Building

Fairer Futures.

MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE
CORPORATION BOARD MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2021, MS Teams
17:00 – 18:55

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance 2021/22	Present at this meeting
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Rebecca Carrington	Independent	1 of 2	Yes
Alan Cook	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Peter Cox	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Kaye Dwight	Staff	2 of 2	Yes
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Marcela Grabowski (joined 10/11/21)	Student	1 of 1	Yes
Liz Marr	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
David Meadowcroft	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Julie Mills	CEO	2 of 2	Yes
Stephen Norrish	Independent	1 of 2	No
Ruby Parmar	Independent	1 of 2	No
Charlynne Pullen	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Ian Revell	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Adam Rixon (joined 10/11/21)	Student	1 of 1	Yes
Neil Sainsbury	Independent	1 of 2	Yes
Aniesa Shah	Staff	2 of 2	Yes
Gwynneth Tan	Independent	1 of 2	No
Manish Verma	Independent	0 of 2	No
Attendance % this meeting		79%	15 / 19
Attendance % year to date		80%	29 /36

Regular attendees: Sally Alexander (Principal: Quality & Student Experience), Annie Allen (CPO), Karen Brown (Head of Governance)

Other attendees: Martin Owen (Interim Chief Financial Officer), Ali Murphy (Learning & Development Manager) (in part),

1.1 Welcome and Apologies
- Adam Rixon and Marcela Grabowski were welcomed to their first meeting and were congratulated on being elected as Student Governors. Adam and Marcela briefly introduced themselves.
- Apologies had been received from Stephen Norrish, Ruby Parmar, Gwynneth Tan, Manish Verma, Alex Warner, and Imelda Galvin.
- Rebecca Carrington and Peter Cox had advised that they would be joining later.

1.2   Declaration of Interests

There is a standing declaration from Rebecca Carrington who is Director and Principal of Arts1.

2.0   Strategic Priorities 2021/22

2.1   CEO's Report *(Paper 2.1)*

Julie Mills referred to her report which includes an overview of Board Strategic Priorities.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

• Governors were reminded of the next FE Voices broadcasts. The session on 17th of November features Milton Keynes College Group and links were included in the CEO report.

Safeguarding and SEND

• This was a key discussion item at the last meeting. Since then, two TSAs (Teaching Support Assistants) have been recruited and further recruitment is ongoing including a new fixed-term role (safeguarding) and an additional 0.4 role to meet the increased demands of managing and delivering against EHCPs.

DfE's In-Work Skills project

• Governors were asked to promote this free training with their networks (the target is 1200 enrolments).

Strategic Partnerships
Discussion minuted as confidential.

ESFA College Oversight

• The ESFA has made a change to its oversight and intervention model and going forward, in order to get closer to colleges which are not in intervention, the FEC will be attending the ESFA's annual strategic conversations with colleges (which will take place on 16th December).

The Board received the CEO's Report

2.2   People Strategy: Learning & Development *(Paper 2.2)*

Ali Murphy was welcomed to the meeting.
Rebecca Carrington and Peter Cox joined the meeting

• Annie Allen and Ali Murphy presented an update on the 'People Strategy on a Page' (SOAP) with a focus on staff learning & development particularly the College's Middle Leadership programme: Transform. (The presentation has been subsequently circulated).

• Transform is a 12 month programme and across the organisation, over 70 members of staff have engaged with the programme over a 12 month period.

Governors asked questions:

What process triggers learning and development e.g. a personal learning and development plan arising from an appraisal?

The College has moved away from a structured performance development review (PDR) and replaced this with regular 'check-in' conversations which includes setting and reviewing objectives in an agile way.

What feedback have you received from the 70 members of staff? How are you measuring that 'Transformation' is taking place?

Colleagues are networking and collaborating across the organisation and geographically. The first cohort will become mentors for others. It has also been supported talent identification,

Who applied for learning and development and is it inclusive?

Yes, colleagues have participated in Transform across the organisation including prisons. Teams have also participated in team dynamic workshops. Over 300 colleagues attended the 'Develop Together' conference on 3rd of November when the theme was wellbeing. There have been c.4,000 applauses since the scheme was launched two years ago.

It is noted that the College is not engaging with the ETF middle management programmes for financial reasons but how is the apprenticeship levy being used?

We are reviewing how to make best use of this

The Board noted progress on Learning and Development / Management and Leadership Development across the Group

Ali was thanked for attending and she left the meeting

2.3 Financial Health *(Paper 2.3)*

Management Accounts P2 and Student Recruitment

Martin Owen referred to Paper 2.3 and highlighted:

- These are the first management accounts for 2021/22 so are not a strong indicator of the year end position. However, learner recruitment is a better indicator of financial performance at this stage.

- Overall Group contribution is £112k behind budget. Campus contribution is £126k behind budget (income is £905k lower than budget largely offset by £477k lower pay costs and £317k lower non-pay costs).

- Adult Learner Loans (£71k adverse to budget) has been affected by difficulties in securing loans for EU students.

- HE Income is £32k adverse to budget (136 students were recruited against a target of 192). This will have a knock-on impact in future years.

- Apprenticeship numbers are close to target, but more financial modelling is needed to analyse income. Apprenticeship recruitment is ongoing throughout the year.

- The Strategic Leadership Team is reviewing income gaps and how to address these. More analysis is being carried out on student recruitment and the relationship between the cost base and income (there is good cost control discipline). The College is not at the cost cutting stage yet and there are opportunities to increase income e.g. distance learning.

Governors asked questions:

Higher Education recruitment is below target. Does this relate to the IoT?

We are not behind with IoT recruitment, and the In-Work Skills project will generate substantial additional income for the IoT.

It is too early to draw any conclusions on the year-end position. HE is a multi-year commitment (with a Teach Out responsibility for current learners even if strategic decisions are made on this provision).

Is the under recruitment of students a region / sector issue?

For 16 to 18 provision, the College has recruited 92% of target. It is a lagged funding model so the impact of under-recruitment this year will be reflected in the financial plan for next year. The worst case scenario is c.£1.5m income shortfall but there are several mitigating actions e.g.
  - Some courses carry a higher weighting, MK College has done well with these courses
  - There was an announcement in the budget referring to a 16-18 uplift which we expect to receive the detail of in the next few months
  - The curriculum planning for 2022/23 will focus on quality, funding efficiency and delivery efficiency.

Applications were high but students appear to have made multiple applications to cover all options. Due to the pandemic, students were unable to visit the College which did not help.

Adult provision has been hit by Brexit (changes to residency status) especially if students require loan funding. Brexit guidelines were published late (April 2021).

Has the DfE reimbursed the £575k due to abortive costs?

The reimbursement has been confirmed by email, but the funds have not yet been received. We will discuss the treatment of this reimbursement with the auditors. It is not included in the cash flow yet.

Post-16 Capacity Funding

- The College has been successful in its bid for Post-16 Funding of £3m to build extensions to the ITC (to grow the delivery of workshop-based vocational education). The project requires a match funding contribution of £0.5m which is included in the cashflow forecast included in Paper 2.3.

- The governance of this project will follow that agreed at the Board meeting on 6th October for the SDF Project i.e. the new CPMG (Capital Projects Monitoring Group) will provide monthly strategic oversight and governance in accordance with the Section 13 of the Financial Regulations.

ESFA Confirmation of 'Good' Financial Health Grade

- The ESFA has confirmed the current financial health grade is 'Good' based on the CFFR (College Financial Forecast Return) submitted in July 2021.

Bank Mandate

- Changes to the Bank Mandate authorised signatories, previously approved by the Board, are progressing.

The Board:
- ***Noted the financial position to 30th September 2021 (Period 2)***
- ***Approved the approach being taken to the Post-16 Capacity Fund project and the match funding arrangements.***
- ***Noted the approach being taken to update the bank mandate.***

2.4.1 Student Experience *(Paper 2.4A)*

Student Achievement 2020/21 (Headlines) / School SAR grades

Sally Alexander referred to the headlines in Paper 2.4A:

- There was a dip in performance last year much of which was related to the pandemic and the impact on learning e.g. Entry, Level 1 and students on programmes including hand skills least engaged with online learning.
- Overall achievement was 80% (including English & maths) (E&M) and 90% without maths E&M. Functional skills was the main challenge.
- Individual areas / schools were self-assessed (most link governors attended the review meetings) and some schools dropped down a grade due to the impact of E&M.
- The overall SAR, which will recommend an overall self-assessment of 'Good' will be presented at the December Board meeting.

Governors asked questions:

> ***How is student feedback at the SAR review meetings being used?***
>
> This will have informed the scrutiny and challenge and the SAR grade. We will arrange for Heads of Schools to report back to students (you said, we did...)
>
> The Chair of the CQG requested a report at the CQG meeting in February.

Action 1: Sally Alexander

> ***At the motor vehicle SAR review meeting, despite best efforts of the team, students did not engage positively with learning online and consequently, the school dipped from Grade 2 to Grade 3. How are the efforts of staff recognised in these circumstances to avoid impacting morale?***
>
> This was a difficult balance and we contemplated not applying a grade this year, but we cannot be complacent. Many courses requiring hand skills saw a dip in performance.
>
> Students who were comfortable working online e.g. higher level students / female students, coped better with online learning. Two schools (Active Industries and Digital & Business) improved their grades which demonstrates that where there is focus, improvement is achievable even in difficult circumstances.

We are confident that outcomes will improve this year if students are in college.

Academic KPIs 2021/22

- The proposed KPIs balance challenge, aspiration, and realism. The aim is to revert to a pre-pandemic position.

- The Chair of CQG requested that CQG review the proposed targets at its November meeting and then make a recommendation to the Board in December. Student satisfaction requires a KPI.

Action 2: Sally Alexander

Learner Voice (First Student Survey of 2021/22)

- There will be three students satisfaction surveys over the year and the results will be analysed at new 360 Performance Review meetings. The Autumn survey (c.2000 responses), indicates a high level of satisfaction with:
    - Understanding of behaviour and attendance expectations
    - Feeling Safe
    - Felt welcomed to the College

- Students were less satisfied with pre-course activity (which was not possible due to COVID).

The Board:
- ***Noted the School / area SAR grades for 2020/21***
- ***Noted the headline achievement data for 2020/21***
- ***Deferred approval of the academic KPIs for 2020/21 to the next meeting (to allow time for CQG to scrutinise)***
- ***Noted the headline feedback from the student survey***

2.4.2 Report from the CQG Meeting on 18ᵗʰ October 2021 *(Paper 2.4B)*

The Board noted the report from the CQG meeting on 6th July 2021

2.5 Estates Strategy 2021 – 2026 *(Paper 2.5)*

- Martin Owen reminded governors that they had been sent a link to the full version of the Estates Strategy. The Estates Strategy is aligned to the Strategic Plan for the next five years i.e. the plan is to retain Chaffron Way and Bletchley campuses and to ensure they are fit for purpose to support the student, employer, and employee experience.

- The College's environmental impact goes beyond the Estates Strategy and reducing the carbon footprint will incur costs (if successful, the CTF bid will assist with this). The College's sustainability plan also needs to align to the Council's plans.

- There will be further discussion with the Board next term on the longer term strategy.

Governors asked questions:

Will you engage with students / the Student Union in sustainability planning?

Yes, we will involve students and staff. It would also be helpful to convene a smaller group of interested governors to consider the College's carbon footprint / FE Climate Roadmap.

A Student Governor added that the College should be seen as a leader on sustainability.

Are there reporting obligations for carbon footprint?

Not explicitly yet but we are preparing for this.

The Board:
- ***Approved the Estates Strategy 2021-2026***
- ***Noted that the Board will be asked to engage in a longer-term review of the Estates Strategy in 2022.***

3.0 Governance and Compliance

3.1 PDMG 27th October 2021 *(Paper 3.1)*

Peter Cox referred to the report of the meeting of 27th October when the PDMG had received assurance on project progress, variations from budget and vision / design principles.

- Bletchley - the RIBA 4 (technical design), which has not changed significantly since RIBA3, has been published. There is a funding gap of c.£120k, but the project team is confident this will be reduced through value engineering. Governors were sent a link to view the plans. The DfE has agreed to reimburse the abortive costs relating to Block D of £575k (but this has not been received yet). Planning permission is awaited.

- Oxford -the DfE has agreed additional funding based on changes in the construction inflation indices and Activate Learning has agreed to cover any shortfall in funding.

- IoT Reading - the Reading IoT was delivered on time and under budget. With the approval of the DfE, the underspend is being used towards roof repairs.

The Board noted the report from the Property Development Monitoring Group (PDMG)

3.2 Agenda items for the next meeting
- College SAR / QIP
- Financial Health
- 20/21 Financial Statements
- EDI Annual Report
- Reports from S&G, A&R, PDMG, CPMG, CQG, FinG

3.3 Meeting Effectiveness

Governors confirmed that there had been sufficient time for debate and did not request that any item be rescheduled to enable further discussion,

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

4.1 *The Board approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 6th October 2021, (Papers 4.1A, Confidential 4.1B, Confidential 4.1C and Confidential 4.1D)*

Actions

Date Raised	Actions arising from the last and previous meetings	Action Owner	Current position
6/10/21	Assurance on immediate actions to address Safeguarding and SEND resource issues.	JM	Complete - included in Paper 2.1

4.2   **Board Meetings Plan for 2021/22** *(Paper 4.2)*

The Board approved the plan noting that the plan will change if there are emerging challenges or opportunities

4.3   **Oversight Task & Finish Group – Terms of Reference V3** (*Paper 4.3)*

The Board ratified the Terms of Reference (approved by email by independent governors).

Next Meeting Tuesday 14th December 2021