

**Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held (via Microsoft Teams) on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021 at 8.30am**

Present:	Jeremy Cartwright, Chair Steve Sawbridge Stephanie Talbot Rob Fisher Jo Mountney Sue Blake David Rogers Denise Brown, Principal/CEO Dave Hopley Neil Hoskinson Sibgha Amin		
In Attendance:	Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation Jason Lancaster, Deputy Principal Antoinette Lythgoe, CFO		
<b>Min. No.</b>		<b>Action By Whom</b>	<b>Action By When</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>		
	The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted.		
<b>2</b>	<b>NEW GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS</b>		
	The Chair referred the Board to the CVs provided for Neil Hoskinson and Tom Nadin. He confirmed that both have been interviewed and would be key strategic appointments and links with the local authority and the chamber of commerce.  AGREED: to appoint a) Neil Hoskinson as an Independent Governor from 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2021 to 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025 b) Tom Nadin as an Independent Governor from 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2021 to 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025		
<b>3</b>	<b>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>		

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	<p>Neil Hoskinson was formally welcomed to the meeting and round table introductions were made. He confirmed that the he is Assistant Director for learning services at the local authority and that he will be working closely with Sarah Parker to cement relationships with the college. Jason Lancaster was also welcomed to the meeting and he was congratulated on his appointment as Deputy Principal.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from David Boughey, Andy Mckay and Pritpal Singh-Nagi. Absent without apologies were Donna Hazledine, Amie Lassells and Shannon Mansfield.</p>		
<b>4</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY &amp; 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021 AND ANY MATTERS ARISING</b>		
	<p>The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.</p> <p>AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>		
<b>5</b>	<b>ACTION PROGRESS REPORT</b>		
	Board were happy to note the content of the update provided.		
<b>6</b>	<b>STRATEGIC PLAN</b>		
	<p>The CEO introduced this item and advised that what has been circulated today is not the final version and that in the final version the visuals and the 5-Pillar Plan are slightly different. She confirmed that the content is the same and that all comments made by governors in feedback have been incorporated. Boards attention was also drawn to the communication plan which is attached to the action progress report. She confirmed that the final version would be circulated to governors later today or on Monday.</p> <p>CEO then asked the Board to consider the communication plan and aspects were considered in detail, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff have been working remotely and therefore it has been important to have mechanisms in place to get them together. Intention is to hold Q&amp;A webinars which are due to be delivered in early June.</li> <li>• Students – work with students will be prepared ready for the start of next academic year.</li> <li>• Community engagement – this is envisaged to be an ongoing strategic conversation rather than consultation. This is something to consider going forward as part of the annual updates. CEO advised that the college has joined</li> </ul>	Principal	May 2021

	<p>the collaborative network in Stoke on Trent and that it would be helpful to request a presentation slot to update on the strategic plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders – college is proposing individual conversations.</li> <li>• Schools/Heads/SASCAL – they are a key group of stakeholders. The Deputy Principal will represent the college at SASCAL and is intending to do a presentation.</li> <li>• Press – CEO is intending to meet with the education editor of the Sentinel on Monday and the aim is to get a positive write up.</li> <li>• College will use the website and social media, with the new strategic plan being a news item.</li> <li>• Parents – a letter and/or text will be sent directing them to details on the website.</li> <li>• Learners – through learner conferences they will be given an opportunity to influence the way forward.</li> </ul> <p>One member of the Board asked whether the approach to be taken should be a 'launch' date rather than a 'rollout'. CEO indicated that the intention was a rollout because the college did not consult before creation of the Strategic Plan, however a launch date could be identified if this is the preference of the Board. A challenge from the Board was that they would like to see a press release which at least gives a marker.</p> <p>Board asked whether the college has a stakeholder list which includes LEP, chamber, local authority etc. They felt that it was important to use this as a platform for engagement.</p> <p>A challenge from the board was for the key messages to be identified so that the board can support as part of the communication strategy.</p> <p>CEO advised that there will also be general press release which is sent to TES, FE Week etc.</p> <p>Board asked whether the collaborative network includes key employers. CEO confirmed that it does and that the College also has the option of approaching key contracts separately.</p> <p>In relation to any launch, one member of the Board asked whether it is possible to secure a local MP or local dignitary to show their support. CEO confirmed that this is possible and that she will also consider key innovators and collaborators e.g. FeastED.</p> <p>Board asked how a 'launch' would fit with the meeting planned with the Sentinel on Monday. CEO advised that it is an intended conversation to t-up future publicity, particularly in relation to lifting financial intervention and the changes made at the college.</p>		
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	<p>She confirmed that the meeting was part of ongoing relationship building.</p> <p>CEO confirmed that she would update the communication plan, based upon discussions today, and would then circulate with the final version of the strategic plan.</p> <p>Neil Hoskinson shared the local authority experience where they obtained external support to launch their new strategic vision. CEO confirmed that she would investigate the cost of external support and compare this with what can be provided/undertaken in house. Neil Hoskinson offered to link the CEO with the communication team at the local authority and David Rogers also agreed to do the same in relation to the NHS.</p> <p>A challenge from the Board was for the college to focus on getting the message out there in a way that works best for us rather than focusing on a 'big bang'. Board queried whether there was middle ground and expressed some concern regarding the time and resource required for a larger event. Some felt that that this was a higher risk approach.</p> <p>CEO advised that the college is about to appoint a contract with a marketing and PR company and therefore it would be appropriate to take their advice on a 'launch', however the college will also continue to press ahead with the cascade plan. A challenge from the Board was that it is important to make the personal connections. Board agreed that it was important to reposition the college within the FE community e.g. AOC, FE leaders. All acknowledged that it was quite a close-knit community. Board all agreed that this was an opportunity for an expression of confidence for the future.</p> <p>Board felt that in terms of a communication medium, videos are really well received and they asked the CEO to consider involving some students to create this in September. CEO confirmed that college students do have capability in this area and that this is something that could be taken forward with the support of a professional company. They asked that the CEO incorporate a power point and video in to the development of the communication plan.</p> <p>AGREE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Approve the content of the Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Principal</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Principal</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>Sept 2021</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>CEO'S REPORT</b>		
	<p>The CEO introduced this item and drew the Boards attention to her detailed report and provided an update on a number of aspects including:</p>		

	<p>1) <u>COVID-19 – lessons learned</u></p> <p>Key matters noted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The family feel of SOTC is really important to both staff and students.</li> <li>• Pulling together in difficult times is a strength of the college.</li> <li>• A concern is that covid has highlighted how thinly spread some areas are and this is now an opportunity to reflect on the structure of the workforce. College has a relatively high number of low paid staff and therefore decisions had to be made by a smaller group of individuals.</li> <li>• Students are very resilient and really approach dealing with covid as a community. This is a positive reflection on culture and values.</li> <li>• Digital exclusion and poverty are a consideration; however, the college needs to be careful not to simply jump on 'bandwagons'. College will engage locally with any digital initiatives but must not forget that a lot of 'customers' are digitally excluded and therefore it is important to build in face to face opportunities.</li> <li>• Learner attainment – some students are definitely behind where they ought to be. It is important to spread the curriculum and assessments going forward and the aim is to provide an offer which is long and thin.</li> <li>• Health and safety arrangements have been a real team effort and all staff and students have confirmed that they felt safe.</li> <li>• IT infrastructure coped despite its age. Issue was often devices and IT support and it is clear that the college has to resource for the basics.</li> <li>• Learning – staff have been monitoring progress online which has been a challenge</li> <li>• College has been able to provide high quality work placements and WEX going forward needs to be built in to all areas of the curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>In general discussion board felt that a 'life in lockdown' anthology would be moving and is something that would make a great video. It was acknowledged that covid has increased inequalities in society and particularly so for places like Stoke on Trent however the college has been able to provide support. One member of the Board asked whether it was possible for the college to undertake some analysis on how it has minimised the covid impact, an example given was a study for a university student to look at what has worked well and what has not worked quite so well. It was agreed that the college would explore an opportunity for a post grad or undergrad research project.</p> <p>Neil Hoskinson advised that there have been some positives and that the local authority is keen to capture and capitalise on a number of aspects, including:</p>	Principal	Sept 2021
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote learning</li> <li>• Relationships with schools</li> <li>• Relationships with central government</li> </ul> <p>A particular concern for the local authority is care leavers and it is believed that there are lessons that can be learnt in this area.</p> <p>One governor suggested the development of a video from leadership to show their life in lockdown e.g. taking on an allotment.</p> <p>A challenge from the Board was to be very conscious of fatigue and mental health and wellbeing over the coming weeks. CEO confirmed that this is something that the college is already aware of particularly as now is a really concentrated period in FE i.e. assessments, TAGs, EPAs etc. Board were given assurance that the college is doing a lot to support staff but it was acknowledged that they are feeling the pressure.</p> <p>2) <u>Performance measures – 2020/21 position against targets</u></p> <p>CEO confirmed that these were reviewed by the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee yesterday and concerns remain in relation to finance income, retention and learner attainment. She explained that the CFO would cover the financial challenges in her reports later in the meeting. In relation to learner attainment, the college should do better than prior year but there is still a significant covid impact. She acknowledged that a lot of the indicators are red or amber and are not where the college wants them to be. Board agreed that the college would need a strong narrative for the next Ofsted visit and would have to have strong plans in place for catch up and progression.</p> <p>3) <u>FEC stocktake report</u></p> <p>CEO advised that the outcome of the stocktake is that the college now moves to support rather than intervention and that good progress has been made on the actions being taken. It was agreed that the CEO would provide a composite report to the next meeting so that activity completed and improvements made are not lost. FNI has been lifted which is a landmark as it has existed since 2014. This provides real justification for the fresh start monies invested. She confirmed that this was an opportunity to celebrate all of the hard work by staff to get to where the college is now.</p> <p>4) <u>Queens speech</u></p> <p>This shows that FE and skills are at the forefront of government ambitions to rebuild, however the White Paper seems to suggest even greater control by DFE and the government. There is a real focus on collaboration and bidding and the college’s challenge will</p>	Principal	July 2021
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	<p>be capacity and resource and there is a need to find ways to enable maximisation of opportunities.</p> <p>College is to look at health and social care workforce planning. In relation to health care training, there are opportunities for collaborative planning including discussions with the university and the sixth form as they are involved in health care provision too. All acknowledged that a rapid increase in collaboration does take resource.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>8</b>	<b>DEPUTY PRINCIPAL – INTRODUCTIONS AND POSITION STATEMENT</b>		
	<p>Deputy Principal provided a summary of early impressions and priorities, it being the case that he is now 10 days in to the role. These were noted as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and the organisation are very welcoming</li> <li>• There is a clear commitment to support students</li> <li>• Clear evidence of staff pride</li> <li>• Students are polite and well behaved and there is a real warmth in the college</li> <li>• Some real positives seen in relation to student work</li> <li>• In some areas there are really creative curriculum and evidence that staff are building a much more modern curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Still work to do in a number of areas, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apprenticeship provision</li> <li>• Attainment in some areas</li> <li>• Processes and reporting, some aspects can be streamlined</li> <li>• A really good start to the year is key</li> </ul> <p>In terms of priorities, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apprenticeship provision</li> <li>• Preparing for Ofsted</li> <li>• Good start to the 21/22 year</li> <li>• Curriculum planning, particularly for adult provision</li> </ul> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>9</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – CAPITAL PROJECT COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>Committee Chairman introduced this item and drew the boards attention to the summary slides and also the detailed minutes of the meetings held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Key matters noted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J Block sale is progressing and enquiries are now with solicitors. College is hoping to exchange by mid-July with</li> </ul>		

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	<p>completion mid-August but this does depend upon planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In relation to the building condition works, the roof has been completed at John Seddon and A &amp; B blocks are due to be completed by mid-June.</li> <li>• Progress in relation to LEP bids are all going well</li> <li>• Sector is supposed to find out today the results of the stage 1 bid for capital funding but there have been no notifications yet.</li> <li>• Risks and issues are summarised but overall there is a definite feeling of 'so far so good'</li> </ul> <p>Board were reminded of the contractor appointment and formal ratification was requested. Board were happy to ratify the decision to appoint Premier Group Southern.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Ratify the appointment decision made in relation to Premier Group Southern.</li> </ol>		
<b>10</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – CQ&amp;S</b>		
	<p>Committee Chair introduced this item and drew Boards attention to his summary slides and the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021. He explained that the slides had been updated following the most recent CQ&amp;S meeting yesterday. He described the meeting as very positive and that the committee was starting to see the impact of cross-college work completed over the last couple of years. Key points highlighted to the board were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College is planning for an Ofsted progress monitoring visit and the expectation is that they will be able to see the evidence of progress made</li> <li>• Apprenticeship provision is a concern and the task and finish group will meet monthly until there is assurance and then it will revert back to usual CQ&amp;S business.</li> <li>• Canvas platform is really valuable</li> <li>• Important to have challenging internal progression targets</li> </ul> <p>In relation to the medium term, there are a number of areas to consider, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centre assessed grades and the need for robust internal and QA validation</li> <li>• SAR and QIP – the process is starting much earlier this year</li> <li>• Start of the year in September – college needs to ensure that there is no slippage and there is a CQ&amp;S meeting planned in August to monitor and scrutinise the arrangements.</li> <li>• Progression and destinations need to be a focus</li> <li>• Work continues in relation to the partnership with Staffordshire University</li> </ul>		

	<p>In the longer term, aspects to note include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to increase governor engagement with students and staff</li> <li>• Development of the HE strategy</li> <li>• Implementation of the digital strategy</li> <li>• Hub delivery for apprenticeship provision and increased business development.</li> <li>• Skills and Post-16 Education Bill – links with the local skills improvement plan provides opportunities for the college to really place itself as an anchor institution. Key to success will be partnership working and this comes with benefits, risks and issues. All acknowledged that partnership working will be key going forward and will include employers, the Sixth Form College and Newcastle Under Lyme college.</li> </ul> <p>Committee Chair then identified a number of risks including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ofsted – particularly the pace of improvements in all areas. College has to focus on consistency, apprenticeship provision, impact and the student experience. He acknowledged that some significant progress has been made in a number of areas.</li> <li>• Catch up needs for students starting in September and funding and resource required and available for this.</li> <li>• Challenge of responding to policies and initiatives with a constrained resource</li> </ul> <p>CEO provided an update in relation to HE discussions with Coventry University and Staffordshire University and also discussed the role of the chamber of commerce in the skills bill. She advised that the Collab group is raising a marker nationally about performance of chambers as it considered to be variable up and down the country and that they are not always resourced well enough. An example given was the skills accelerator pilot, and it was explained that this is a bid that has to be led by the chamber but that they do not have capacity to do this in Stoke on Trent. A challenge from the board was to pull together a consortium so that the college can then be at the forefront. Board agreed that it was important for the college not to be left behind and that now is the time to seize opportunities.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>11</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – TF&amp;R COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>Board were invited to consider the summary slides and the detailed minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021. One aspect considered was the fees policy and it was explained that there were some minor updates because of changes to AEB funding rules last week. Key changes relate to the low wage threshold and Brexit details. Board were given assurance that</p>		

	<p>there is nothing significant which has changed to the policy previously reviewed by TF&amp;R.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) To note the content of the update provided</p> <p>b) Approve the Fees Policy 2021/22 as presented.</p>		
<b>12</b>	<b>CFO'S REPORT</b>		
	<p>The CFO drew Governors attention to the detailed papers circulated and an update was given in a number of areas.</p> <p>1) <u>Management accounts – March 2021</u></p> <p>Key matters noted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TF&amp;R reviewed the February accounts at their last meeting and what is provided today is the March pack as it has been concluded and to ensure that the board is considering the most up to date information. Team are now working on the April accounts.</li> <li>• They include an AEB assumption of at least 90% protection which would then mean the college would receive 100% funding, however there is a risk in relation to this risk is currently quantified at £700k. The college is looking at options for increased direct delivery and subcontracting to mitigate.</li> <li>• In relation to apprenticeship provision, there is a risk which is being recognised in the April accounts and the forecast will be reduced by £250k to reflect this.</li> <li>• Cash position remains strong</li> <li>• College is anticipating hitting the KPIs however the biggest challenge is the forward-looking cash available for debt target. College is looking at how to manage spend on capital works to see if the position can be controlled and is also in discussion with Lloyds regarding a covenant waiver.</li> </ul> <p>2) <u>2021/22 budget assumptions and funding allocations</u></p> <p>Key matters highlighted by the CFO were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Board considered a very first draft of the 21/22 budget.</li> <li>• This forecast is a £1.3 million deficit on the basis of a decline in income. College has received details of its allocations but cannot yet assume success in relation to any of the bids submitted.</li> <li>• Executive are now looking to take out some of the costs in the draft budget</li> <li>• To meet KPIs the college has to achieve a £1 million deficit or less</li> <li>• 20/21 deficit is expected to be £800k</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the college implements the planned elements of the pay strategy then this would cost the organisation circa £200k. She reminded that there are a number of aspects to this including             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Realigning the bottom of the pay scales – this will mean that the national minimum wage and living wage differences are eroded.</li> <li>b) Outcomes of the job evaluation scheme</li> <li>c) Initial stage of lecturer salary reviews</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>CFO advised that there is therefore a need to take out circa £700k from the first draft budget.</p> <p>Board considered the deficit position and agreed that hitting bank covenants was a given but then college needs to look at the pre-covid deficit value when compared to the higher deficit forecast based upon covid recovery. A challenge from the Board was to look at how the college ambitiously grows income to avoid gradually getting smaller and smaller. Board agreed that there needed to be a real strategy developed in relation to this.</p> <p>CFO indicated that the college is dealing with allocations as they are and is being realistic, however there are a number of opportunities arising in the sector which are being 'drip fed by the DFE'. She expressed the view that growing income has to be an absolute priority.</p> <p>A question and challenge from the Board was, what will it take to get the college to where the strategy says it should be and that, this should then be compared with what is currently achievable and practical. CFO expressed the view that the college could</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain more tuition fee income and</li> <li>• Increase the 16-18 allocation – a business case has submitted for an increase of £350k</li> </ul> <p>All agreed that this needs to be an iterative conversation with board input and that it closely links with the risk appetite and the risk register.</p> <p>A challenge from the Board was that to just take out costs to hit a number is the wrong approach and that what needs to happen is for the college to grow and there needs to be a conversation about how to achieve this. All agreed that they needed to know more about the impact of a £1.3 million planned deficit. Question and challenge from the Board was whether or not the college can identify inefficiencies and costs that can be taken out without negatively impacting upon delivery service and quality. Board agreed that they would need to better understand the contingencies i.e. what can and can't be done if the college doesn't grow its income. They asked that the senior team consider and rank these. CFO advised that, to hit the bank and CFADs covenants the maximum deficit position is £1 million,</p>		
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	<p>however even at this staff costs would be 67% which are higher than FEC benchmarks. This draft budget assumes that the college delivers all of the 21/22 AEB allocation.</p> <p>Given the significant uncertainties it was suggested that the executive facilitate a TF&amp;R discussion before the July Board meeting, with a meeting potentially to be identified in mid-June 2021.</p> <p>3) <u>FE capital transformation fund</u></p> <p>Key matters highlighted by the CFO were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs associated with progressing to stage 2 are circa £100k plus VAT</li> <li>• £50k has been provided for in the 20/21 budget and the plan for the remainder will be included within the 21/22 budget</li> <li>• College simply does not have the time to go out to tender and is therefore proposing to use the same stage 1 team plus a cost consultant, M&amp;E engineer and CNS engineer. Advice on this has been sought from Mark Palmer the CPC co-optee and, whilst supportive, he has suggested that the college obtain some references to support the process.</li> </ul> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the updates provided.</p>	CFO	June 2021
<b>13</b>	<b>EBSS – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021</b>		
	Board were happy to note the content of the minutes.		
<b>14</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>Committee Chair introduced this item and drew Governors attention to the summary slides and the minutes of the meetings held on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Key feedback to the board included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Really positive development of the management competency framework</li> <li>• Good progress being made in relation to the ETF Board review action plan</li> <li>• Arrangements being made for meet the student and staff sessions</li> <li>• Chair of the Board and Clerk met with Rob Lawson this week and he was very complimentary about the progress made.</li> </ul> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided</p>		
<b>15</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – AUDIT</b>		

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	<p>Committee Chair introduce this item and drew Governors attention to the summary slides and the details of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Key matters highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk register and risk maturity is always discussed</li> <li>• College is improving its approach to risk management and the pendulum has now swung to a 'far too detailed' approach with the committee and therefore the CFO has been tasked with reviewing the presentational style.</li> <li>• Committee are now looking at the more strategic risks including collaboration and additional income. Focus in on the future and not correcting the past.</li> <li>• Also considered was the internal audit work which is progressing well</li> <li>• Matters arising requiring attention have been minimal which is a real improvement on previous years</li> <li>• Financial regulations have been amended to respond to Brexit and primarily the changes are in relation to OJEU</li> <li>• A risk remaining is apprenticeship delivery</li> </ul> <p>AGREED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Approve the amended Financial Regulations as presented.</li> </ol>		
<b>16</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>		
	<p>The Clerk to the Corporation introduced this item and presented a draft meeting schedule for 2021/22. Chair raised a question in relation to the start time of Board meetings and asked whether there was a need to reconsider an 8.30am start. It was agreed that governor preferences would be canvased outside the meeting and potentially there could be a mix of day time/evening meetings.</p> <p>Board then discussed when onsite meetings will resume and it was acknowledged that, under the current guidance, this is 21<sup>st</sup> June and thereafter. Board agreed that it is important to look at a balance and a mix with the option of joining by Teams provided for each meeting. It was agreed to take a blended approach initially and continue with Teams meetings for committees as these have worked well. Chair indicated that, if possible, it would be appropriate to have the final board meeting of the year in college at the Burslem campus.</p> <p>Board were then asked to formally ratify the terms of reference created for the apprenticeship delivery task and finish group.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Approve the apprenticeship delivery task and finish group terms of reference as presented.</li> </ol>		

17	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>As a matter of additional business, the CFO presented a subcontracting report with proposals to enter in to arrangements to subcontract some AEB and 16-19 tuition fund provision. Specifically, there are currently three providers that can support with the immediate delivery required and they include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A proposal to subcontract a maximum value of £300k to Learning Curve Group for the delivery of AEB funded distance learning courses.</li> <li>• Subcontract with NESG (a current partner) to deliver to a further group of 10 learners with a maximum contract value of £20,664.</li> <li>• To subcontract an initial MCV of £150k to the Skills Network who can support with the delivery of tuition and catch up.</li> </ul> <p>Board were provided with assurance that the organisations proposed are reputable and in, relation to AEB, it will be money in money out.</p> <p>Board asked for the rationale for subcontracting 16-18 delivery and it was explained that the college has struggled to internally deliver given the high existing staff utilisation rates. It was confirmed that Learning Curve have a good reputation for high performance and it is believed that the college can learn from them and improve its own quality to take the college further forward in its journey. It was explained that the proposals are based upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of a COVID year</li> <li>• Learner skills needs</li> <li>• Confidence regarding partner quality.</li> </ul> <p>Assurance was given in relation to quality assurance management, with the College retaining control and responsibility. A challenge from one member of the Board was, if these organisations can respond to demand then why can't SOTC. Whilst supportive of the proposals a challenge from the board was to add this aspect to the risk register and to make sure that it is monitored closely and speedy mitigating actions taken if there appears to be an issue. Board were happy to approve the proposals as presented so long as the risks are clearly identified.</p> <p>AGREED: to approve subcontracting proposals as presented at the meeting.</p> <p>CFO advised that the college has now formally received ESFA confirmation of 19/20 financial health. This is 'outstanding' and the anticipation is for 20/21 to be 'good'. They have confirmed that there are no financial control concerns. CFO noted that the incorrect dashboard had been attached to the letter and it was</p>		
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	<p>agreed that this would be shared at the next meeting. College position is currently 'good' but is at the lower end of the band.</p> <p>Board discussed cyber security and it was agreed that the Audit Committee would have oversight and scrutiny in relation to this. It was agreed that a report would be prepared and presented setting out the risks, actions and areas of assurance. All agreed that it would be useful to have a better understanding of the age of equipment and the robustness of systems and processes. One question to consider is whether the college is or can be insured against any identified risks. CFO advised that the college was accredited with cyber essentials plus last week and that this gives a level of external assurance and included stress and penetration testing. Challenge from the board was to carefully consider prevention as well as recovery.</p> <p>Board asked whether there any lessons to be learnt from colleges who have suffered cyber-attacks. It was agreed that the CFO would follow up and explore this.</p>	CFO	July 2021
		CFO	2021
<b>18</b>	<b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b>		
	This was confirmed as Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 8.30am.		
<b>19</b>	<b>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</b>		
	<p>It was agreed that confidential items would be reported and recorded on a separate basis.</p> <p>Dave Hopley, Jason Lancaster and Antoinette Lythgoe left the meeting at 11.15am.</p>		