

BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COLLEGE
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION BOARD
HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2019, 5.00PM

IN ROOM 204, UNIVERSITY CENTRE CAMPUS, PARK ROAD, BLACKPOOL, FY1 4ES

Members' attendance record:

		17 Sep 2019	22 Oct 2019	3 Dec 2019	4 Feb 2020	10 Mar 2020	28 Apr 2020	9 Jun 2020	7 Jul 2020	2019/20 attendance
Alan Cavill	Independent Member, Chair	✓	✓							
Jane Cole	Independent Member	✓	✓							
Kenny Gilmour	Independent Member	✓	✓							
Colleen Hickson	Staff Member	✓	✓							
Kieran Hunter	Student Member	✓	A							
Heather Knight	Independent Member	✓	✓							
Martin Long	Independent Member	---	✓							
Judith Mills	Independent Member	✓	✓							
Lorraine Moffat	Independent Member	A	A							
Anne Parmley	Independent Member	✓	✓							
Joanne Shepherd	Staff Member	✓	✓							
Bev Robinson OBE	Principal and Chief Executive	✓	✓							
Kate Shane	Independent Member	A	✓							
Steve Williams	Independent Member	A	✓							

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

In attendance:

Paul Howard, Company Secretary (PDH Advisory Limited, Clerk to the Corporation)

Cheryl Dunn, Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement

Simon Hughes, Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum

Daryl Platt, Vice-Principal for Engagement

Robby Ryan, Chief Operating Officer

104/19 Chair and quorum

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.

The Chair opened by welcoming Mr Martin Long to his first meeting as an Independent Member of the Corporation Board.

105/19 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received as shown in the members' attendance record, above.

106/19 Declarations of interest

J Cole and J Shepherd noted that they held an interest in minute reference 114/19 (membership matters) and agreed to withdraw during the discussion.

Whilst P Howard did not have a personal interest in minute reference 115/19 (clerking function), it was nonetheless agreed that he would leave the room whilst the matter was under discussion.

107/19 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 September 2019 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record. Confirmation was provided that all actions shown in the action log had been completed.

108/19 Dashboard

The Board considered the dashboard containing headline financial performance and quality metrics which had been tabled at the meeting. A discussion was held on the metrics, which displayed steady progress.

The Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum confirmed that no areas of concern were being escalated for the Board's attention but pointed out that whilst student attendance is of a good standard when compared with peers, work was nonetheless ongoing to improve this metric as part of the College's own internal drive for continual improvements.

The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the dashboard and noted the content.

109/19 Principal and Chief Executive's report

The Principal and Chief Executive presented her regular report which had been circulated with the agenda and which included the following key areas:

- No deal Brexit preparedness;

- High profile visits;
- Office for Students' assurance statements; and
- News relating to the wider further education sector.

A copy of a joint letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the School System and the FE Commissioner had also been appended to the report. Confirmation was provided that an invitation had been extended to the Minister to visit B&FC as part of his introduction to the sector.

The Principal and Chief Executive took the opportunity to confirm that the assurance statements that had been required by Office for Students, the Higher Education sector regulator, in 2018/19 as part of its interim arrangements were not required to be submitted in 2019/20. This had been reported to the Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 8 October 2019 and was shared with the Board for information.

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

110/19 Period 2 financial report

The Chief Operating Officer presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the Corporation's financial position as at 30 September 2019. He noted that much of the content had been highlighted within the dashboard considered earlier in the meeting and welcomed questions from the Board.

In response to a question from A Parmley, the Chief Operating Officer confirmed that the draft statutory accounts had been prepared and that the predicted impact of the recent McCloud judgement in relation to public sector pensions had materialised. In response to a supplementary question from A Parmley, the Chief Operating Officer advised that the impact related to a technical adjustment in relation to pension costs in the statutory accounts only and confirmed that such adjustments are not considered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency when calculating colleges' financial performance ratings.

In response to a question from H Knight, the Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement advised that the primary reason for non-continuation of higher education students surrounds their performance at exam boards rather than any dissatisfaction with the service provided by B&FC.

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

111/19 Revised capital approval process

The Chief Operating Officer presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to seek approval of a proposed process for providing early approval to commit a proportion of the college's annual capital expenditure for the

following financial year. He reminded the Board that development of the proposal had stemmed from a suggestion from Independent Members and that the rationale for doing so was to allow best value pricing to be secured and to ensure that works can be commissioned at an appropriate point in time to allow for any necessary lead-in times.

K Gilmour also suggested that it may be beneficial to consider the potential to develop a two-year rolling capital expenditure programme in the future.

Following discussion, the Board **APPROVED** the process as outlined within the report that up to £800k may be approved on an unqualified basis in April of each year, subject to meeting in-year financial metrics of borrowing being equal to or less than 20% of income and surplus remaining above 3% of income.

The Board **FURTHER APPROVED** the amendment of Financial Regulations to the extent required to give effect to this process.

112/19 Employer engagement report

The Vice-Principal for Engagement presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the employer engagement activities that have been undertaken and to outline the tactical direction being adopted to optimise Lancashire Energy HQ.

K Gilmour commented that there is much potential associated with Lancashire Energy HQ and it was noted that Board members who are STEM related employers may wish to debate the further development of LEHQ with the Vice-Principal for Engagement outside the meeting.

ACTION: Vice-Principal for Engagement

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

113/19 Employee survey results 2019

The Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the findings of the 2019 employee survey. The Board noted a slight decline in response rates when compared with the previous year and the results for each section of the survey over the past three years were provided to allow for comparison and trend analysis.

The Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement noted that the organisation had recently invested in talent management arrangements and noted the intention to move to more regular pulse surveys as opposed to an annual survey of staff. Independent Members who have examples of good pulse surveys were encouraged to send these to the Principal and Chief Executive for further consideration.

A Parmley suggested that consideration should be given to making the scale of professional development more visible within the organisation so that staff are able to more easily recognise the investment that is made, and suggested that consideration is also given to identifying ways in which professional development could be celebrated further.

In response to a question from H Knight, the Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement confirmed that the surveys provide quantitative data only but noted that qualitative feedback is received from regular staff representation groups. The Principal and Chief Executive also advised that she undertakes monthly staff focus events where qualitative feedback from all staff groups is provided.

The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the report and noted the content. An update on progress with introducing pulse surveys was requested in February 2020.

ACTION: Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement

114/19 Membership matters

J Cole and J Shepherd withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Clerk to the Corporation presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to outline the recommendations of the Search Committee meeting held on 25 September 2019 that J Cole and J Shepherd be confirmed in post following a successful Induction Year.

The Corporation Board **RESOLVED:**

1. THAT J Shepherd be confirmed in post as a Staff Member for the remainder of her first term of office; such term to expire on 31 October 2022.
2. AND THAT J Cole be confirmed in post as an Independent Member for the remainder of her first term of office; such term to expire on 10 December 2022.

115/19 Clerking function

P Howard withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item and C Hickson was appointed as Acting Clerk.

The Principal and Chief Executive presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda and which had been jointly prepared with the Chair to seek the Board's view on the future clerking arrangements at B&FC. She reminded the Board of the legal requirement to appoint a Clerk and that responsibility for appointment is the reserve of the Board.

The Board discussed at length the options that had been set out in the report and noted that PDH Advisory Limited would not be seeking reappointment when the current contract comes to an end in September 2020.

Following discussion, the Board **ENDORSED** option 3 or 4 as set out in the report. The Chair and the Principal and Chief Executive will now form a sub-group with either A Parmley and or H Knight, depending upon diary commitments, to take the recruitment forward in line with the Board's wishes.

116/19 Further education corporations: governance guide

The Company Secretary presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise guidance for Board Members on governance, as requested by the Chief Executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency in a letter to Chairs of all Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges in July 2019. A short supplementary presentation was also provided and confirmation was provided that copies of the guidance had been uploaded to the Board portal for future reference.

The Company Secretary concluded by reminding Board Members that advice and guidance is readily available on demand.

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

117/19 Adoption of Association of Colleges' Senior Staff Remuneration Code

As it had been necessary to rearrange the meeting of the Remuneration Committee which had been scheduled to be held immediately before the meeting, this item was deferred to the next meeting of the Corporation Board.

118/19 Quality and Standards Committee matters

The approved minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting on 14 May 2019 were received for information and K Gilmour provided a verbal summary of the business transacted at the most recent meeting of the Committee on 8 October 2019. He noted that the committee had considered a comprehensive suite of key quality metrics with the accompanying management-level metrics, which are regularly reviewed by teams across the organisation. This includes intent, implementation and impact. Together with the ensuing debate and questions great assurance was noted by the committee.

119/19 Board Member training: Education Inspection Regime

A training session relating to the new Ofsted inspection regime was delivered.

The Corporation Board **RECEIVED** the training and noted the content.

120/19 Date, time and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation Board will be held on 3 December 2019, 5.00pm on the University Centre campus.

Chair

Date