

THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY
7 MAY 2022

PRESENT: R Anderson (CG), S Brown (EM), R Davies (CG and Chair), M Gaze (CG), E Kunonga (CG), S Lane (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), D Lusardi (CG), P Lynn (CG), M McClintock (CG), S Mirsalehi (CG), E Rennison (CG), D Still (Staff Governor), P Studd (CG).

OFFICERS: A Adamson (VP), J Chance (VP), G Cumiskey (DP), Z Foster (Clerk), S Marshall (ED), M Russell (VP), R Shuttsworth (Dir), J Steel (VP), M Telling (Dir.).
B Robinson – *in attendance*

KEY: CG College Governor EM External Member DP Deputy Principal
VP Vice Principal Clerk to the Corporation ED Executive Director
Dir. Director

1. Apologies for Absence

H Ashton (CG), A Coleman-Cooke (CG), M Ellis (Staff Governor), M Laidler (CG), P Sharp (CG), I Wright (CG), C Cannon (EM), L Holdsworth (EM), J Robson (EM), S Shepherd (EM), S Wilson (EM), K Parkinson (ED),

2. Declarations of Interest – R Anderson in respect of any potential LSIP discussion

3. Strategic Context and Priorities

Z Lewis gave an overview of the session to follow and drew attention to the annual report which provided a summary against the strategic plan.

ITE Inspection – C Ramsden gave a confidential verbal report on the inspection which had taken place this week and drew attention progress within the three main areas of INTENT, IMPLEMENTATION and IMPACT.

She highlighted some positive feedback from the Inspection Team and also detailed the main areas of development for trainees, mentors and tutors.

C Ramsden then drew attention to the immediate actions post inspection and the formal action plan which had yet to be finalized.

Governor questions and discussion included: the amount of time and support which had been given to the Department; the context of new initial teacher training provider inspections and outcomes for smaller providers and related accreditations; the qualification levels of staff in the programme; staff morale and wider understanding of the context; and lessons which could apply cross college.

Apprenticeships External Review – G Cumiskey reminded Governors of the background including grading and previous consultant work. He then detailed the more recent review by P Hornsby. He outlined her findings in respect of strengths and areas for improvement and detailed the key recommendations (2 main and 2 minor).

Governor questions and discussion included: acknowledgement that Apprenticeships had come a long way; possible approaches to fulfil the recommendations; clarification on possible resistance to Smart Assessor; and the varied feedback from the employers' review process.

SLT Changes – Z Lewis welcomed B Robinson (Deputy Principal from August 22 replacing G Cumiskey who extended his departure until 31 July 22) to the meeting. In addition, she informed governors of the following:

- J Steel's phased retirement and responsibilities with ITE going forward
- SLTT additions and changes
- J Chance's forthcoming resignation to which J Chance gave further detail

Strategic Planning Context – Z Lewis outlined who the College served; the Tees Valley in some detail both currently and in its future ambition; how curriculum intent was determined; student demographic trends; applications for 2022-23; the future proofing of the campus to create a UK Centre of STEM Excellence by 2024; the multitude of influences on the strategy (international; government and local) and then detailed each of the strategic elements and progress within.

She further detailed the key strategic documents ensuring the success of the plan and of a refresh of the Strategic Plan during 2022-23.

Governors' questions and discussion included: recruitment, retention, wellbeing and CPD; work placements; and potential reasons for low national rates for work placements and apprenticeships standards.

4. Learner Destinations

J Chance gave a comprehensive account of the learner destinations agenda and its complexities including data reporting by the College and DfE reporting. He detailed fully what constituted a positive destination and the forthcoming Single Skills Measure and potential impact on the College. He also confirmed the need for all governors to understand the destination data to assist with the strategic direction of the College.

Middlesbrough College's high level trend graphs were outlined by provision type.

Governors were then given a group task with both Department and Employment Sector information to further their understanding.

Questions and discussion included: whether colleges should be compared with Sixth Form and the effects of that; timing for the collection of destination data and impact when not longitudinal; NEETs; the measurement of softer skills; tracking of learners; and a full debate on the Single Skills Measure, potential unintentional consequences and ongoing lobbying/information giving to DfE.

J Chance summarized the destinations data agenda reminding Governors of the key DfE/TVCA focus; the College's positive performance against national data; the influence of the regional economy and the complexity of the measure.

5. Developing our Students

A Adamson and S Donnison drew attention to some new developments within PDEP including new Careers and SEND strategies and implementation.

A Adamson gave detail of the increase in SEND numbers and of the resulting joint commission and multi agency group operating across Middlesbrough to support numbers and the SEND green paper challenges.

6. Digital Governance Update

R Shuttleworth gave an update to the Digital Strategy for staff and students and of the Cyber Essentials successful accreditation for the whole organization. He outlined the ongoing need for governors to appreciate, understand and monitor cyber security and how this was initially being assessed which would be shared in more detail at the July Audit and Risk Committee.

He then outlined the reasoning for the move to digital governance from September 2022 which would be based around a move from Board Intelligence to centralization in SharePoint and increased use of Governors College email/outlook to ensure security. He briefly detailed the changes and gave assurances on full support to all Governors through the transition.

7. Financial and Strategic Projects Update

Z Lewis detailed the campus investments since 2004 and also the College's historic performance.

M Russell then took Governors through the current year forecast outturn performance including reasons for the surplus downgrade and the importance of EBITDA cash earnings which remain strong.

The updated revenue plan was presented and M Russell gave further detail in relation to income, pay, non pay, financial health (which would remain a solid Good but under the new methodology may move into Outstanding)) and opportunities and risks balancing out in the plan.

The Capital Plan 2022-2027 was outlined. Key points included: the total investment of £23.5m over the course of the plan; that to support cash flow the College would need to access borrowings in support of the construction phase of TTE; detail of the investment profile and level of borrowings which would need to be raised to maintain cash flow.

The summary investment profile was detailed which showed the cash impact of the College's investment over time.

M Russell and P Bland detailed the financing proposal for TTE supporting this with the financing/governance timeline which could be subject to change and potential delegated permissions.

P Bland outlined the high level programme for TTE including the current status of the planning and next stages which would include a written resolution by 13 June 2022 to approve the preferred contractor. P Bland gave some detail of the interested contractors and outlined potential risks and mitigations associated with the plan.

Governors' discussion and questions included: detail of the end of the plan and refinancing expectations with the bank; certainty on the costs associated with TTE investment in the current climate and associated continuity to support this; car park options; aspects of the STEM adaptations; classroom layout and roof choices; potential added value from the contractors (e.g. social responsibility aspect/work experience for college students); and cash flow management for the scheme.

After the full presentation and discussion governors confirmed and **approved** the following:

- Noted and endorsed the revenue and five year plan draft proposal (with the final plan coming for formal approval in July)
- Noted and endorsed the £3.5m borrowing requirement for TTE to approach the bank
- Noted the £2m car park contingency for overall project
- Noted the timescale for formal borrowing approval in advance of committing to construction
- Noted the continued spend at risk to keep to programme

Z Lewis gave a brief summary of the session drawing attention to the sound financial base and key challenges in the current FE/UK climate.

Final questions included: whether information would be there in 12 months time to allay local uncertainties; the timeline for TTE closing (January 2024 with a full year of contingency); further detail of the Skills Academy at Teeswork; staff retention within the 5 year plan which Z Lewis detailed including support through the curriculum plan; future pay awards and hopeful increase to class sizes; the options with TTE space; other campus improvements; and the possible Eton A Level provision and impact.

8. Date of Next Meetings

8.1 Monday 13 June 2022 – 5pm Curriculum and Standards/GB Joint Committee – Curriculum Planning

8.2 Monday 4 July 2022 – 2pm Corporate Services/GB Joint Committee

8.3 Monday 11 July 2022 – 2pm Curriculum and Standards/GB Joint Committee (determined retrospectively on 13 June 2022)

8.4 Thursday 14 July 2022 – 5pm GB (Ordinary)

9. Matters for Publication

10. Any other Urgent Business

11. Reserved Matters – none taken

The meeting ended at 2.20pm