THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION – 17.05.2019

PRESENT: R Davies (CG and Chairman), A Allen (CG), R Anderson (CG), H Ashton (CG), J Autherson (EM), A Coleman-Cooke (CG), C Cooney (CG), M Gaze (CG), J Golightly (CG), L Holdsworth (CG), S Lane (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), P Studd (CG), A Waller-Amos (Staff Governor), I Wright (CG).

OFFICERS: J Chance (VP), G Cumiskey (DP), Z Foster (Clerk), C Kipling (VP), J Steel (VP).

IN ATTENDANCE: K Lord – Deputy Chief Executive (Member Services) from the AoC

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

1. Apologies for Absence
Y Khan (CG), T Parkinson (CG), D Cleves (Staff Governor), M Clarke (Student Governor), C Hudson (Student Governor), S Green (EM), A Hanif (EM), S Shepherd (EM), A Stephenson (EM), S Wilson (EM), A Wond (ED).

R Davies updated members on A Malcolm who was resigning from the Governing Body with immediate effect. ACTION by Z Foster (with assistance from Chair) – to organize appropriate acknowledgement of contribution to the College.

2. Declaration of Interests - none declared

3. AoC Sector Strategic Overview – K Lord
K Lord covered the key areas below in her presentation

- Finances, Insolvency and Intervention
  Discussion and questions included:
  - The current situation with Hadlow College
  - ESFA local review quite likely
  - Movement within Financial Health measures and ongoing DfE review of calculations
  - What was the AoC doing for the colleges which were simply underfunded (not badly managed financially)? K Lord gave an overview of a number of campaigns run by the AoC including the week of action and the Independent Commission Contribution of Colleges report
  - Discussion over T Levels and the learners at Middlesbrough College. The AoC acknowledged that T Levels would be for a small cohort of students
  - TPS was funded for one year – what then? K Lord – it was helpful that Colleges had been grouped with schools for the first time and it was hoped that this would have a positive effect on support going forward

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• How effective was influencing of AoC in light of the wider political situation? K Lord – felt the DfE were positively supporting 16+ agenda but acknowledged that there were blocks with Treasury, the AoC were keen to increase the influence on Select Committees. The AoC were encouraging colleges to influence MPs where they could which would assist

• **Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code**
  A discussion took place about the Senior Postholder Remuneration Code nationally and in relation to the College situation. The wider complexities of reporting and the skew of data was discussed in detail and the salaries of principals and effect on quality of colleges was also considered.

• **Curriculum Policy Overview**
  The OfS was discussed as a regulator particularly in relation to the HE offer in FE as were the possible outcomes of the Augar Review due out very soon.

  Z Lewis informed Governors that the College had bid for delivery of T Levels in 2021 and she was due a call from the ESFA next week in relation to that.

• **Education Inspection Framework**
  - The Applied General Qualifications consultation was debated and the need for both Colleges and individuals to respond robustly

• **Campaigns**
  The timing of the spending review was discussed and the ongoing lobbying of the AoC

**General advice and guidance included:**
• **RE Insolvency/Finance** - the need for robust and accurate minutes reflecting true discussion and challenge under this regime
• **Senior Postholders Remuneration Code** - Exemplar median pay calculations were on AoC website. Other sources of assistance were the OfS Accounts Direction and some LA publications would offer some related examples.

R Davies, on behalf of Governors, thanked K Lord for her engaging and informative overview.

4. **Business Update and Awareness – Z Lewis/SLT**

**Strategic Overview – Z Lewis**
Z Lewis gave an overview of the Strategic Plan and a reminder of progress since 2012. In particular, for 2019 she referenced the positive movement (to green) in many areas and the hope for ‘good’ in financial health. A key area that remained amber was engagement with employers (apprenticeships and T Levels) and that this was a real focus going forward.

Z Lewis then detailed progress since March 2019: applications were up in all areas; the IoT was progressing well; contracts had been exchanged on Prissick; improvements in staff retention; and changes in local politics.

**Questions and discussion included:**
• **Staff survey outcomes** – including how retention was increased with more sophisticated methods being used in planning and retaining key staff which was having a positive impact; recruitment of good staff was discussed especially in areas such as Maths and specialist HE where it was still
difficult; it was acknowledged that feedback from staff was up but there were key areas to still address (NSG, Health and Care and A Levels) and work was being done to address these findings; job security was also discussed particularly in light of the recent restructure; the continued positive effect of Ofsted ‘Good’ was also acknowledged and as was the College focus on wellbeing.

- Students – the softer side had been recognized within the new framework with mental health and wellbeing particularly. Governors would need to re-evaluate the effect on SEND students to ensure they were not at a disadvantage under the revised framework.

It was acknowledged that Apprenticeship reform would still involve further attention but new teams were now in place; that curriculum reform would need careful planning and that Governance must support and test the College intentions in terms of reasoning and impact.

- The local situation was discussed generally in terms of investment and the new mayor.

**IoT and Prissick** - Z Lewis gave a full overview of risks and opportunities relating to IoT and also of forthcoming capital decisions in light of the very tight deadline imposed by the DFE, and the effects of the various outcomes.

Governors had a full discussion re IoT, costs and HE Strategy including: the need to de-risk the timing on flow of funds; actual funds to be received; branding - IoT North East being the official title; 5 year contract and the effects of that; the plans for HE expansion and an overview of the risks and opportunities.

A report was tabled gave full detail and of the decision making required by the Governing Body. **Governors agreed that this should be emailed out to all with a Written Resolution on approval sought on the procurement of the advisors team and of the summer internal moves programme** to follow early next week. **Action by Z Foster – to organize the process accordingly.**

**Quality and Improvement – J Chance**

J Chance gave a comprehensive overview including: that the College did more Level 3 courses than was typical for other colleges and the effects of this; the FE student profile; detailed information about Student Programmes progress and Adult Qualification information and predictions; Apprenticeship Tier 2 presenting a mixed picture; and Higher Education which was going well (and to which Standards Committee would get further detail on 20 May).

**Questions and discussion included:**
- **Was Access a problem?** it was improving but it was acknowledged that retention needed to improve. G Cumiskey detailed actions by SLT including that all members were seeing 4-5 learners each to get a better idea of any issues (particularly in relation to Health and Wellbeing)
- **The profile of the college in relation to the population of the area and industrial make-up and the high level of choice in the Tees Valley area**
- **Governors liked the dashboard approach of detailing the study programmes**
- **Level 1 and 2 programmes which were not on the DFE tables. The effect of this within the public domain was debated in some detail.**
- **Underperformance and methods of scrutiny**
- **Health and Social Care performance would be discussed in detail at Standards Committee**
**Curriculum/New Inspection Framework – G Cumiskey**

G Cumskey gave a detailed overview of the changes particularly the development and inspection of softer skills within the new regime from September 2019. He also detailed the focus of the College with regards Curriculum Strategy including the Performance Report Card, an overview of the Review of Post 16 Qualifications at Level 3 and below consultation; and forward planning by the College.

**Questions and discussion included:**

- What a ‘good’ outcome would mean in relation to length of future inspection. As the College had a subgrade of 3 a re-inspection would be a full one.
- A discussion about October SARs meetings took place in relation to the new framework and the intent of Governors within the ‘quality of education’ judgement.
- The Performance Report Card including concerns in relation to English and Maths (and where reported); how often it was issued – very 6 weeks at assessment points; related initiatives such as linking the Bursary to attendance for Maths and English, focus on softer skills; engagement of parents with more information; consent for sharing of information.
- Maths and English was debated in full in relation to vision; possible failure and effect on students and possible streaming.
- Bursary initiative complexities and focus and the need for a pilot was agreed.
- The movement to T-Levels both nationally and locally was debated fully including opportunities, constraints and the need to balance local need and needs of students.
- The AoC view of the DfE strategy and consultation was that it was a more complex situation than the DfE suggests though there was acknowledgement that there were too many qualifications overall.

Governors requested that the new Ofsted Framework be put on the Portal. *Action by Z Foster.*

**Finance Update – C Kipling**

C Kipling gave a full overview of planned income 2019/20; detail on Curriculum Plan Core funding (including business case with ESFA) and recruitment in relation to local demographics and more generally applications for 2019-20 which were 8% up on the previous year; she also detailed comparison of 16-18 income and HE income; the Adult Education Budget and delivery plan; Apprenticeship funding; Higher Education budget; key risks/assumptions; and detail on the Financial Health position, options and benchmarking trends.

**Discussion and questions included:**

- Combined Authority Case and the Tees Valley provision more generally.
- Health and Care decline and potential impact on staffing.
- The positive effect on recruitment of the A Level and Mix Up programme.
- Apprenticeship funding and non-levy effects on additional recruitment.
- Effect of re-structuring of Apprenticeship Teams? The College was now in the process of upskilling teams which would hopefully have a further positive effect.
- Governors acknowledged the dip in apprenticeship volume (22%) in 2017/2018 when the new levy and policy was introduced but in light of the wider Tees Valley (43% over 2017/2018) felt the outcomes were still positive in the current climate.
- Higher Education local applications? There had been a significant increase.
- HE Budget – did this include the possible 50K referred to in IoT paper? Not yet.
- Would the possible income from Prissick be restricted in relation to spend? No.
- Financial Health points were discussed and how likely ‘outstanding’ was to achieve. Repayment of debt was discussed in relation to financial health. Full detail on Financial Benchmarking and Health would go to Corporate Services on 4th July.
- Local comparisons with regards Financial Health were considered in detail and of changes in local provision and possible effect on student numbers for the College

**Summary and Close – Z Lewis**
- Z Lewis gave a full overview of the College aims.
- The Strategic options for Headroom would be discussed at Corporate Services Committee but the SLT believed that the College could get and maintain GOOD Financial Health with HE being the area to watch

*Post meeting note:* The slides from all of the presentations were uploaded onto Board IQ – under Governing Body Training/Strategic Days (within the agenda for 17 May 2019).

4. **Date of Next Meeting – R Davies**
   4.3 Monday 15th July 2019 at 5pm

5. **Matters for Publication**
   The combined slides from K Lord (AoC) and the SLT presentation would be put on the Governing Body Training/Strategic Days Shelf in Board IQ as soon as possible.

   Governors and External Members received a copy of the 2017-18 Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report for information.

6. **Any other Urgent Business** – none taken

7. **Reserved Matters** – none taken

   The meeting closed at 5.40pm