

BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COLLEGE
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION BOARD
HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2021, 5.30PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Members' attendance record:

		28 Sep 2021	2 Nov 2021	7 Dec 2021	1 Feb 2022	15 Mar 2022	26 Apr 2022	24 May 2022	5 Jul 2022	2021/22 attendance
Alan Cavill	Independent Member, Chair	✓								
Helen Broughton MBE	Independent Member	A								
Jane Cole	Independent Member	✓								
Richard Fee	Independent Member	✓								
Steve Fogg	Independent Member	✓								
Kamil Gradowski	Student Member	✓								
Vicky Henderson	Student Member	✓								
Colleen Hickson	Staff Member	✓ ¹								
Chris Holt	Independent Member	✓ ²								
Heather Knight	Independent Member	✓ ³								
Suzy Layton	Independent Member	✓								
Sandy Lee	Staff Member	-								
Martin Long	Independent Member	✓								
Adrian Mills	Independent Member	✓ ⁴								
Judith Mills	Independent Member	✓								
Bev Robinson OBE	Principal and Chief Executive	✓								

Key: ✓ attended including by tele/videoconference | A apologies sent and accepted | ✗ did not attend

In attendance:

Sam Bailey, Head of HR - for Minute 106/21 only
 Ian Barker, Interim Director of Estates - for Minute 108/21 only
 Linda Dean, B&FC's Executive Director for Business
 Paul Dewhurst, Data Protection Officer - for Minute 109/21 only
 Cheryl Dunn, Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement
 Paul Howard, PDH Advisory Ltd
 Simon Hughes, Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum
 Alistair Mulvey, Vice-Principal Finance and Planning
 Daryl Platt, Vice-Principal for Engagement
 Danya Young, Company Secretary

¹ Until Minute 108/21
² Until Minute 99/21/ii
³ Until Minute 103/21
⁴ From Minute 91/21

89/21 Chair and quorum

- i. Alan Cavill took the chair and noted that due notice had been given to all members and that a quorum was present. Accordingly, he declared the meeting duly convened and constituted.
- ii. The Chair introduced and welcomed Richard Fee, independent Board member, Kamil Gradowski, student Board member and Paul Howard the incoming Company Secretary to their first meeting.
- iii. On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked the outgoing Company Secretary Danya Young for her work and contribution over the last 18 months and wished her well with her new role.

90/21 Apologies for absence

The above apologies for absence were noted.

91/21 Declarations of interest

Alan Cavill, Jane Cole and Martin Long declared their respective interests in agenda item 100/21 and it was agreed that they would not participate in the discussion of this item, albeit it was for information only.

92/21 Minutes of the previous meeting and action log

- i. The minutes and confidential minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 July 2021 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record.
- ii. The Board noted the action log and the Vice Principal Finance and Planning provided a verbal update on the VAT treatment for FE colleges in response to action 81/21/ii which was then closed.

93/21 Matters arising

- i. It was noted that since the last meeting, the dissolution of the National College for Onshore Oil and Gas had taken effect on 27 July 2021. It was also noted that Steve Williams had resigned from the Board on 2 August 2021 to streamline and balance his personal commitments.
 - ii. The Board directed that the remainder of this item be minuted confidentially.
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94/21 Dashboard

- i. The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum and Vice Principal Finance and Planning summarised the respective headline quality and performance metrics in the circulated dashboard, which the Board noted.
- ii. In response to a question from Suzy Layton on the College's target for student attainment progress HE, the Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum and Principal and Chief Executive summarised the College's rationale for continuing to set aspirational targets for its students and its high target. The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum and the Vice Principal Higher Education and Student Enhancement also contextualised the contributing factors, which included the impact of the pandemic that had resulted in the outturn.
- iii. In terms of the financial metrics, the Board noted that B&FC had maintained its Outstanding ESFA Overall Financial Health Score.
- iv. The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the dashboard and noted the content.

95/21 Student Recruitment Enrolment 2021-22: Early indicators as at 28 September 2021

- i. The Vice-Principal for Engagement presented a report on the latest enrolment indicators for 2021-2022 for each of the College's markets and the respective confidence levels in achieving the 2021-22 budget.
- ii. In response to a question from Suzy Layton, the Board was informed of the potential financial impact albeit it was acknowledged that this was an indication only given the very early stage and therefore the incompleteness of the analysis.
- iii. The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content.

96/21 Principal and Chief Executive's report

- i. The Principal and Chief Executive presented her report which had been circulated with the agenda and summarised the following key areas:
 - a) Current B&FC operations
 - b) 2020-21 GCSE English and Mathematics results
 - c) Board informal feedback
 - d) Inclusive employer
 - e) Letter from interim CEO of the Educational and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
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f) Further Education sector news: New secretary of state for education; Review of the composition of FE college boards by the Department for Education; and Review of ESFA and Plans for reforming Level 3 qualifications in England

ii. The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content.

97/21 P12 2020/21 Financial Report

i. The Vice Principal Finance and Planning presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the Corporation's financial position as at 31 July 2021 and to report on B&FC's performance against the FE Commissioner's recently introduced metrics, which was positive, which the Board discussed.

ii. For the benefit of new Board members, the Vice Principal Finance and Planning drew the Board's attention to the pension adjustments in the statutory accounts due to technical adjustments, which would similarly impact all organisations with public sector pensions, which the Board noted.

iii. The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content.

98/21 B&FC's operation during the global health pandemic; reflecting upon lessons learnt

i. B&FC's Executive Director for Business summarised the report reflecting upon lessons learnt relating to B&FC's operating during the global health pandemic and invited the Board to discuss and comment on the findings.

ii. During its in-depth discussions, the Board members asked questions and asked for further information around the strong communications; whether the relationship and communication between B&FC and its partners and businesses generally could be further enhanced; how representative the reported feedback was in terms of reflecting student feedback and feeling; and the tangible changes that the College had adopted as part of this process.

iii. The Executive team provided detailed responses to each of the questions including communications; the value of tailoring future partner communications using an industry led approach which would be influenced by business size and sector type; B&FC's ongoing relationships and positive work with businesses including the co-creation of apprenticeships by way of example, which had continued; the support and shared learning B&FC provided to local businesses; and the plethora of examples of tangible valuable changes that had been introduced at the College during as well as

as a result of the pandemic, from learning, teaching and assessment which had continued where in the best interests of the students.

- iv. With regard to the question asked about whether the report fully reflected student sentiment, the B&FC's Executive Director for Business provided a detailed account of the various channels that had been used to receive, share and test feedback to enable a rich data set of both qualitative and quantitative results to inform the lessons learnt.
- v. Following discussion, it was agreed that a follow-up shorter report of the approach taken as a result of the learning would be shared with the Board at the February 2022 meeting.

Action: B&FC's Executive Director for Business

- vi. It was also agreed that a review of whether resources, skills-base and support could be shared with businesses and partners using a more formalised and systematic approach rather than informally as was currently the case.

Action: Vice Principal Engagement

- vii. In response to a question from Chris Holt on the mood of the students returning to campus following the lock down, the Principal and Chief Executive shared her own observations of what she had seen which was extremely positive. Kamil Gradowski also shared his personal experience and that of his peers who were delighted to return to face to face delivery and to meet the students and tutors, following the exemplary work the tutors delivered through the pandemic.

99/21 Provisional outcome of degree classifications

- i. The Vice-Principal for HE and Student Enhancement presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to provide the Board with the interim position of the achievement rates as at 6 September 2021 following the summer HE exam boards and for the first time reassessment boards for B&FC's degree awards completing in 2020/21. The Board also noted that the final position and further analysis would be reported to the Quality and Standards Committee in due course.
 - ii. The Vice-Principal for HE and Student Enhancement provided a detailed summary of the importance of safeguarding academic standards, and elaborated on the associated controls and external scrutiny in place for the College which the Board discussed and noted.
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iii. The Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content.

100/21 Confidential item

The Board directed that this item be minuted confidentially.

101/21 Governance review

i. The Company Secretary presented the report which had been circulated with the agenda to update the Board on the status of the actions from the governance review conducted in 2020 which she had progressed and which she would hand over to Paul Howard to report to the Board on following their handover. The Company Secretary also asked the Board to approve the circulated draft recruitment policy.

ii. Following consideration, the Board **APPROVED** the recruitment policy.

102/21 Membership matters

i. Paul Howard updated the Board on the outcome of the election for the Staff Corporation Board Member noting that it had generated positive engagement and participation from eligible employees.

ii. The Board noted that the highest polling candidate Sandy Lee, Student Support and Wellbeing FE Coordinator, would be appointed as the Staff Member to represent corporate staff on the Board for an initial induction year, with effect from 2 November 2021.

103/21 Confidential item

The Board directed that this matter be minuted confidentially.

104/21 Risk Register – Closing Off 2020/21

i. The Vice Principal Finance and Planning presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to present the College's final risk position for the financial year 2020-21.

ii. The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content.

105/21 Summary of Complaints and Compliments 2020-21

i. The Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the complaints and compliments received by B&FC during the 2020/21 financial year.

- ii. The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content.

106/21 End of year HR Report 2020/2021

- i. The Head of Human Resources joined the meeting and presented the end of year HR report for 2020/21 circulated with the agenda to report to the Board on in year progress against the 5-year People Strategy introduced in 2020.
- ii. The Head of Human Resources drew the Board's attention to the highlights as detailed in the report including the increased participation in the annual employee survey to 88% which was in part due to B&FC's exemplary response to covid-19 in terms of enhanced employee wellbeing and communications in challenging times; the focus on continuity of learning and teaching in a safe environment; and significant investment in professional development for B&FC colleagues. The Head of HR also highlighted the continued focus on equality, diversity and inclusion with its several initiatives.
- iii. Stephen Fogg, Adrian Mills and the Chair congratulated the team and the College on the outstanding level of engagement and the report.

The Head of Human Resources left the meeting.

107/21 Safeguarding and Equality, and Inclusion annual report 2020-21

- i. In the absence of the Director for Students, the Vice Principal Higher Education and Student Engagement introduced the report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise B&FC's performance in relation to safeguarding and equality and diversity metrics.
 - ii. The Chair highlighted that he was assured by the report that students were supported by B&FC both inside and outside the College where a number of the safeguarding cases arose.
 - iii. Suzy Layton reminded the Board that she was their representative for B&FC's safeguarding arrangements pursuant to the relevant statutory guidance and confirmed that following her meeting with the new safeguarding lead, and she when she had received pre-reading from the Director for Students, she would be visiting the site once per term during her appointment.
 - iv. The Principal and Chief Executive highlighted the increasing and ongoing complexity of the safeguarding issues and the importance of the support that was also in place for safeguarding employees in this regard.
 - v. Following a question from Adrian Mills on the extent to which statistics reflected national or regional trends, the Vice Principal of HE and Student
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Enhancement confirmed that the rise and nature of issues presented reflected the current national picture in terms of increased numbers and the nature of incidences. She also reported that the new Head of Student Support of Wellbeing and Inclusion would be able to shed even further light on these national and regional issues. She also assured the Board that in line with the College's drive to continuously improve in all areas, a review of safeguarding practices was currently underway.

- vi. The Board discussed the report and safeguarding and resilience issues generally and **RECEIVED** and noted the report.

108/21 Health, Safety and Environmental annual report 2020-21

The Interim Director of Estates joined the meeting and presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to inform the Board of progress against key health, safety and sustainability metrics which the Board noted with thanks.

The Interim Director of Estates left the meeting.

109/21 Data Protection Annual Report 2020-2021

- i. The Data Protection Officer joined the meeting and presented the new annual report on data protection which had been circulated with the agenda to provide the Board with assurance with the College's practices and policies to safeguard data.
- ii. In response to the Principal and Chief Executive inviting the Board to discuss any learnings from their own organisations, Board members discussed cybersecurity and business continuity particularly given the impact of remote working; the increased risks generally from hybrid and remote working; and the importance and value of bite size delivery of training on a regular basis.
- iii. The Data Protection Officer informed the Board of its existing Cyber Essentials Certification and the work underway towards achieving Cyber Essentials PLUS by the Autumn which would be of benefit to the College and the third parties who it contracted with.
- iv. The Chair updated the Board on the voluntary ICO audit that Blackpool Borough Council had recently been subjected to and offered to share the learnings with the College if that would be helpful.

The Data Protection Officer left the meeting

110/21 Board members' forum

- i. The Chair updated the Board on his end of Summer review of College affairs with Steve Fogg, as the incoming Chair, Helen Broughton as Vice-Chair and the Principal and Chief Executive.
- ii. Adrian Mills informed the Board of the campus tours he had attended noting that he had been highly impressed with the knowledgeable and passionate staff he had met and how this had been an inspiring and welcoming experience for a new Board member, and he looked forward to meeting the students in due course. Martin Long also provided positive feedback on his experience.
- iii. The Chair reminded the Board that it had previously agreed to hold the November 2021 and April 2022 meetings remotely. On this basis, following consideration, the Board agreed to hold the December 2021 Corporation Board meeting in person, subject to a risk assessment and the official prevailing guidance at the time.

111/21 Date, time and venue of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 2 November 2021 at 5.00pm via videoconference.

Chair _____

Date _____