

**Time:** 5.15pm

**Venue:** Runshaw College (Virtual Meeting held via MS Teams)

**Present:** Warren Middleton (Chairman), Yvonne Bradshaw, Jo Venn, Andy Pratt, Clare Russell (Principal), Joshi Jariwala, , Alison Watson-Bird, Stephen Gregson, Jacqui Chatwood, Jessica Gill, Robert Cobourne, Pam Pye

**In Attendance** Martin Rigby (Deputy Principal), Zoe Smallman (Deputy Principal), Janet Ivill (Director of Finance), Fatema Hussein (Head of Governance)

Meeting began 5.15pm

Meeting closed 7.25pm

Attendance 92%

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Martina Jay.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Governors were invited to declare any direct, indirect, pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interest relating to any item on the agenda for the meeting.

Clare Russell and Stephen Gregson declared an interest in Item 7.1

### **3. Presentation from LEP - Labour Market Intelligence (Tracy Heyes / Joe Mount)**

Tracy Heyes and Joe Mount from the LEP delivered a presentation on the local labour market data and the impact of COVID19 in which the following points were included:

- The South Ribble, Preston and Chorley travel to work area followed the broad pattern in Lancashire
- Its two biggest employment sectors by percentage of jobs were Wholesale and Retail Trade, and Human Health and Social work activities.
- South Ribble, Preston and Chorley collectively had a lower representation of manufacturing jobs than the wider LEP, with 8% of employment vs 14% in the LEP
- There was also a smaller percentage of retail and wholesale businesses in the Travel To Work Area than wider Lancashire
- Retail and Wholesale businesses made the biggest contribution to Gross Value Added in the Travel To Work Area
- The Lancashire rate of furlough was 32%, and this was in line with the UK and North West rate

- Currently, there were 210,000 jobs in Lancashire being supported by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- Over the course of the pandemic, the claimant count rate (claiming Universal Credit due to unemployment) had increased the most sharply for the 18-24 demographic, and was as high as 10.0% in July 2020

Governors thanked them for their informative presentation.  
Tracy Heyes and Joe Mount left the meeting at this point.

#### **4. Minutes of The Meeting Held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

##### **4.1 Approval of the Minutes**

Agreed that: the minutes are signed as a correct record and authorised for publication

##### **4.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The action progress log was reviewed, and it was noted that most of the actions had been completed.

In response to a question about the external Board evaluation report, the Head of Governance advised that the report would be discussed at the Search & Governance Committee meeting and included on the agenda for the December Board meeting.

##### **ACTION:**

Head of Governance / Board Agenda

#### **5. Corporation Committee Meeting Minutes**

##### **5.1 Covid Task & Finish Group Minutes - 8<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

The Chair of the group updated members on the key areas of focus / discussion at the meetings. It was noted that during a recent visit to the College, the Chair had seen the health and safety measures that had been put in place by the College and could assure the Board that all relevant guidelines were being adhered to.

##### **Governor Questions**

**Q.** There is reference in the minutes to a Safe return to College Campus Questionnaire. Was there anything that Governors needed to be aware of?

**A.** All staff had completed this questionnaire, and as a result, 136 individual risk assessments were required. Most of these have now been completed, by managers in liaison with the relevant staff. All appropriate measures were being taken to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff.

**Q.** Have any guidelines been provided 're October half term holidays to staff and students?

**A.** Guidance has been published in the Staff Update and Student bulletin

#### **6. Recruitment 2020**

##### **6.1 Sixth Form College**

##### **6.2 HE / Adult College**

The Principal delivered a presentation on 2020 recruitment and the following points were noted:

- As at 9th September, there were 5087 students on roll and this exceeded the October census target by 127 students
- Last year, the October census figure was 28 students less than the August enrolment figure

- If the same thing happened this year, College would be ahead of target at the October census
- However; due to the current circumstances, the actual student gains and losses may be different than expected
- There had been a very steady increase in recruitment over the long term in South Ribble; with a pleasing increase in numbers this year
- There had been a significant increase in recruitment from Chorley this year; and this was now at an all-time high
- Student numbers from Southport and the outlying areas of Wigan, Bolton and Blackburn had all dropped off slightly this year
- This could potentially be a COVID-effect.
- 68% of the Apprenticeship target had been achieved
- Adult F.E. had experienced very positive growth and several areas were ahead of target

### **Governor Questions**

**Q.** Was the total number of enrolments still above target for census date?

**A.** As at Saturday 19th September, the total number of students on roll was 5066 and still above target

**Q.** Was there any update on the adult enrolment figures?

**A.** There were now 534 Adult FE enrolments against a target of 483 target. Functional Skills English and Maths had been particularly buoyant, as had Access to Paramedic Studies and Level 4 Counselling. There were 17 HE enrolments, matching the target

**Q.** Was there any specific reason for a fall in market share in Southport?

**A.** Southport / KGV College had been undertaking a strong marketing campaign over the summer and some students were more inclined to stay local

**Q.** Was the lower number of apprenticeship starts to do with the uncertainty over the economic climate?

**A.** This was a factor, but the data was not as bad as anticipated

**Q.** What were the plans for recruiting more apprentices?

**A.** The Employer Relationships Team were undertaking a number of initiatives including;

- Contacting existing employers (renewing) to remind them of the benefits of recruiting an apprentice
- Engaging with a number of new employers via e-mail, phone and social media to promote our apprenticeship offer for 20/21
- Revisiting all employers who put vacancies on hold due to Covid-19, in a bid to promote the new incentive and reopen the vacancy

**Q.** Were any Government incentives available to support apprenticeships?

**A.** An incentive for employers was available until January 2021

Governors congratulated all staff on the very positive enrolment data.

## **7. College Centre Assessment Grades / Results**

### **7.1 A Level**

The Deputy Principal Zoe Smallman reported on the A Level Centre Assessment Grades and the following points were noted:

- A level examinations did not take place last academic year due to the Coronavirus pandemic

- For each A level course, providers were asked to submit to exam boards, for each student, a centre assessment grade and a rank position in relation to other students with the same centre assessment grade
- In determining the centre assessment grades, College had acted in accordance with Ofqual guidance, which required College to take into account how this year's students compared to those of previous years, the prior attainment of this year's students relative to that of previous students and previous results in the subject
- In contrast to the start of previous years, it was not helpful to make comparisons between this year's data and historic performance to identify strengths, trends and areas for improvement
- There was no meaningful way of confirming whether subjects on the key issues list would have met their targets
- The proposal was to keep those subjects on the key issues list

Governors agreed that it was very difficult to gain any meaningful information at the moment and that a full discussion would take place at the Standards & Curriculum Committee.

## **7.2 Advanced Vocational**

The Deputy Principal Martin Rigby reported on the Advanced Vocational course results and the following points were noted:

- Headline results for the L3 BTEC Extended Diploma remained very pleasing with the L3 BTEC 90 Credit Diploma significantly above national benchmarks
- Headline results for the L3 UAL courses were also significantly above national benchmarks
- Achievement rates on all L3 courses were excellent and represented a 5-year high
- The achievement rate data for the vocational programme had historically been low but improved last year as a result of higher retention which was at a 5 year high prior to the lockdown

## **7.3 Pre-Advanced Vocational**

Discussed as part of Item 7.2

## **7.4 GCSE**

It was noted that no conclusions could be drawn on progress due to the absence of exams. The College was proposing to carry on with the implementation of actions that had been previously agreed. 16-18 GCSE courses were planned to be taught fully on-site for the whole of this year and the team was continuing to incorporate the strategies implemented last year, which were showing promise.

## **7.5 Adult F.E. & H.E.**

Results for HE and Adult FE courses were determined in a variety of ways. Some students had received actual results, whilst others students sat delayed assessments which then enabled them to receive results, and in some cases, centre assessment grades were submitted.

### H.E

- The percentage of High Grades (Distinctions and Merits) was the highest in seven years, at 83.3%
- The pass rate was down slightly on last year and the previous three years, at 95.5% but still very high
- The achievement rate targets were 90% for single-year courses and 80% for multi-year courses.
- Pass rates across most Adult FE courses was 100%

## **Governor Questions**

- Q.** The A Level results report mentions large numbers of queries received. How many were received and had this increased from what was reported at the Covid meeting? How does it compare with queries on previous years?
- A.** Initially, most students contacted their Progress Mentor to find out their CAG, in order to compare this with their calculated grade. Later, when the government publicised a “triple lock” process; students wanted to know their mock grades. This then changed again when the government made the decision to issue the higher of the CAG and the calculated grade. This was an exceptional situation for this year only; there were no such queries in previous years.
- Q.** Why is the target for ALPS only  $\leq 4$ ; for an Outstanding College should it not be  $\leq 2$ , or at worst  $\leq 3$ ?
- A.** The proposed target is carried forward from last year. Agreed that this should be discussed at the Standards & Curriculum Committee on whether it should be increased.
- Q.** Is there any update on Oxford and Cambridge places and Medicine, Veterinary, and Dentistry?
- A.** From 22 students with offers, 18 students have enrolled to Oxbridge (compared with 19 from 25 offers last year)  
Medicine/Veterinary/Dentistry: from 42 students with offers, 29 students have enrolled to MDV courses (compared with 31 from 47 offers last year)
- Q.** The GCSE results look very positive, but will these be sustainable?
- A.** College has managed to reduce the size of all GCSE classes to around 10, in order to facilitate social distancing. This means that, unlike in just about any other FE college, our GCSE lessons will all be on-campus, with no online learning
- Q.** The pass rate for HE is slightly down; was this expected?
- A.** There were 3 HE students who failed their qualification. However, the outcome of some re-assessment boards was still being awaited.
- Q.** Can you clarify what the approach was to the determination of this year’s CAGs? Particularly, did we follow ASCL guidance?
- A.** The approach to the calculation of this year’s CAGs was well documented and agreed by Governors in the summer term. It was based on the grade distribution profile for the last 3 years (A Level) or 2 years (GCSE), as per the Ofqual guidance. Grades at Runshaw College were therefore absolutely in line with the average of the last 3 years, for all key metrics (including added value).
- Q.** How many appeals had been received by the cut off of date of 17 September?
- A.** The exams team responded to c.300 emails requesting appeal/clerical checks
- Q.** Have any of these been carried forward to the exam boards by College or have all been rejected?
- A.** Appeals for Biology (56 students), Chemistry (39 students), Physics (22 students), and Geology (5 students) were carried forward to the exam boards. In addition, three individual A Level appeals and 5 individual GCSE appeals were carried forward to the exam boards.
- Q.** How many former students are registered to take October exams?
- A.** We currently have 77 exam entries for the October re-sit series
- Q.** How much is the 5-year high achievement rate on the Vocational programme due to changing from predominantly 2-year qualification aims, to separate 1st and 2nd year qualification aims?

- A.** Part of the rationale for moving to the 1 + 1 one model (Year 1 90 Credit Diploma topping up to a Year 2 Extended Diploma) was to improve retention and therefore achievement rates. However, end of Year 1 programme retention in 18/19 was 89%, which was lower than the previous 3 years and therefore the move to the 90 credit model did not have the desired effect on retention and achievement rates for Year 1 Advanced Vocational students. A clear cause and effect relationship is difficult to establish, especially when more than one significant variable has changed. However, significant improvements in retention across all vocational programmes has largely driven the improvement in achievement rates too. Considering retention (and achievement rates) have improved on other vocational programmes that do not have the 1 + 1 model, it is likely that the re-vamped High Expectations – ABCDE strategy had a more significant impact on the data

In response to a question about Alps, The Deputy Principal Zoe Smallman provided an overview of how ALPS grades were calculated.

## **8. Principal's Report**

The Principal presented her report and the following points were noted:

- Staff had returned to a COVID-secure workplace and College had put all the necessary health and safety measures in place
- New term training and presentations for staff were mostly delivered online
- Despite the college submitting CAGs that were robust and completely aligned with previous years' results (as per the published guidance), the national moderation exercise initially downgraded the A Level results substantially; 797 student results were lower than CAGs
- The subsequent Government U-turn that A Level results would revert to Centre Assessed Grades (with no national moderation) meant that there had to be a re-issue of all the results
- The grade inflation on the GCSE results had impacted on curriculum planning; new students had higher GCSE results than a typical cohort (but were not necessarily higher ability). This had altered the distribution of enrolments across programmes – with more on Level 3 Voc and far fewer on Level 1 / Level 2
- 26 new staff were welcomed to College this term, all completed a full day face-to-face induction event which was fully COVID-secure
- All 2500 Vocational students were back on campus full-time (for their usual 3-day timetables), as well as 2500 A Level students on campus for one day a week (and 3 days online learning)
- Overall, students were complying with the requirement to wear face coverings but social distancing was more of a challenge
- There were currently 9 confirmed cases of Coronavirus, resulting in 6 staff and 45 students self-isolating
- Due to new local restrictions and the increase in cases in the local area, the College open event was moved online. Students could all still get the information they needed about the courses but also access support from subject teachers

A Governor advised that “walk in” Covid tests were available at sites in Preston and College could communicate this to students.

### **Governor Questions**

- Q.** How many expressions of concern /complaints have we received so far in relation to our approach to blended learning with 1 day in college per week for A level students?
- A.** Around 30 or so concerns have been received. On the whole, students and their parents are happier with the situation now that they have experienced it, than they were before term started
- Q.** Have any of these been focussed on specific subjects / courses / teachers?

**A.** A few, which are being addressed by the relevant Heads of School. A survey is about to go out to all A Level students, which will ask them direct questions about the quality of their online learning experience.

**Q.** How can we increase the face to face teaching time for those students in their final year of studies?

**A.** This has been discussed at length with the ESFA. It is currently not possible to achieve both the objective to return all students to campus, at the same time as maintaining social distancing and keeping cohorts of students separate.

**Q.** How confident are we that the online and virtual teaching and learning in each subject for final year students is as good as it can be and is improving? Are all subjects at a consistent level of quality and effectiveness in relation to their online teaching?

**A.** Both Deputy Principals are assessing the quality of online learning via drop-in observations. Our Curriculum Observation & Review (COR) process is currently being re-developed, to align with online delivery. An exceptional range of training is being provided, via the Professional Tutors and the Technology for Learning Coordinator.

A survey is about to go out to all A Level students, which will ask them direct questions about the quality of their online learning experience. This will enable us to quickly address any issues

**Q.** How does the Runshaw blended learning mix compare to our local College / 6th form competitors?

**A.** Most other local colleges are offering a 50:50 mix of on-campus and online delivery. However they are also having to self-isolate much larger groups of students whenever there is a confirmed COVID case, because their social distancing is less than ours, or their bubbles are larger. For example, at Cardinal Newman College, they have a similar number of confirmed cases to us, but currently have over 200 students isolating for 14 days

**Q.** Had new students encountered any specific issues with online learning?

**A.** The approach had been changed so that the first-year students had their first session face to face in College and this had worked well

**Q.** What support will be provided to those students applying for university early (Oxbridge, medicine etc.)?

**A.** Our usual Prestigious Universities Programme and Progress Mentor support is ongoing

## **9. Addendum to 2020/21 Strategic Plan**

The Principal presented proposals for an addendum to the strategic plan and explained that:

- In light of Covid19, a one-year update to the strategic plan was proposed as some of the priorities identified for the strategic plan in May, had already been superseded by new priorities
- The College theme for 2020-2022 “Changing Lives, in Changing Times” was still relevant
- It was suggested that the following were included in the addendum:  
Our priorities for a safe return to college are
  - Protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of our college
  - community
  - Providing outstanding teaching, learning, assessment and support for all

**Q.** Did the sections re Support cover Prevent/Counselling/Mental Health support? Could there be something more explicit that could be added?

**A.** Agreed we could add something more specific to this

Governors suggested that the following areas were also added:

- Students working safely from home
- Monitor the political and local (community) environment

## **RESOLVED:**

The Board approved the addendum to the strategic plan subject to amendments proposed

### **10. Strategic Planning - Agenda items and key issues for January Meeting**

The agenda and key issues for the strategic planning meeting were discussed and the following areas identified for consideration:

- Development of community links / stakeholder engagement
- Income generation and space utilisation
- Use of the Chorley campus (opening it up to employers)
- Enhanced requirement for staff and student wellbeing

### **11. Finance Update 2020 / 21 Budget**

The following update was provided by the Director of Finance:

- Favourable variances ('savings') were being predicted for other grant income and special revenue costs
- The ESFA had confirmed additional funding for 16-19 catch-up teaching and learning resources and estate condition improvement
- The August payroll was below budget, and this would provide some capacity for additional resources as required for teaching, cleaning and student management
- A (worst case scenario) deficit of c£300k would meet criteria for good financial health and also comply with loan covenants
- Catering operations have had a very slow start to the year. Footfall was significantly reduced due to reduced on-campus timetables and social distancing restrictions

#### **Governor Questions**

**Q.** What is the update on take up of bus passes. What happens if a parent pays and then changes their mind?

**A.** Bus pass sales have been strong. The College had a rebate policy in place

### **12. Risk Register – High Risks & Key Movements**

The risk register was reviewed, and it was noted that the risk of a cyber attack had been increased to high as a number of Colleges had been targeted in July and August. Additional security measures had been added to the IT systems.

### **13. Issues from Data Dashboard**

The Board discussed the dashboard which was used to monitor key College performance indicators. A Governor suggested that it may be useful to review the dashboard to ascertain if any amendments were required in light of COVID19.

#### **Governor Questions**

**Q.** The achievement rate for Looked after and Independent living (LAC/IL) was very low; was this because of retention issues, or their CAGs?

**A.** It was a retention issue rather than pass rates

#### **ACTION:**

Head of Governance to include Governors dashboard on Search Agenda



## 14. Safeguarding Annual Report

The Deputy Principal Zoe Smallman presented the report and it was noted that:

- College had continued to offer support whilst the campus had been closed
- The key area of concern was Health and Wellbeing as this had the highest number of referrals
- During COVID 19 and the move to online learning, most students were using their own devices at home and unless they accessed resources via the Student Portal, College was unable to monitor their usage and activity
- This was a nationally recognised issue which all educational establishments faced
- To ensure students continued to be safe on-line, College followed Government advice and guidelines promoting awareness of the issues on a weekly basis through student emails, the student bulletin and the college wellbeing Instagram
- The issues were also highlighted through the communication portal for parents and carers

The following update was provided by the Safeguarding Governor from her attendance at the recent Steering Group meeting:

- College was keeping in touch with students who were self-isolating via phone calls with their progress mentor
- A mental health and wellbeing facilitator had been appointed to provide further support to learners
- A calendar of wellbeing events was also being organised
- College was to be involved in the F.E. knife free project
- Governors were required to undertake Prevent refresher training

**Q.** Mental health distress is high - Female students are accessing counselling three times more than male students. Has any work been done to ascertain why male students aren't seeking help and what is being done to encourage them to do so?

**A.** The Counselling Team are trying to target male students to see what the barriers which prevent them from accessing counselling are, and have noted that males tend to seek support when they are actually in crisis rather than before. College would continue to look at strategies to try and promote the benefits to male students.

## 15. Annual Governance Report

The annual governance report for the year ended 31 July 2020 covered the following:

- Governor Attendance
- Governance developments
- Appointments and Retirements
- Governance self-assessment and performance review activity

The Head of Governance reported that:

- Attendance for 2019/2020 at 84%, was above the 80% target set by Governors and in line with the average in the sector
- Eight Governors had recorded 100% attendance at Corporation meetings
- Governors continued to play a key strategic role in ensuring that key performance indicators were met and a number of initiatives had been implemented to further strengthen governance, and this included:
  - Reviewing governance arrangements in light of the Coronavirus pandemic
  - Ensuring that the Board and Committees continued to meet via the use of online platforms

- Establishing a Coronavirus Governance & Leadership task and finish group to monitor the board approved plan for College re-opening
- Commissioning an independent evaluation of Board effectiveness

**RESOLVED:**

The Board noted the report which provided additional assurance that governance arrangements continued to be effective and were reviewed regularly.

**16. Governance Position Statement**

**RESOLVED:**

The Board reviewed and endorsed the Governance Position Statement

**17. Covid Governance & Leadership Group Terms of Reference**

**RESOLVED:**

The Board approved the amended Terms of Reference as recommended by the Covid Governance & Leadership group

**18. Policies**

**18.1 Health, Safety & Well Being**

Minor changes had been made to the policy and these were highlighted to Governors.

**RESOLVED:**

The Health, Safety & Well Being policy was reviewed and approved

**18.2 Adult Admissions**

**Governor Questions**

**Q.** Why has the Matrix Accreditation been removed?

**A.** The Matrix Accreditation is a quality standard for organisations to assess and measure their advice and support services. At Runshaw, this applies to our careers guidance team based in Student Services, but it is not of relevance to the adult Marketing Team. It has therefore been removed from this particular policy, but it is still in place for the college. All applicants have the opportunity to speak to the careers guidance team for Matrix-accredited support, before they join us.

**RESOLVED:**

The Adult Admissions policy was reviewed and approved

**18.3 Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults**

The Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults policy was reviewed and approved

A Governor requested that in future, any amendments to policies were highlighted as tracked changes so that they could be easily identified.

**ACTION:**

SMT / Head of Governance

## **19. Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance**

The meeting was informed that it was a requirement for all Governors to read Part 1 of the guidance which had recently been updated.

### **ACTION:**

Board members confirmed that that they had read and noted the guidance.

It was suggested that Governors completed the online quiz which would assist in confirming their understanding of the guidance.

### **ACTION:**

- Head of Governance / Zoe Smallman to arrange
- Prevent refresher training for Governors to be arranged

## **20. F.E. Commissioner Letter**

The Board received and noted the F.E. Commissioner letter.

The Principal advised that she had requested a diagnostic assessment and felt that as a newly appointed Principal, it would be useful to get an independent external assessment of the College.

## **21. Governance Impact Statement**

- Review and approval of policies ensures that Governors are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities
- Governor input into the strategic planning process
- Report from Safeguarding Governor confirms that Governors are monitoring safeguarding arrangements
- LEP presentation and data will help to inform strategic direction and curriculum intent
- Suggestion to review the Governors dashboard in light of Covid19
- Amendments suggested to the to the strategic plan addendum

## **22. Reserved Business Minutes**

### **22.1 Corporation Meeting Minutes Part 2 - 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

### **22.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Discussed under reserved business.

### **22.3 Any other Reserved Business Matters**

Discussed under reserved business.

## **23. Date of Next Meeting**

Governors SAR Meeting  
Tuesday 6 October 2020 at 8.00am

Board  
Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 5.00pm