

AGREED 21/05/24

THE CORPORATION OF EALING, HAMMERSMITH & WEST LONDON COLLEGE

Meeting	Board
Date and time	5 pm, Tuesday 26 March 2024
Venue	LT3, Hammersmith & Fulham College
Members	Ian Comfort (Chair); Phillip Kerle (Vice Chair); Maddalaine Ansell; Sarah Benjamin; Robin Ghurbhurun; Laura Gladstone; Sharon Lambert; Shawez Mir; Adrien Ong; Kunal Parkash; Karen Redhead; Jonathan Roe; Christopher Taylor
In attendance	Maxine Deslandes (Director of Finance); Matt Fawcett (Deputy Principal (Planning, Partnerships and Projects)); Anil Nagpal (Chief Operating Officer); James Taylor (Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality)); Richard Ward (Director of Governance).

No.	Item
1	<p>Attendance</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Kunal Parkash to his first formal meeting of the Board, noting that he had attended the strategy workshop on 23 January.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Rachael Fisher, Carole Kitching and Yusra Mehmood.</p> <p>The Chair informed the Board that a request to observe the meeting had been received from a member of College staff, to which the Board agreed. The Board noted that the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee would give further consideration to the Board's practice and procedure on this point.</p>
2	<p>Appointment of governors</p> <p>The Board noted that a written resolution had been agreed on 16 January in the following terms:</p> <p><i>Resolved, That Kunal Parkash be appointed as a member of the Corporation and of the Audit Committee for a term of four years from 16 January 2024 to 15 January 2028.</i></p>
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Phillip Kerle declared that he was a governor of Orbital South Colleges.</p>
4	<p>Minutes</p> <p><i>Resolved, That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2023 be approved as a correct record.</i></p>

5	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>The Director of Governance reported that the three matters arising from the previous meeting had either been completed or were on the agenda for the evening's meeting.</p>
6	<p>CEO report</p> <p>The CEO updated the Board on the progress being made by the College under the Post-Intervention Monitoring and Support (PIMS) plan which had been agreed with the Department for Education in October. Overall, the outcomes from actions which were due (or were shortly to become due) had been met or exceeded.</p> <p>On finance, the College had maintained its 'Good' financial health score for 2022/23 and was tracking well in the current year. On quality, the College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) had been presented to Ofsted as part of the recent monitoring visit. The outcome of the monitoring visit had been very positive, with 'significant progress' being observed against three of the themes and 'reasonable progress' in the other two. On HR, the work conducted by external consultants had concluded and would be reported to the Board as the next item on the agenda. The College had achieved a demonstrable improvement in staff survey results including significant increases in the response rate and levels of satisfaction. On Estates, the work commissioned as part of RIBA Stage 3 for the Hammersmith campus had been concluded, but there was some slippage in developing plans to contract the College's occupancy of the Hammersmith site.</p> <p>A paper prepared by the Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) had been circulated to the Board to give greater detail on the verbal feedback that the College had received at the end of the visit. The CEO informed the Board that the report of the monitoring visit would be shared as soon as it was available.</p> <p>Governors commented on the strong and positive direction of travel set out in the report, in particular the outcome of the monitoring visit and the improvement in the staff survey results. The Chair noted that it was pleasing to see that significant effort from across the College over several years was delivering such clear results. The CEO thanked the Board for the positive feedback, noting that the College was pleased but by no means complacent.</p>
7	<p>Staff survey and external consultancy outcomes</p> <p>The CEO presented a paper which reported the outcomes of the latest staff survey and the external consultancy work which had been commissioned as part of the PIMS plan. The report indicated changes in reported levels of satisfaction against the previous survey which had been conducted in 2022. The College continued to focus its efforts on areas where satisfaction was reported as being below 60% (Red) and between 60% and 80% (Amber).</p> <p>Based on the findings of the staff survey and external consultancy work, two clearly identified steps were being taken to address areas which had emerged as staff concerns. The first was the continuing implementation of the College's capital</p>

	<p>expenditure programmes, in particular on Estates and IT. The second was a review of financial controls to enable greater autonomy within defined limits. This was reflected in the changes to financial regulations which had been considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee the previous week and which was being presented to the Board for approval later in the evening.</p> <p>Governors noted the lower levels of satisfaction reported at Ealing, and asked what work was being carried out to identify and address the underlying issues. The CEO informed the Board that the College was indeed looking at this point more closely and that the Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) was reviewing the student and staff satisfaction across the campus. The CEO added that the College was planning to introduce more regular 'pulse' surveys alongside a main annual survey. On the specific issues of progression and development within the College, two training courses had been run recently to provide greater opportunities for staff and it was hoped that the impact would be seen in the next set of results.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Funding report</p> <p>The Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) spoke to a paper setting out details of the College's performance against major funding allocations as they stood at the latest funding return period (R07, ending 6 March). The report had been adjusted to take into account governor feedback on the December report, and showed the comparable position in the previous year.</p> <p>The position was broadly favourable, with GLA and ESFA funding above target and up on the same point last year. Advanced Learner Loans were down on last year as a result of some courses now qualifying for funding via Courses for Jobs. The College had bid for additional CfJ funding from ESFA but this had been unsuccessful. Governors thanked the Deputy Principal for the report and asked that future reports include an overarching narrative.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Management accounts</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer spoke to the College's management accounts for the period ending January 2024. The forecast income for the year was projected as £35,046k, slightly up on December. This was £2,482k above the original budget and included the additional income received from ESFA of £648k which had been directed to the College's pay award provision as agreed by the Board in October. The COO noted that with some income streams, greater income also brought increased costs. Overall the College was reporting an adverse variance of £176k but was broadly still on track.</p> <p>Governors noted and discussed the College's level of subcontracting. The Deputy Principal (Planning, Partnerships and Projects) noted that in house delivery had increased to the extent that the College was now only subcontracting 45% rather than the 55% of provision that it could have been under its tapering agreement with ESFA.</p> <p>On the financial KPIs, the COO reminded the Board that the College's level of borrowing would remain comparatively high for as long as the College had a significant loan balance with the DfE.</p>

11	<p>Confirmation of going concern</p> <p>The Vice Chair reported that the going concern position had been scrutinised at the most recent meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Vice Chair confirmed that the College continued to be a going concern.</p>
12	<p>Audit Committee (8 February)</p> <p>Shawez Mir reported that the Audit Committee had met on 8 February and considered a report on subcontracting in line with the requirements of the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice. The Committee had noted progress made by the College in relation to the recommendations of the internal auditors, with several recommendations now validated as completed by Scrutton Bland. On risk management, the Committee had noted that there had not been any movement in the net risk scores since the previous update. The Chief Operating Officer updated the Board on the measures relating to risk management which were currently underway within the College.</p>
13	<p>Curriculum & Quality Committee (7 March)</p> <p>Robin Ghurbhurun reported that the Curriculum & Quality Committee had met shortly after the College’s monitoring visit, and reiterated the extent to which the very positive outcome was testament to sustained effort across the College. The Committee had received a report on the wide range of activities which had taken place to build and maintain strong relationships between the College and local employers. The Committee had also reviewed the outcome of the College’s autumn learner survey, which had focused on the induction period at the beginning of the academic year. A significant increase in the level of response had been recorded, along with good responses on learner safety and the quality of teaching and learning.</p> <p>Robin Ghurbhurun added his thanks to Committee members for their contributions and commented that systemic improvements within the College were now coming to fruition.</p> <p><i>Resolved, That the revised terms of reference for the Curriculum & Quality Committee be approved.</i></p>
14	<p>Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee (14 March)</p> <p>Adrien Ong thanked governors for their responses to the latest skills audit, the results of which had been considered by the Committee as part of its oversight of Board development and recruitment. The Committee had noted that the Board had a good mix of skills and experiences. The Committee had agreed a new role description for governors which was aligned to a competency framework being rolled out across the sector. The Committee had also considered a proposal to introduce a Board portal, and a demonstration had been arranged for during the Easter holidays.</p>
15	<p>Finance & General Purposes Committee (19 March)</p> <p>Phillip Kerle informed the Board that the Committee had considered a paper from the Chief Operating Officer which proposed a variation of the College’s financial regulations to increase the level of financial delegation within the College. The</p>

	<p>intention of the proposal was to provide for greater autonomy and respond to themes emerging from the staff survey and external consultancy work reported earlier in the meeting. The Committee had made a minor textual amendment and recommended the paper to the Board for approval. The Committee had also received an update on the process for setting the 2024/25 Budget and reviewed the strategic risks relating to its remit at the request of the Audit Committee.</p> <p>A governor asked how the impact of the proposed amendment would be monitored. The Board noted that existing structures and processes provided the mechanisms for effective oversight, in particular the role of the Audit and Finance & General Purposes Committees. The Chief Operating Officer noted that increased autonomy came with increased responsibility for budget holders.</p> <p>Resolved, That the variation to the financial regulations be approved.</p>
16	<p>Committee evaluation</p> <p>The Chair invited comment from the Board on the papers and conduct of the meeting. Governors commented positively on the organisation and chairing of the meeting. The Board noted that the number of papers had been more manageable than the length of the last Board pack, while acknowledging that the agenda was shorter than the December meeting.</p>
18	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Nil.</p>
19	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>The next Board meeting would take place on Tuesday 21 May as part of an afternoon/evening meeting at the Hammersmith & Fulham campus.</p>