

## Colchester Institute Corporation

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Corporation Board  
held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
at the Colchester Campus**

**Present:**

Kevin Prince, *in the Chair*  
Sam Aldwinckle  
Alison Andreas  
Stephanie Bettinson  
Peter Cook  
Irene Kettle

Brenda Rich  
Terry Smyth  
Dawn Swainson  
Richard Wainwright  
Caroline Williams

**In Attendance:**

Gary Horne	Deputy Chief Executive
Hazel Paton	Clerk to the Governors
Jason Peters	Vice Principal: Curriculum Delivery and Performance
Jill Wognum	Executive Vice Principal: Curriculum, Planning and Quality

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Lisa Blake, Richard Block and Mark Davies.

**2. Declaration of any conflicts of interest**

None.

**3. Agreement to Starred Agenda Items**

Governors were invited to indicate any items which they wished to star for discussion or question. Items that had not been starred were noted and/or approved without discussion.

**4. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2022 (CIC/22/5/1) and Special meeting held on 4 October 2022 (CIC/22/5/2) were received and approved as an accurate record. The Chairman signed the minute book.

**5. Matters arising from the minutes**

CIC/22/5/3, Corporation Board Action Sheet, was received and noted.

Governors asked how this year's 16-18 cohort were settling in compared to the previous year when there were a number of behavioural issues as a result of the learning experience in secondary school during the pandemic. It was reported that generally, the student body was more settled than in the previous year, but there had been five summary exclusions; three for possession of drugs, and one for serious verbal abuse of a teacher. Attendance was 3% below where the College would want it to be with attendance at GCSEs exceptionally poor. It was reported that students only want to attend for about 40% to 60% of the time. A survey of 14,000 students conducted by UCL and the Sutton Trust suggests that it will be a difficult post-Covid time for another two to three years with students down to year ten saying that their educational experience has been completely distorted.

Governors asked what the next steps would be for students who do not attend. It was reported that the College would engage with the parents and in most cases the students comply but there would be a group of students that will leave because they do not attend. It was reported that students who do not meet minimum attendance requirements for GCSEs are not funded. In response to a question, it

was reported that there were pockets where attendance at GCSEs was worse than in other areas, including Construction and Motor Vehicle. This was because the students do not see value of attending. Attendance was good in Public Services.

It was reported that Covid was having an impact on the teaching teams and two weeks previously there were no lessons in ESOL for three days because no one was available to teach either in person or on line.

## 6. **2021-22 and 2022-23**

CIC/22/5/4, College Targets 2022-23 – FE and Apprenticeships, Higher Education, HR and Finance, was received and presented by the Principal. The purpose of presenting the paper was to present all previously agreed KPIs in one paper and to provide the most recent update on the achievement of 2021/22 targets where these were known. The 2021-22 quality targets would be presented to the Curriculum and Quality Committee after the final ILR for the year had been submitted. National average data would not be available until March 2023.

It was reported that results would be at the same level as 2018-19, the most recent normal year before the use of Teacher Assessed Grades as a result of the pandemic. The current indication was that apprenticeship results would be just below 60%; overall classroom-based learning results would be in the low 80s with considerable variation within that. More details would be shared with the Curriculum and Quality Committee and through the Self-Assessment Report at the December Board meeting.

Given the performance in 2021-22 a Member asked how the College would achieve the target for percentage of apprenticeship levy utilised and whether consideration had been given to a levy transfer with an organisation that might use the levy to support apprenticeships delivered by Colchester Institute. It was reported that a levy transfer was not something that the College had considered. The intention was to use the levy, which the College had done successfully pre Covid.

Governors questioned the most recent result for student survey overall satisfaction. It was reported that this target had always been based on the result for the question 'overall I am satisfied with my course', with points awarded according to if the student strongly agreed, agreed etc. This year a completely different methodology had been used with students being asked on a scale of one to ten how happy there are with their experience at Colchester Institute, making it difficult to compare to previous years.

The Chair stated that the Curriculum and Quality Committee had discussed separate targets for GCSE maths and English but noted that it was still a combined target. Separate targets would help the Board and College identify which area was performing less well. **Action:** the Principal agreed to take this forward.

## 7. **Reports from Committee**

### 7.1. **Finance and Resources Committee**

#### 7.1.1. **Report from Committee Chair**

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee presented his written report (CIC/22/5/5). It was reported that:

- Staff recruitment and retention was a problem across the College causing pressure in the HR Department.
- Short term sickness levels were increasing across the College. Long term absence due to stress and mental ill health was above the sector benchmarks, albeit it that the sector benchmark data was out of date.

#### 7.1.2. **Monthly Management Report**

CIC/22/5/6, Monthly Management Report and Accounts July 2022 [Period] 12, was received and noted. The Committee Chair thanked the Deputy Chief Executive and his Team on a good year end position. It was noted that the College would report 210 financial health points, maintaining its Good position. The cash position was good and was not forecast to fall below £1m over the next twelve months.

It was reported that the movement in the Local Government Pension Scheme FRS102 report would change the overall negative net asset position in the Balance Sheet to positive. The revaluation was based on the bond yields at the time of the valuation.

#### 7.1.3. **Update on 2022-23 Budget Position**

It was reported that the 2022-23 Budget was still under review as some of the uncertainties become more certain. The Deputy Chief Executive reported that:

- He was working on energy saving policies to get as close as possible to the original budgeted costs for energy.
- The pay review was still under consideration.
- The College Executive recognise that there will be some exceptional changes in the Period 2 and 3 forecasts but want to retain the Budget as approved at the July Board meeting.
- The Executive were hopeful that reductions in income would be offset against reductions in expenditure to maintain a surplus forecast.
- The main concern was staff pay and what could be done to provide additional cash to pay for a higher pay award than that currently provided for in the Budget.

#### 7.1.4. **Update on Property Issues**

It was reported that the majority of the summer works should be completed by half term, and the Salix project by the end of November. This would free up the Facilities and Estates Team to focus on decarbonisation and energy reduction plans, which were not straight forward because of the infrastructure of the buildings.

#### 7.1.5. **Policy Review**

The Board received, considered, and on the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee APPROVED:

- CIC/22/5/7, Vetting Checks and Single Central Register Policy
- CIC/22/5/8, Pay and Reward Policy 2022/23, subject to Appendix 4 being added, or the reference to Appendix 4 being removed from the Policy.
- CIC/22/5/9, Mandatory Training Policy

Governors asked how the College ensures that staff undertake the mandatory Safeguarding training. It was reported that regular management meetings take place between the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads, Director of HR and Student Services Manager to monitor compliance and discuss what to do if completion rates fall close to or below target. Monitoring data is reported to the College Executive and the Finance and Resources Committee. Managers also have access to real time data on completion rates through PowerBI reports.

#### 7.1.6. **Update on Strategic Plan One Year Action Plan**

CIC/22/5/10, Update on Strategic Plan Goals, was received and noted.

### 7.2. **Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee**

The Chair of the Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee presented his written report (CIC/22/5/11). It was reported that:

- It had been agreed to appoint Governance4FE to undertake an external review of governance during the Autumn 2023.
- The Committee was still looking for an Independent Member to join the Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee.
- In the absence of any declarations of interests from current Governors, an external organisation would be engaged to search for a new Corporation Chair unless Governors and the College Executive can use their own networks to search for suitable candidates. The Committee Chair asked for nominations to be received by the end of November, after which the Committee will move forward with an external agency.
- The Committee was still looking for Independent Members and had identified a skills gap for an individual with a specialism in IT.

CIC/22/5/12, Board Attendance 2021-22, was received and noted. Governors were reminded that the target for attendance at Board and Committee meetings was 70%. Governors who were struggling to attend meetings were asked to raise this during their one-to-one meeting with the Corporation Chair. It was noted that some Governors unable to attend a meeting still contribute to a meeting by submitting comments on the papers to the Chair, which was not recognised in the report. Governors also take part in wider activities such as through links to a curriculum area/department.

8. **Register of Corporation Members' Interests**

CIC/22/5/13, Summary of changes to the Register of Corporation Members' Interests, was received and noted.

9. **Review of Effectiveness of Meeting**

A Member questioned the starring of agenda items, given that the majority of items were starred for discussion.

10. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Corporation Board is on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 4.30pm at the Colchester Campus. The meeting would be preceded with a Board briefing at 4.00pm.

Governors were invited to attend the Chair's annual briefing to College Management on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 10.00am.

11. **Any Other Urgent Business**

11.1. Governors agreed that it would be helpful for the Board to receive feedback on Curriculum Advisory Boards and suggested inviting Heads of Area to give a pre-Board briefing on their experience and examples of good practice.

11.2. It was reported that the College had been nominated for an Essex Countywide Business Award based on its environmental awareness campaign and its work to reduce its carbon footprint. One of the College's apprentices had also been nominated for an award. Five members of staff would be attending the awards event on 21<sup>st</sup> October. Governors asked for their congratulations to be passed on to relevant people.