

# EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

## CORPORATION BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 1 July 2022 in the Boardroom, Hele Road, Exeter**

### **Present**

Bindu Arjoon	Chair
John Laramy	Principal/CEO
Matt Roach	
Sue Clarke	
Emma Bradshaw-Smith	
Neil Hitchings	
Sonja Longmore	
Vicki Roberts	
Stewart Noakes	
Rob Hutchins	
Auguster Irabor	
Phil Randall	
Patrick Tigwell	
Carol McCormack	

### **Observers**

George Smith-Easton	Co-opted Student Governor
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### **Apologies**

Sarah Brampton  
Tim Quine  
Sally Wolkowski

### **In Attendance**

Rob Bosworth	Deputy Principal/CEO
Richard Church	Chief Financial Officer
Jade Otty	Vice Principal Performance
Gemma Noble	Director of People and Organisational Development
Alison Layton-Hill	Clerk to the Corporation

### **Action**

1.

#### **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting and the Board noted apologies from Sarah Brampton, Tim Quine and Sally Wolkowski and was reminded that Glenn Woodcock is on a leave of absence until September 2022.

The Chair advised governors that Simon Tapley had stepped down as a governor although, subject to Board approval, may re-join the Board at a

later date. Mike Owen had stepped down as a co-opted governor serving on the Business Services Committee and the Masterplan Working Group. The Chair thanked Mike for his valuable contribution to the College and the Board agreed that a letter of appreciation would be sent to him.

**Clerk**

The Board noted that this would be the final meeting for the student governors, Auguster Irabor and George Smith-Easton. The Chair thanked them for undertaking a crucial role and wished them well for their futures.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Bindu Arjoon, Deputy CEO, Exeter City Council declared an interest in any items relating to planning.

Carol McCormack, Partner Michelmores, declared an interest in any items relating to Michelmores.

John Laramy, Principal/CEO declared an interest in any items relating to Pearson.

## **2. Minutes of Meetings**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2022, as circulated, were agreed.

2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2022, as circulated, were agreed.

## **3. Matters Arising**

Emma advised the Board that she had reverted to her maiden name of Bradshaw-Smith.

## **4. Corporation Chair's Oral Report**

The Chair thanked the Board for their attendance at the Residential in May 2022 and informed governors that the overall satisfaction rating for the Board Residential was very high at 93% reflecting the quality of the presentations and discussion. The feedback related to the venue was very encouraging and the College had provisionally booked the Imperial Hotel again for the 2023 Board Residential. However, caution was advised as the hotel is due for redevelopment.

The Chair referred to the Governance Review report and action plan. The Board was pleased to note the positive report and that all actions had been completed. Governors acknowledged that it had been a useful exercise and was excellent preparation for the future mandatory external reviews of governance.

The Chair had attended the Michael Caines Academy Awards event at @34 and the Employers and Apprenticeship Awards at Sandy Park. It had been

inspiring to hear learners speaking positively about the College and their tutors. Feedback from employers in terms of their excellent relationships with the leadership team at the College was also encouraging. The Chair thanked all staff for their efforts.

### **The Board noted the report**

#### **5. Strategic Matters for Discussion**

##### **5.1 Principal's Strategic Report**

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

*Gemma Noble, Director of People and Organisational Development joined the meeting for item 5.2 only*

##### **5.2 Gender Pay Gap**

The Board received the report which conveyed data taken as at 31 March 2021. The Board noted that over half of UK companies had reported an increase in the gender pay gap. The Board also received positive benchmarking data against other regional colleges.

The Board recalled that prior to the pandemic there had been leadership development offered to business support staff and enquired whether that would be expanded in the future, which was confirmed.

Governors requested a timeline to understand how female representation in senior roles had increased to evidence the success of the strategies the college is using. The Clerk to circulate the information.

**GN**  
**Clerk**

The Board questioned what the barriers are to narrowing the gender pay gap and noted that the major challenge is the high cost of childcare. The lack of equality of choice for women was disappointing, however it was felt that insisting on all female shortlisting was not conducive for quality appointments.

### **The Board noted the report**

##### **5.3 Meeting the Skills Need of the locality**

The Board received the presentation and the Chair referred to the report that had been circulated by the Clerk. It was noted that the College welcomed the amendments to the Ofsted framework related to meeting the skills needs as this was felt to be a strength. The Board was reminded that it had set the College's vision and mission in 2019 which included constant challenge to the College to shape, drive and anticipate the needs of employers and key stakeholders.

The Board sought assurance that the College is checking with employers that the curriculum, as it is shaped, is meeting their needs and noted that the curriculum is constantly evolving using the ARC process.

Governors asked whether learners would be involved in the inspection and if they were being supported. It was confirmed that all learners will be included in discussions with the inspectors and the current deep dive process has a focus on conversations with learners in preparation.

The Board noted that the College anticipates an inspection in the autumn term 2022.

### **The Board noted the report**

- 5.4 Key emerging issues for the College  
The Board engaged in an interactive exercise led by the Principal, the objective of which was to remind governors of the key knowledge areas that will be of interest to Ofsted. The Principal emphasised the strategic role of the Board to challenge and hold to account the leadership team as opposed to having detailed operational knowledge.

### **The Board noted the report**

## **6. Learner and Student Voice update**

### **6.1 College News**

The report was received and taken as read. The Principal highlighted the success of the T level partnership with HepcoMotion.

### **The Board noted the report**

- 6.2 Learner and Student Voice Report  
The report was received and taken as read. The Principal gave examples of where the College had positively responded to the learner voice. The Board noted that extra-curricular activities had been branded as EXtra for 16-18 and WRAPP for Adults, HE and Apprentices.

George Smith-Easton, FE Student Governor explained the proposed changes related to incorporating the Student Union into the Learner Voice. It was felt that the changes would result in more representation and engagement of learners.

### **The Board noted the report**

### **6.3 Student Governor Reports**

The Board received the positive reports provided by the student governors. The student governors took the opportunity to thank the Board for being inclusive and for the support that they had received during their time as governors.

## **The Board noted the reports**

### **Part 2 REPORTS FOR NOTING/APPROVAL**

#### **7. Recommendations from Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

7.1 Executive Summary from Committee meeting on 6 June 2022  
The report summarising the key issues considered at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 6 June 2022 was received and the Committee Vice Chair highlighted the key issues.

7.2 Risk Register  
The Board considered the risk register, which had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Following challenge from the Board, the Committee had reviewed the status of R1, maintain quality of provision against funding shortfalls and had decided that the residual risk medium rating was appropriate.

#### **The Board approved the Risk Register**

7.3 Post 16 Audit Code of Practice  
The Board considered the report detailing the changes made in April 2022 to the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice.

#### **The Board agreed to adopt the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice**

7.4 External Audit Strategy 2021/2022  
The Board received the External Audit Strategy for the preparation of the financial statements for the current year and noted that there will be more scrutiny related to the subsidiary, Exeter College Services Ltd.

#### **The Board approved the External Audit Strategy for 2021/2022**

7.5 Internal Audit Service Tender  
The Board received the Committee's recommendation to appoint Tiaa as the internal auditors and thanked Adele Westcott for supporting the robust tender process.

#### **The Board approved the appointment of Tiaa as the internal auditor for a period of three years followed by a further two years (in 12 monthly increments), subject to satisfactory performance and the agreement of both parties**

7.6 Risk Management Policy  
The Board received the updated risk management policy and noted the minor amendments.

#### **The Board approved the Risk Management policy**

8. **Recommendations from Business Services Committee**

- 8.1 Executive Summary from Committee meeting on 13 June 2022.  
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Business Services Committee meeting held on 13 June 2022 was received and the Committee Chair highlighted the key issues.

The Committee had discussed the Masterplan following the unsuccessful bid for blocks B & C. Governors were keen to submit a further bid and to ensure that any other bids submitted beforehand would not be detrimental to the bid for blocks B & C.

- 8.2 Exeter College Provisional Budget 2022/2023  
The Board received the Provisional Budget for 2022/2023 and noted the Committee's recommendation to approve. The Board was reassured that the budget had made provision for the risk of further inflation and that the College will always aim to achieve at least good financial health.

**The Board approved the Provisional Budget for 2022/2023 subject to the amendments agreed under the Principal's Strategic Report item.**

- 8.3 Exeter College Services Ltd Provisional Budget 2022/2023  
This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the restricted minutes.

9. **Recommendations from Quality and Standards Committee**

- 9.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 20 June 2022.  
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 20 June 2022 was received and the Committee Chair highlighted the diversity data that the Committee had received showing the diversity of the learner community. The Clerk to add the data to BoardEffect. **Clerk**

- 9.2 Future of the Student Union/Learner Voice  
The Board was reassured that the dissolution of the Student Union would strengthen and extend the learner voice and the student leadership team. The College will remain affiliated to the NUS, protection for students will be maintained and there will not be any adverse impact on learners wishing to attend College.

**The Board approved the dissolution of the Student Union**

- 9.3 Policies  
The Board received the Freedom of Information policy and the Registration and Certification policy.

**The Board agreed to adopt the Freedom of Information policy and the Registration and Certification policy**

9.4 Ofsted thematic review on sexual harassment action plan

**The Board received and noted the action plan**

10. **Board Self-Evaluation**

The Board considered its performance and effectiveness over the previous twelve months. Governors were encouraged to let the Clerk have additional comments for the self-evaluation by email.

**All**

**The Board agreed to receive an updated self-evaluation for approval at the Board meeting in October 2022.**

**Clerk**

**PART 3: REPORTS AND MINUTES FOR INFORMATION**

11. **Reports**

The following reports were **received and noted**.

- 11.1 IT Security update
- 11.2 Student On Course Survey
- 11.3 HE Student Voice
- 11.4 Opportunities and Developments Register
- 11.5 ESFA Financial Health Score
- 11.6 ESFA Financial Dashboard
- 11.7 Governance Report

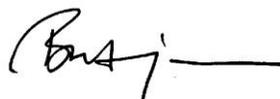
12. **Dates of scheduled meetings for 2021/2022**

Friday 14 October 2022  
Friday 9 December 2022  
Friday 24 February 2023  
Friday 28 April 2023  
Friday 7 July 2023

13. **Other Business**

The Chair thanked governors, the leadership team and all staff for their hard work and commitment over the year and wished all an enjoyable summer.

Signed by the Chair:



Date: 14 October 2022