.

The Board approved the Safeguarding Report for 2019/20 and received assurance that the College is meeting its statutory responsibilities.

Lindsey was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

Strategic Priorities 2019/20

3.1   CEO's Report to the Board *(previously circulated as Paper 3.1)*

Julie Mills referred to her report and drew attention to the following:

Strategy and Vision

- The report details progress against the strategic priorities set by the Board for 2019/20. Good progress has been made apart from the IoT capital project which has progressed slower than anticipated due to external circumstances.

- The Executive is recommending that a robust strategic review takes place in the autumn term to determine the Strategic Plan for the next five years and that this is a Board focus for the first three meetings.

- It is in appropriate time to review the opportunities and vision for the next five years as the Government has recently announced the 'Plan for Jobs' which may provide access to new funding. Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education has also made a statement on the importance of FE. It is a good time for the College to be influencing as the importance of FE is being recognised.

- In the meantime, the Executive's recommendation is to extend the current strategic priorities until December 2020.

Governors added:

- Professor Tim Blackman, Vice-Chancellor of the OU, is a member of the advisory group looking at the future of FE.

- A FE white paper is expected in the autumn, partly in response to the Augur review, which will focus on higher level technical education (e.g. IoT) but may also include Level 2, pre-apprenticeships and traineeships as progression routes.

In response to a question, Julie confirmed that the group(s) which did not engage as well as others during lockdown were the economically disadvantaged and young males (there was a specific issue with motor vehicle students). The curriculum teams have been challenged to ensure that plans for September will address the issues with attendance and participation relating to these groups.

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The Board:
- ***Received the CEO's report***
- ***Agreed to the Executive taking forward a strategic review in the autumn term and to propose a refreshed Strategic plan for 2021 – 2025***
- ***Agreed to prioritise Board time for the strategic review***
- ***Agreed to extend Board's current strategic priorities to December 2020***

3.2   IoT Capital Project *(previously circulated as Paper 3.2)*

Jess Annison was welcomed to the meeting and summarised the current position.

Discussion and decisions minuted as confidential.

3.3   Student Experience (campus) (Strategic Priority 2)

a) **Forecast SAR grades / Planning for September return** *(previously circulated as Paper 3.3A)*

Keith Turner summarised the key headlines from Paper 3.3A:

- 18 out of 19 Schools are forecasting to meet their self-assessment target grades for 2018/19. Three areas have improved: Active Industries, Care Professions and Built Environment which has emphasised the need to focus on the QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) to ensure that practice is embedded. A culture of continuous improvement is necessary to achieve 'outstanding; and performance boards in 20/21 will focus on the QIPs.

- The School of Digital Technologies is anticipated to see a decline from 'good' to 'requires improvement'; there is a clear understanding of the issues (i.e. poor recruitment of students and poor TLA) and an action plan is already in place to secure rapid improvement in 20/21.

- The Curriculum areas and Business Partners have been planning for students to return to College in September and the planning continues to be an iterative process as the Government publishes more guidance. The intention is to have c75% of vocational students in College at any one time. Lessons learned about groups most disadvantaged by lockdown has informed timetables e.g. Motor Vehicle students will be timetabled to attend college 100% of the time.

- The Student Governor added that he had personal challenges working remotely and his preference was to be at College where he could access resources and support.

Governors asked questions:

> ***There was an expectation that the new functional skills qualification would lead to a drop in performance – was this the case?***

> Maths Functional Skills dropped 2-3 percentage points. Maths has been a challenge and has required a lot of support for students particularly when learning moved online at short notice. Online working for some functional skills groups was more effective than classroom delivery.

> We are intending to continue with online for all English & Maths (E&M) and will review in October. Staff and students have responded well and it will free up space for vocational students. This provision has large class sizes / mixed groups so students cannot be confined to their vocational bubbles.

> ***Are there plans to develop / adapt the Progress Mentor role?***

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We have expanded the team to 8 FTE. Their focus is educational progress of students which led to an improvement in achievement and retention in 2019/20. More refinements may be necessary when we have undertaken further analysis e.g. whether the retention of progressing students has improved. It is a responsive and agile team which can be redirected if an area is struggling e.g. with attendance.

Is the College able to support apprentices who have been furloughed or made redundant?

The apprenticeship team is supporting apprentices e.g. they have been taken out of learning if they are furloughed. We don't yet know the size of the problem but have already scaled back numbers in some sectors.

The team is working on a number of strategies to create and maintain opportunities.

Governors requested an update on apprenticeships next term.

Action 2: Keith Turner

Is there a full staff complement for September to support students?

It is difficult to accurately predict student numbers for September (as we have no experience of the impact of a pandemic) but we believe that we have the right resources in place and Progress Mentors can be moved to other areas.

Approximately 25% of delivery will be online and staff who will still be shielding / self-isolating will be best placed to support online learning.

The Board received the update on the Student Experience (campus)

b) **CQG 29th June 2020** *(previously circulated as Paper 3.3B)*

The Chair of CQG drew attention to Paper 3.3B and the key points from the meeting on 29th June.

As requested by the Board, CQG had reviewed potential quality risks relating to the 2020/21 budget and received assurance on the ongoing investment in teaching and learning. The one red risk related to 'not achieving fee and full cost income targets' (which will be the same for all colleges following the pandemic).

The CQG had received a presentation from six tutors on how they had adapted their pedagogy for online learning; governors were impressed with the strategies and software used. Governors also explored how teachers would be taking forward these ideas post lockdown.

The Board received the report from the CQG meeting on 29th June 2020

3.4   **Financial Sustainability (Strategic Priority 1)** *(previously circulated as Paper 3.4)*

2019/20 Financial Health

Imelda Galvin referred governors to the comprehensive finance pack which reports the financial position as at Period 10 (31st May 2020).

The 2019/20 budgeted College contribution is forecast to be £27k ahead of target and there could be some further improvement relating to Prison Services. Confirmation is awaited from the MoJ on the 5% performance payment. Cash at year end is expected to be c£4m. The financial year-end is 31st July 2020.

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2020/21 Financial Health / Budget

The Board approved the budget for 2020/21 at the meeting on 10th June 2020.

The Board noted the:
- *Financial position as at Period 10 (31st May 2020)*
- *Cashflow position as at 31st May 2020*
- *Update on the Campus investment budget*
- *Financial implications of COVID-19 pandemic*

Governance and Compliance

4.1   Audit & Risk Committee 18th June 2020 *(previously circulated as Paper 4.1)*

The Chair of A&R Committee drew attention to Paper 4.1and the key points from the meeting on 18th June 2020.

The internal audit plan has no time allocated to risk as the internal auditor has previously relied on his involvement with the College Risk Management Group to provide an opinion; this is a potential conflict. The Committee Chair and Vice-Chair and the Chief Operating Officer are in discussion to agree a solution.

The Board:
- *Noted the report from the meeting on 18th June 2020*
- *Approved the External Audit Strategy and Plan for 2019/20 (Consent Paper 5.5)*
- *Approved the Strategic Risk Register (Consent Paper 5.6)*
- *Approved the Risk Management Policy (Consent Paper 5.7)*
- *Approved the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2020/21 (Consent Paper 5.8)*
- *Approved the seven sections of the Financial Regulations (Consent Paper 5.9)*

4.2   Search & Governance Committee 9th June 2020 *(previously circulated as Paper 4.2)*

The Chair of S&G Committee drew attention to Paper 4.2and the key points from the meeting on 9th June 2020.

There is a BAME and gender imbalance in terms of Board membership and there could be other diversity areas to be addressed. Governors will be asked to complete an E&D survey (on a voluntary basis).

The Head of Governance is reviewing mandatory training for governors as the online training for staff is not wholly relevant.

The Board:
- *Noted the report from the meeting on 9th June 2020*
- *Approved the revisions to the Standing Orders (Consent Paper 5.10)*
- *Approved the revisions to the Governor Role Specifications (Consent Paper 5.11)*

4.3   Follow Up items:

As recommended by the Search & Governance Committee (in response to the Governors' Self-Assessment Questionnaire), this is a new standing item to confirm that discussion time has been appropriately allocated and any follow-up action which may be required.

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Governors discussed the following:

- Governors requested that time be allocated to discuss the Gender Pay Report in the autumn term.

Action 3: Annie Allen

- The CEO's Report includes an update on the strategic priorities agreed by the Board, if not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- Discussion time should be allocated in proportion to the mission / strategic priorities / financial contribution.

- More time should be allocated for:
    - Strategic thinking; the Board has agreed to prioritise the strategic review at the next three meetings.
    - The prison contract (currently this is a substantive discussion item termly). The Chair of CQG added that prisons and the IoT, from a quality perspective, are currently reported to CQG.
    - Committee Chairs to report to the Board
    - Link Governors to feedback on visits

- Consent agenda
    - The consent agenda does not have allocated discussion time as these are items which have already been scrutinised by a Committee or are referenced elsewhere on the agenda or are self-explanatory. However, there is a note on the agenda that governors can request discussion time be allocated to consent items.

The Chair thanked governors for the comments which he will review with the CEO and Head of Governance when planning the cycle of business for 2020/21.

Action 4: David Meadowcroft, Julie Mills, Karen Brown

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

5.1   **MK College Student Union Budget / Constitution** *(previously circulated as Paper 5.1)* **as recommended by the CQG,**

5.2   **Health & Safety**
a) Health & Safety Annual Report 2019/20 (previously circulated as Paper 5.2a)
b) H&S Policy including H&S Policy Statement 20/21 for signing by the Chair / CEO (previously circulated as Paper 5.2a)

5.3   **Senior Post-holders Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures** *(previously circulated as Paper 5.3)*

5.4   **Gender Pay Report 2020 (for the period April 2018 to April 2019)** *(previously circulated as Paper 5.4)*

5.5   **External Audit Strategy 2019/20** *(previously circulated as Paper 5.5)* **as recommended by the A&R Committee**

5.6   **Strategic Risk Register** *(previously circulated as Paper 5.6)* **as recommended by the A&R Committee**

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5.7   Risk Management Policy *(previously circulated as Paper 5.7)* **as recommended by the A&R Committee**

5.8   Internal Audit Strategy & Plan *(previously circulated as Paper 5.8)* **as recommended by the A&R Committee**

5.9   Financial Regulations *(previously circulated as Paper 5.9)* **as recommended by the A&R Committee:**
- *Section 1: Introduction and General*
- *Section 7: Reimbursement of Expenses*
- *Section 8: Income*
- *Section 10: Treasury Management, Banking and Cash*
- *Section 15: Conflicts of Interest, Bribery, Gifts and Hospitality*
- *Section 16: Partnership and Sub-Contracting*
- *Section 17: College Companies and Joint Ventures*

5.10   Board Standing Orders *(previously circulated as Paper 5.10)* **as recommended by the S&G Committee**

5.11   Governor Role Specifications *(previously circulated as Paper 5.11)* **as recommended by the S&G Committee:**
- *Chair / Vice-Chair*
- *Independent Governors*
- *Staff Governor*
- *Student Governor*
- *Safeguarding and Prevent Governor*
- *SEND Governor*

5.12   Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 10th June 2020 *(previously circulated as Papers 5.12A and Confidential 5.12B)*

Matters arising: none

Next Meeting 7th October 2020 at 5pm

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