

BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COLLEGE
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION BOARD (“the Board”)
HELD ON 25 APRIL 2023 AT 5.00PM
BY VIDEOCONFERENCE

Members’ attendance record:

		28 Sep 2022	1 Nov 2022	6 Dec 2022	15 Dec 2022	31 Jan 2023	14 Mar 2023	25 Apr 2023	23 May 2023	4 Jul 2023	2022/23 attendance to date
Steve Fogg	Independent Member, Chair	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			100%
Helen Broughton	Independent Member	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			86%
Andrea Challis	Independent Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			100%
Mark Chapman	Student Member	---	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A			67%
Jane Cole	Independent Member	✓	✓	A	A	A	✓	A			43%
Darren Gorman	Student Member	---	✓	A	✓	A	A	✓			50%
Colleen Hickson	Staff Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			100%
Chris Holt	Independent Member	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			86%
Suzy Layton	Independent Member	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			86%
Sandy Lee	Staff Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓			71%
Antony Lockley	Independent Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A			86%
Martin Long	Independent Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			100%
Adrian Mills	Independent Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A			71%
Bev Robinson	Principal and Chief Executive	✓	✓	✓	A ^(*)	✓	✓	✓			100%
Wendy Robinson	Independent Member	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	A	✓			71%

() indicates an absence due to having an interest in the business to be transacted, which is not counted towards attendance figures*

In attendance:

Linda Dean Executive Director of Apprenticeships and People
Paul Howard PDH Advisory (minutes)
Alistair Mulvey Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning
Daryl Platt Vice-Principal for Engagement
Rob Lawson OBE External Governance Reviewer (for item 52/23 only)

35/23 Chair and quorum

Steve Fogg 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.

36/23 Apologies for absence

- (i) Apologies for absence from board members were received as shown in the attendance table above.
- (ii) Apologies for absence were also received from the Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement due to her participation in the TEF panel for the Office for Students, and from the Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum due to him supporting an Ofsted inspection of B&FC's teacher training provision.

37/23 Declarations of interest

There were no opening declarations of interest.

38/23 Minutes of the previous meeting

- (i) The minutes and the confidential minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 March 2023 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record.
- (ii) The Board reviewed the action log and noted that all actions had been completed, with the exception of the draft Accountability Statement which had been deferred to the May meeting following publication of new guidance from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

39/23 Dashboard

- (i) The Executive Director of Apprenticeships and People and the Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning presented the regular dashboard containing headline quality and performance metrics and the Board had the opportunity to ask questions.
- (ii) In response to a question from Chris Holt, confirmation was provided that the status column showed the movement of the key performance indicator since the previous meeting and, in response to a follow-up question, the Executive Director of Apprenticeships and People confirmed that any lessons learned are recorded and applied.
- (iii) Sandy Lee noted the national trend of student attendance not having returned to pre-Covid levels and commented that B&FC's levels of attendance exceeded the national average. The Principal and Chief Executive acknowledged this, but reminded the Board that B&FC had intentionally set challenging internal targets for all metrics.

- (iv) The Board received the dashboard and noted the content.

40/23 Principal and Chief Executive's report

- (i) The Principal and Chief Executive presented her regular report which had been circulated with the agenda and which briefed board members on the annual strategic conversation with the Education and Skills Funding Agency and a recent decision by the Department for Education (DfE) in respect of four T-Level qualifications due to be delivered from September 2023, alongside general news relating to the further education sector.
- (ii) In response to a question from Martin Long, the Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that the DfE decision had not caused any significant difficulties for B&FC. In response to a question from Chris Holt, it was noted that the Prime Minister's recent announcement regarding the requirement for students to study maths until the age of 18 may not have any significant impact for the College as B&FC students currently continue to study maths until that age. However, an understanding of the impact would not be known until the decision on the content of the maths was made and which we await.
- (iii) The Board received the report and noted the content.

41/23 Period 8 finance report

- (i) The Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the College's financial position as at 31 March 2023 and to confirm the 2021/22 financial health rating of Outstanding as assessed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
- (ii) In response to a question from Martin Long, the Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning confirmed that two energy contracts had been signed at the end of March 2023, with a resultant favourable impact on the forecast shown within the report albeit still a threefold increase compared with current energy costs.
- (iii) The Board received the report and noted the content.

42/23 Pay award 2023

- (i) The Executive Director for Apprenticeships and People presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to share a paper produced by the joint trade unions to outline their response to B&FC's pay offer for 2023. Confirmation was provided that the report from the joint trade unions had been shared in its original form, with no alterations or amendments having been made.
- (ii) Having reviewed the joint trade unions' submission and having taken account of its earlier discussions on this topic in December 2022 and January 2023, the Board **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that its considered offer made in December

2022 and subsequently repeated in January 2023 was the best it could offer and that no further flexibility could be considered. In reaching this decision, the Board was clear that the financial envelope agreed in December 2022 had been at the limit of what it could afford and that the decision had been based on affordability. Furthermore, the Board's position was that the use of reserves for pay awards would be irresponsible in the context of the sustainable future of B&FC. The Board had already taken the unprecedented step of agreeing a lower in-year surplus to pay for the non-consolidated element of the proposed award. It further noted that it had also committed to reviewing the financial position in July 2023 to consider the affordability of a third non-consolidated payment for the year 2022-23.

- (iii) In response to a question from the Chair around the next steps, the Executive Director for Apprenticeships and People confirmed that the Board's decision would be shared with the joint trade unions the following day.

43/23 Major projects update: Multiversity

The Board directed that this item be minuted confidentially.

44/23 Update on progress since the November 2021 Ofsted inspection

- (i) In the absence of the Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum, the Executive Director for Apprenticeships and People presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to update the Board on progress made since the last full Ofsted inspection in November 2021. Note was also made of the fact that the wider Quality Improvement Plan is scrutinised by the Quality and Standards Committee.
- (ii) The Board received the report and noted the content.

45/23 Operational plan update

- (i) The Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to provide an update against the targets set out in the operational plan for 2022/23.
- (ii) The Board received the report and noted the content.

46/23 Business engagement update

The Board directed that this item be minuted confidentially.

47/23 Capital programme 2023/24

- (i) The Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to seek qualified approval of the learning and teaching capital expenditure budget for 2023/24, and to seek full approval of an element of this budget as advanced capital.

- (ii) The Board **RESOLVED** as follows:
 - (a) THAT qualified approval of up to £1.2m for learning and teaching capital expenditure be given for FY2023/24
 - (b) THAT up to £173k of the qualified approval amount be **APPROVED** as advanced capital
 - (c) THAT the Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning and the Principal and Chief Executive may vire between the proposed budget lines within the capital table provided, provided the total cost remained within the overall budget envelope of £1.2m

48/23 FE Fees Policy 2023/24

- (i) The Vice-Principal for Finance and Planning presented the proposed FE Fees Policy for 2023/24.
- (ii) The Board **APPROVED** the policy as presented.

49/23 Board strategy session agenda

- (i) The Principal and Chief Executive presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to facilitate discussion about the topics that the Board would wish to debate during its strategy session on 20 June 2023.
- (ii) Following discussion, it was agreed that a blended session about business development and the future of work would be the main item, facilitated by an external speaker if possible and involving students to better understand their perspective on the future of work.

50/23 Board members' forum

Board members took the opportunity to share any College-related activities since the last meeting.

51/23 Quality and Standards Committee matters

- (i) Helen Broughton provided a verbal update on the business transacted at the most recent Quality and Standards Committee meeting in March 2023, and a copy of the approved minutes of the November 2022 meeting had been circulated with the agenda for information.
- (ii) The Board received and noted the verbal update.

52/23 Feedback from external governance review

- (i) Rob Lawson joined the meeting and summarised the content of the external governance review report which had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting.
- (ii) At the Board's request, Paul Howard agreed to produce an initial action plan for the Board's review at the next meeting.

ACTION: Paul Howard

53/23 Date, time and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Board will be held on 23 May 2023, 5.00pm, on the Bispham Campus.