



Full Governing Body Minutes

Meeting	Full Governing Body	Date	Tuesday 5 May 2020
Location	Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams	Time	5.30pm
Membership	Charles Buchanan (Chair), Graham Razey (Chief Executive Officer), Gail Clarke, <i>Miranda Chapman</i> , Jonathan Clarke, Tim Kent, Peter Troke, Peter Wood, John Korzeniewski, Peter Cheney, <i>Richards Brooks</i> , Joanna Worby, Gregg Skinsley-Stephens (Staff Governor) and Lucas Hammond (Student Governor)		
In Attendance	<i>Anne Leese (Deputy Chief Executive Officer)</i> Chris Legg (Chief Finance and Commercial Officer) Tammy Mitchell (CEO EKC Schools Trust) Paul Sayers, (Chief Strategy Officer) Andrew Stevens (Chief Operating Officer) Jamie Weir (Invited Observer) Sharon Hollingsworth (Interim Director of Governance) Kerry Hickmott (Minute Clerk)		

(Italics denotes absence)

	ITEM	COMMENTS	ACTION
1	Welcome and Apologies	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Richard Brooks and Anne Leese. Unfortunately, Miranda Chapman was not in attendance apologies was received following the meeting.</p> <p>Due to the lockdown measures associated with the Coronavirus, the meeting took place virtually through Teams.</p>	

2	Declarations of Interest	There were no additional declarations to the meeting than those declared as standing.	
3	Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 th March 2020 and 30 th March 2020	<p>The minutes and confidential minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 17th March 2020 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The minutes of the Extraordinary Governing Body held on 30th March 2020 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.</p> <p>A governor queried whether the process of DBS checks for Local College Board governors had commenced. SH advised that the checks had not commenced due to the current lockdown period. It is planned to begin the process in the new academic year.</p>	
4	Matters Arising	SH confirmed that a letter of thanks from the Chair of the Governing Body had been sent to Tammy Mitchell and Jonathan Cresswell.	
5	Chair's Report	<p>The Chair noted his appreciation for the way in which the CEO and the senior team is managing the Covid-19 lockdown period. The CEO's daily updates are well received by governors and provide added assurance of the actions being taken by the Group in response to the current challenging situation. All members of the Governing Body noted their full support of the actions being taken by the CEO.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that Ashford and Spring Lane successfully transferred to EKC Group on the 1st April. This matter is reported later in the meeting under item 8.</p> <p>The Chair thanked SH and the governors involved in the sub-group for their contribution to the new governance structure. The proposed new governance arrangements will be considered later in the meeting under item 9.</p> <p>The Chair had recently participated in several virtual meetings set up by the Association of Colleges (AoC) for the Further Education (FE) Chair of Governors group. FE colleges across the</p>	

		<p>country were experiencing similar issues due to the lockdown. The Chair reported that he was completely satisfied that the Group is taking the appropriate actions in line with government guidance.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he had met with Kate Young, Independent Chair of Safeguarding. An emergency safeguarding committee meeting had taken place at the start of the lockdown. The Chair was assured that the Group was doing all it could for vulnerable students. It was anticipated that a higher demand for safeguarding activities will be required when the lockdown restrictions begin to lift.</p> <p>NOTED: The Chair's report.</p>	
6	Chief Executive Officer's Report	<p>GR noted that since writing his report changes relating to the lockdown were taking place on a rapid timescale. The CEO's report was taken as read and GR provided an update on the Covid-19 situation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that 25-30% of students will not be able to complete due to guidance in place by Ofqual, however final details around technical and vocational qualifications is awaited. Where courses have a license to practice with a technical competency it is unlikely that qualifications will be awarded remotely through teacher assessment or recommendation. It was acknowledged that the Group is potentially entering the return phase of the lockdown and preparations are underway as to what that might look like. GR advised that he is being consulted as part of a small group of principals by the Department for Education which is considering next steps. A government update is expected on Thursday or Sunday. Further information regarding some restrictions being lifted is anticipated.</p> <p>The phased return is likely to focus on completing those students in the 16-19 category. No imminent return for adult learners is expected. Students will be phased in 3 ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where a student could benefit from the Covid-19 situation (i.e. Early Years, Health and Social Care) 2. Those learners most disadvantaged to those who cannot participate on-line 	

		<p>3. Courses of a national interest and cannot be competed via on-line (i.e. Construction) It is estimated that 30% of learners could return in first week of June. The initial 3-week plan will include apprentices. It is envisaged that students will come into the college for one lesson only and leave, there would be no refectory service. Principals are tasked to put together a plan for Executive Team sign off.</p> <p>It was noted that current guidance is unclear on PPE requirements for staff and students and unclear on public transport arrangements, which many students are heavily reliant upon.</p> <p>There is concern from some staff regarding what a return to work will look like, specifically from staff with mental health/anxiety concerns and/or caring responsibilities. The senior team are very mindful of the position and the need to carefully manage this in determining the capacity for a return.</p> <p>GR reported that the Group's financial situation is a concern. CL has modelled a £1.6 million funding risk. The impact of Covid-19 started to be seen in the March accounts. The Finance sub-group was informed of the position. Commercial staff have been furloughed except for 12 members. The Group will seek to recoup 80% of costs, although it was noted that the Group is paying 100%. Apprenticeship income is not protected. If September and October starts are impacted, this will be significant, as many businesses plan for a September start. This may lead to a re-modelling of the financial position; however, our revolving credit facility means there is no immediate impact on the cashflow position.</p> <p>GR raised a significant concern regarding Kent County Council and its inability to provide clear guidance with respect to students with an Educational Health Care Plan and those with a social worker. Very little guidance has been received and this is being challenged at the highest level. GR advised that he may need to call on further input from the governing body if the issue is not resolved imminently.</p> <p>GR stated that digital learning capability is an area of improvement for the Group due to the apparent mixed ability of skills and technology. The senior team are working on a plan over the</p>	
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7	Interim Director of Governance report:	<p>The report was taken as read and SH invited questions.</p> <p>The Governors with outstanding mandatory training were encouraged to complete this before the next meeting. SH is supporting governors where required.</p> <p>The Chair provided feedback from the recent Finance sub-group meeting. CL advised Governors that the accounts will detail a much better budget position in the April accounts. Governors noted that savings are being made on non-pay items.</p>	

		NOTED: The Clerk's report.	
8	Ashford and Spring Lane Progress Report	<i>This item was considered confidential and will form Part A confidential minutes.</i>	
9	Governance Structure	<p>Following agreement at the last Full Governing Body meeting, a sub group was put in place to take forward the proposed new governance structure and to develop a new scheme of delegation, cycle of business and terms of reference for approval by the full governing body.</p> <p>The new structure of governance has been designed to build upon the emerging strength of the local college board model, with the boards reporting through a newly created Education Committee.</p> <p>The traditional style committee structure requires 3 new governors, candidates for these positions are due to be considered at the next Search and Governance committee meeting on 19th May 2020, appointment are subject to governing body approval in due course.</p> <p>The local college boards will start the new cycle in the new academic year with their new terms of reference.</p> <p>Governors discussed the advantages of the new governance structure. The Chair was comfortable that the new arrangements were at the appropriate level of governance which seeks to provide support and challenge in a way where all responsibilities are discharged appropriately. The proposed structure reduces the time demand by putting in the scheme of delegation which allow the committees to examine curriculum and business matters in greater depth.</p> <p>The Chair offered to write to all LCB members informing them of re-focus to their roles.</p>	CB

		<p>The Business and the Education committee have meetings planned in June. SH will circulate meeting dates and memberships for these meetings and check availability.</p> <p>APPROVED: Governors agreed the proposed Governance Structure including the revised: a) Scheme of Delegation; b) Cycle of Business c) Committee's Terms of Reference</p> <p>APPROVED: Governors agreed the implementation date of 6 May 2020 for the proposed structure except for the Local College Boards where new Terms of Reference will be implemented from 1 August 2020.</p>	SH
10	16-19 Student Recruitment	<p>PS advised that a consultant, Steve Matthews, was commissioned to conduct a research and analysis of EKC Group's 16-19 student recruitment trends since 2016/17. The purpose of the research was to test student competition to inform curriculum development and marketing strategy. The report focussed on four key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering growth potential in specific curriculum areas at each campus, especially Ashford, as part of the curriculum planning process. • Undertaking an objective assessment of why sixth forms are proving to be so attractive relative to EKC Group, and what mechanisms are at play to facilitate this. • Developing further progression partnerships with schools and increasing the College's visibility and appeal to potential 16-year-old recruits through marketing and outreach activity. • Exploring with North Kent College and Mid-Kent College whether there is scope for increased specialisation by each provider, in a coordinated way, in response to unmet skills needs across Kent and Medway. <p>PS suggested that it would be prudent to review this data on an annual basis.</p>	
11	Policy Updates	<p>The following policies were presented for Governor approval following consultation at the Policy committee:</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern Slavery Statement - Junior College Admissions Policy - Staff Disciplinary procedure <p>PS was asked to review the policy approval process considering the new governance arrangements. This is covered in the scheme of delegation.</p> <p>APPROVED: Governors approved the Modern Slavery Statement; Junior College Admissions Policy and the Staff Disciplinary procedure.</p>	PS
12	Published QAR for 2018-2019 outcomes against the latest national averages	<p>GR presented the report which broadly showed an improvement in some areas such as GCSEs and noted the lower level delivery of learning due to communities we serve; along with the impact of the selective grammar school system in Kent and the areas of deprivation.</p> <p>The governors welcomed the report and acknowledged that the newly formed Education committee will be able to delve deeper and compare colleges for strategic focus along with an overall comparison.</p> <p>It was noted that there will not be a published report for year due to Covid-19, however the Group will produce its own data. It is anticipated that that grades will not drop, as there had been a positive trajectory, however this is heavily reliant on external assessors.</p> <p>NOTED – Governors noted the report on the published QAR for 2018-2019 outcomes against the latest national averages</p>	
13	Any Other Business	None.	
14	Matters Considered Confidential	Item 8 will be reported under Part A confidential minutes.	



15	Date and Time of Next Meeting	Tuesday 30 th June 2020 at 5.30pm	
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There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.13pm

Signed: 

Print: Charles Buchanan

Date: 30th June 2020