

## MINUTES

Page 1

**Directorate:** Corporation**Minutes of:** HCUC Governing Body**Date:** Tuesday 8 December 2020**Time:** 4.30pm**Venue:** Remote access via Zoom

**Present:**

Areeba Asghar	Student Governor (Harrow)
Melissa Bridge	Staff Governor (Uxbridge)
Simon Boulcott	Governor
Steven Cochran	Governor ( <i>Acting Chair and Vice Chair</i> )
Tracey Critchley	Staff Governor (Harrow)
Nicholas Davies	Governor ( <i>Corporation Chair</i> )
Darrell De Souza	Governor ( <i>Group CEO and Principal</i> )
Zamzam Hashimi	Student Governor (Uxbridge)
Nasim Khan	Governor
Alasdair MacLeod	Governor
Johanna Morgan	Governor
Steve Owen	Governor
Amanda Priem	Governor
Mariann Rand-Weaver	Governor
Ketan Sheth	Governor

**Apologies:** Paul Walker Governor

**In attendance:**

Intiaz Aziz	HR Director ( <i>Items 7 and 13 only</i> )
Pat Carvalho	Harrow Principal and Deputy CEO
Darrell DeSouza	CEO/ Group Principal
Gavin Hughes	Dir SEND, Safeguarding & Prevent ( <i>Items 1-13.</i> )
Dylan McTaggart	Deputy Principal
Andy Miller	Exec Director Corporate Services ( <i>Items 1-13.</i> )
Tracy Reeve	Clerk to the Corporation
Shane Woodhatch	Group Director Finance & Resource Planning

**Presentations**

- **'You said, we did' – Student Learner Voice Feedback**

The meeting noted a Learner Voice presentation from the Student Governors Harrow and Uxbridge.

**Harrow College (HC):**

The Student Governor Harrow (ME) presented the report to the meeting. The report highlighted the key actions and improvements made in 2019/20 as a result of Student Council feedback. The meeting was pleased to note that Student Council activity had continued during the Covid-19 lockdown with a Student Council Meeting hosted on Zoom by the Head of Student Services. Positive feedback from Student Reps included: they believed the College had taken appropriate steps to keep students safe during the pandemic; good teachers who were friendly and supportive; teachers had made good efforts to deliver teaching remotely; support with UCAS; good resources including new buildings and computers. Areas which were being addressed after student feedback were also noted including: English and Maths lessons being outside 'Covid-bubbles'; student awareness of personal targets; car parking; lack of social space and a prayer room; some timetabling issues; computer room access; and food variety in the canteen. Principal Harrow (PC) confirmed that the Harrow SLT was working with the students to action the suggested improvements but some things could not change eg. Car parking limitations. Student Union activity proposed for 2020/21 was noted as: promoting diversity amongst students; delivering a Stay Safe Tutorial focused on understanding sexual content; and a RAG Week activity to raise money for a charity.

# MINUTES

## Uxbridge College:

Governors noted the 'You Said We Did' presentation which outlined the issues raised during the year and the action taken by College management. The meeting noted that issues during the year had existed around the following: gaps in timetables; concerns about the LRC and a lack of space/ quiet space for revision; learners needing additional help with structuring assignments; busy areas at entrance and exit and lunchtime which make social distancing hard; a request for some remote teaching to ease congestion on campus; there should be a better awareness of LGBTQ+ issues; a request for a prayer room; some IT issues with poor access to Google apps; issues boarding buses (limited capacity due to the pandemic guidelines) causing learner to be late for first morning lessons; request for more sports activity; poor hygiene in the toilets. The management responses and action taken wherever possible to these requests were noted by the meeting. The meeting was pleased to note the positive feedback which highlighted the following things that learners liked about Uxbridge College: most students felt happy and felt welcomed to College; teachers and other support staff were kind and understanding; students would like to thank the IT Team for being so helpful with log-ins and mobile phone apps during the first few weeks of term; learners feel safe and supported; the College was doing all it good to keep learners safe and deliver high quality teaching during the pandemic.

**The Student Governor presentations were NOTED.**

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Paul Walker.

### 2. Notification of any urgent business Members may wish to raise under any other business, and any items to be taken as read that Members may wish to discuss

Governors raised the issue of how much paperwork had been sent out in advance of the meeting. The Clerk reminded Governors that to some extent this was unavoidable as this meeting was the worst during the whole year in terms of compliance matters requiring governors' approval. In addition there were a number of key issues - including Covid-19 and the proposed merger with Richmond Upon Thames College – that needed to be considered by the meeting. However, the point was noted and future thought would be given to this matter when planning the 2021/22 Governing Body work schedule. Governors agreed that one-item extraordinary meetings had worked well recently when specific items were being considered.

There was no other business notified.

### 3. Notification of interests Members may wish to declare relating to any item

No specific interests were notified.

### 4. Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 22nd September 2020

The Minutes were APPROVED as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### 5. Matters arising from Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 22nd September 2020, which were not agenda items.

There were no matters arising that were not already covered by the agenda.

### 6. Updates

- **Chair's Update**

The Chair flagged that he and the Vic-Chair were now involved with the Joint Steering Group for the proposed merger with Richmond Upon Thames College.

- **CEO's Update**

DDS highlighted the successful and busy start to the new year and the strong QAR performance data for 2019/20. The challenges associated with a return to campus under Covid-guidelines and the proposed merger with Richmond Upon Thames (RuTC) were all proving challenging.

**NOTED**

**ITEMS FOR DECISION**

# MINUTES

## 7. Update on Covid-19 Action Plan

The meeting received update reports covering the following aspects of the Covid-19 operational action plan: HCUC Covid operations and revised Risk Assessment – Estate operations; Financial implications; HR update (including furlough); and, Curriculum & Quality – Delivery of Learning 2020/21.

### Campus Operations and Risk Assessment:

The CEO (DDS) confirmed that the College had heeded all Government and DfE advice in relation to expectations of as full a return to high quality educational provision, albeit within the Covid-19 restrictions. The College's Covid-19 Risk Assessment (RA) and associated RA action plan continued to inform arrangements and was being reviewed weekly and updated in light of the various Government updates relating to Covid-19 and educational establishments. Colleges had been reminded of the need to obtain permission from ESFA/DfE should local decisions be made to shift to significant levels of remote delivery of learning. Governors noted that following dialogue with the ESFA/DfE, this had been adjusted to HCUC providing a rationale (rather than obtaining permission) to shift to remote learning but the expectation was still that remote delivery would not be more than 50% of overall expected delivery without permission by ESFA/DfE or intervention by Health & Safety Executive. Governors were assured that the College would continue to make local decisions based on safety & capacity, in line with learner & staff need and government advice. The meeting noted a summary update to the report which had been provided in September 2020.

- The campuses Covid-19 arrangements included - protective screens for appropriate areas e.g. reception/refectory; sanitiser dispensers; social distance and one-way route markings; instruction to wear face coverings in communal areas/corridors. There was also a temperature check facility on entry to reception at each campus (this was not a requirement).
- Face coverings, since the announcement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown by Government, are now a requirement not a recommendation and the College has raised the level of surveillance and sanctions to assist this.
- The 'Bubble' concept continued to be used to house curriculum areas, aligned to coloured lanyard ID for ease of identification. Bubble arrangements and timetabling for English & Maths had also been revised to further reduce flow of learners around the premises and between classes.
- Classrooms capacity was being monitored via a live report that allowed both 16-19 programmes & the more restricted adult classes to adhere to maximum capacities identified by the Risk Assessment. Adults in mixed 16-19 programme classes had resulted in some reduction to maximum class capacity in order to adhere to CV19 guidance concerning social distance, even with mitigation (e.g. face shields). Adult learners in classes, under more stringent social distance guidance than 16-19 bubbles, have resulted in reduced capacity in order to adhere to CV19 guidance.
- All learners and parents/carers had received further in-term updates from the Principals following the Government's raising of the alert levels and introduction of the second lockdown. This includes expected compliance with the CV19 regulations within premises and off-site e.g. when using TfL and in town centres.
- The College has seen the first positive Covid-19 cases reported for learners and staff. These had been carefully monitored and close contacts notified and made to isolate for the requisite period. Resultant modification to Teaching Learning & Assessment delivery modes had followed.
- Curriculum teams had planned variations to on-premises delivery utilising remote online methods, allowing for flexible delivery of TL&A where required.
- Remote staff meetings continued and DDS/PC continued to deliver whole staff Zoom meetings, including jointly as part of the October Whole College Training Days.
- Weekly All-Staff email updates from the Principals, Covid-19 updates from the Exec Director Corporate Services and regular HR Newsletters had kept staff informed and advised on Covid-19 safety and well-being matters.
- Staff Covid-19 metrics continued to be collected and reported on a weekly basis by HR. The meeting was pleased to note positive reports from the regular HR discussions with Unions in relation to Covid-19 communications.

# MINUTES

- Maintaining contact with employers and keeping apprentices engaged and re-igniting this activity with the Kickstart scheme (using the available incentives) continued to be a priority for the WBL Employer engagement teams. Apprenticeships were still an area of risk and there was a need for HCUC to respond in-year to adult re-skilling and re-training opportunities.
- Modified marketing activities continue to be relied upon - with greater reliance on LinkedIn and website development to promote the West London IoT (WLIoT), including the planned launch in January 2021. Arrangements were also in place for Virtual Open Days during December 2020.
- The ongoing review of HCUC's Digital/ IT strategy continued to be a priority focus, mindful of the Covid-19 landscape. Further sessions with JISC and HCUC SLT had been conducted in September 2020.
- Contact was being maintained with Public Health England and the local authority on a regular basis. The College had also been visited by the Health and Safety Executive following a 'Riddor' reportable event and this required a response by the College to a range of issues raised.

## Financial implications:

Finance metrics were being monitored in relation to the impact of Covid-19. SW confirmed that costs had escalated more quickly than expected. However, the majority of any necessary large expenditure such as temperature cameras and Perspex shielding had now been made. HCUC had set aside £125,000 to spend on PPE and associated costs to comply with guidelines; to date HCUC had spent £88,000 and based on current health and safety audits, it was likely that HCUC would be spending in excess of the budget. Governors were assured that contingencies were in place to meet the additional expenditure to ensure that all of the campuses fully complied with Government Covid-19 expectations. The meeting was reminded that the draft HCUC budget for 2020/21 was prepared inclusive of the COVID19 impact to shortfall in income in particular Apprenticeship and Commercial income. SW highlighted that he would update the Covid-19 impact when the mid-year reforecast was prepared in January 2021 and presented to Resources Committee. The meeting was reminded of the financial impact on Apprenticeships, the IoT and some elements of mainstream 16-18 enrolments (at 94% of target). Contrastingly, adult recruitment had exceeded target. The impact on lagged funding was noted with the £4.7m shortfall crystallising in 2021/22. The meeting noted the detailed mitigation in place to counter current and future income dips. Governors challenged the SLT on what was being put in place to ensure that enrolment improved for 2021/22; SLT clearly appreciated that numbers for 2021/22 needed to be maximised. The meeting asked that additional analysis be undertaken at the point of the mid-year reforecast in spring 2021 to consider the two possible scenarios: numbers recovering to pre-Covid levels across the College and the numbers dip continuing into 2021/22. The CEO highlighted the need for the College to maintain a close grip on quality – any drastic cost cutting measures could have a detrimental impact on this and would need to be carefully managed.

## Covid-19 Staff Metrics

The HR Director (IA) informed the meeting that on 4 November 2020, the government had issued new guidance on the status of staff that were classified as Extremely Critically Vulnerable (ECV). The government guidance meant that these staff could no longer work onsite; across HCUC there were 25 staff in this category, 19 at Uxbridge and 6 at Harrow. In addition, staff that received shielding letters during the first lockdown were identified as falling within the ECV category. The College also consulted with Occupational Health advisers to identify all staff that should be covered by this category.

The meeting noted that 59 staff (just under 8% of established staff) had been required to self-isolating between 1 September and 10 November 2020. IA confirmed that these staff could not return to work onsite until HR had assessed that they were no longer a risk to staff or students. The latest weekly 'work status' survey showed that 93% of staff were working at least some of their working week onsite. IA also confirmed that there were currently no HCUC staff on furlough.

## Curriculum & Quality – Delivery of Learning 2020/21:

The meeting noted a detailed report which gave Governors an update on the following aspects of learning delivery at HCUC.

- School bubbles at HCUC: Students had been timetabled into School Bubbles; coloured lanyards matching zones indicated if a student was in the right geographical area of the College. As previously noted, to avoid cross-contamination English and Maths was now timetabled within School lanyard

# MINUTES

bubbles. Governors were reminded that HCUC had required staff to wear face-coverings when within 2m since the beginning of term, this had more recently been made compulsory by government. The meeting noted that 109 student cases and 32 staff cases of Covid-19 had impacted upon over 1300 students (including during October half term student break); each affected contact had been tracked and decisions were then taken.

- **Onsite & remote delivery:** The 'remote delivery rationale' steers the College procedure for agreeing 'up to 25% remote delivery' which culminated in a Curriculum Director owned decision. The meeting sought additional assurance around learners access to IT resources and mitigating any ongoing negative impact on remote learning. DMcT assured the meeting that HCUC was self-funding IT kit to loan to students and also utilising £200,000 of BAME 19+ project funding. The College had audited student need and had identified the need for 819 kit items (laptops, Chromebooks, headsets, dongles). DM informed the meeting that the College had pre-ordered 200 laptops, 20 headsets & 50 webcams – staff would need to prioritise where the need was most impactful to student engagement. Governors were assured that as the majority of delivery during the autumn term had been face-to-face the College had been able to provide necessary IT kit from within current College stocks where learners were self-isolating. College management were planning for the possible move to a full lockdown post-Christmas.

Governors noted that a staff rota system had been available to local managers since October to allow staff the capacity to work remotely where this did not negatively impact on the student experience (eg. to reduce footfall within staff rooms). This sat alongside the HCUC Work from Home Policy.

- **Student knowledge-gaps:** The meeting was reminded that students had joined HCUC from disparate starting points and the College was now focused on closing the 'knowledge-gaps' resulting from highly varied lockdown delivery by feeder schools. The meeting was reminded that 2020/21 was very likely to be an inspection year for HCUC given that the College was now beyond the prescribed three years post-merger 'window'. DM highlighted that Ofsted would apply an additional focus on *knowledge-gap* attainment and remote delivery. The meeting noted that the College had access to a £961,000 16 to 19 tuition fund which was aimed at supporting students in English, maths, and other courses where learning has been disrupted. While this was being complicated by an unhelpful restriction on group size, 3-5, the College would apply as much of this fund as could be aligned with the needs of the baseline assessment activity now being completed.

**The Covid-19 Update Report was NOTED and RECEIVED.**

## 8. Governing Body Matters

### • Search Committee Recommendations

The meeting was reminded that HCUC currently had one vacancy on the Governing Body for a qualified accountant to join Audit Committee. However, considering the proposed merger with Richmond Upon Thames College Search Committee had resolved that it should not go out to look for additional governors during the pre-merger period. The Corporation meeting agreed with this proposal and that Steven Cochran should join the Audit Committee for the remainder of the 2020/21 academic year to fill the current vacancy.

In order for this to happen the meeting also agreed that Steven Cochran (SC) should be re-appointed for a further term of office when his current term of office ended in March 2021. The meeting was reminded that SC was re-appointed in March 2020 for a one-year term of office. Part of the reason for this one-year term of office (rather than the usual 4 year) was that SC was mindful of his long association with Uxbridge College and had previously asked Search Committee to commit to clear succession planning during the current academic year. In order to fill the ongoing vacancy on Audit Committee for the remainder of the 2020/21 year it is necessary to extend Steve Cochran's current one-year term of office. Search Committee also believe that it would be sensible during the current merger discussions with RuTC to maintain SC's role within the Corporation at HCUC. The meeting agreed with the Search Committee recommendation that SC's current term of office be reinstated to a four-year term so that his cessation date would be extended to March 2024. Corporation member agreed that SC's ongoing contribution to governance at HCUC as Vice-Chair, as the IoT Board link Governor, and as a member of the Joint Steering Group for the merger discussions with Richmond Upon Thames College was too valuable to lose. SC had also been responsible

# MINUTES

for the governance monitoring of the HCUC Post-Merger Action Plan during 2017/18 and this experience would be invaluable if a further merger did go ahead.

The meeting was given assurance that the Search Committee would reconvene in Spring 2021 to look at current and future membership when the College was further down the line with the Joint Steering Group and due diligence process. As with the last merger the composition of the Governing Body moving forward would be driven by people's skillsets. Current thinking was that some new governors from RuTC could be accommodated without losing any current HCUC governors.

***In order to maintain the correct balance of knowledge and experience on the Governing Body at HCUC the Corporation APPROVED the extension of Steven Cochran's current 1 year term of office as a Member of HCUC Corporation to a usual four-year term of office, (until 31 March 2024). SC to continue in his role as Vice-Chair of the Corporation and as an ex-officio member of the West London IoT Board.***

- **Corporation Self-Assessment 2019/20**

As part of the Governance Self-Assessment process 2019/20, Governors completed a college generated questionnaire designed to assess governors' views on compliance with good governance standards. The self-assessment questionnaire and governors' responses had been discussed at the Governors Training Event in October 2020. Subsequently governors returned their completed questionnaires and narrative comments. In addition to this the Clerk reviewed the Skills Audit in order to ensure an appropriate balance of skills and knowledge within the new HCUC Corporation. For additional assurance, the Clerk also undertook a review of HCUC Corporation's performance 2019/20 against its adopted Governance Code – the Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance for English Colleges. The meeting noted this detailed 'RAG' rated review against all of the elements of the code; Governors were assured that there were currently no areas of non-compliance that need remedial action.

At the October 2020 Governors' Training Day, the performance against the Governance Objectives for 2019/20 was discussed by HCUC Governors. The outcome of the discussions is shown in italics below.

- To continue to develop the team working dynamic of the HCUC Corporation and to ensure that all member of the Governance team were 'Ofsted-ready' in order to support an Outstanding grade for Leadership & Management in a future Ofsted inspection of HCUC under the new Education Inspection Framework. (A full Ofsted Inspection under the new EIF had been likely in 2019/20.)
  - To ensure Governors have access to updated/ live performance data through ongoing briefing on curriculum areas of strength or underperformance during 2019/20.
  - To develop a succession planning strategy for future government recruitment and to recruit two new governors to fill current vacancies on Audit Committee and QCS Committee. Audit Committee member to be a qualified accountant as recommended by the FE Commissioner.
  - To monitor and challenge any instances of poor attendance from individual governors in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Instrument and Articles. Additional attendance data to be compiled on a rolling year basis.

*The meeting agreed that it had been disappointing that Ofsted had not visited the College during 2019/20 but the pandemic had caused Ofsted inspections to be halted. Governors and the SLT believed that with the implementation of core systems and a strong culture across the whole of HCUC the organisation remained Ofsted Ready. The succession planning strategy would be temporarily halted while the College explored a possible merger with Richmond Upon Thames College (RuTC).*

- To further review the current governance structure of HCUC to ensure that it was still 'fit for purpose' as HCUC moved into Year 3 of operation (2019/20) and to reflect the addition of the Institute of Technology to the governance remit. A specific 'IoT Governor' to be identified from within the current membership; this role would include attendance at IoT Board meetings.

*This had been considered during the year especially in relation to the new West London Institute of Technology at HCUC; the Vice Chair had joined the IoT Board as an ex-officio member. The focus of the*

# MINUTES

SSCs at individual College level enabled a clear oversight of both Colleges strengths and weaknesses which was fed into the HCUC Corporation through the Quality Curriculum and Student Committee. The current structure was deemed as 'fit for purpose' as it moved forward and would possibly be extended to accommodate a third college as merger discussions with RuTC continued.

- To further develop governance training opportunities (internal and external) for all levels of governor expertise and to meet the challenges of a changing external environment; Governors to be kept appraised on all relevant legislative changes.

Governors felt that this objective had been partially met; external training opportunities had been made available and the internal training – especially as provided at the two Governors Training and Strategy Days – had been very useful. However, it was agreed that with an ever-changing external environment this was something that could never be deemed to be fully completed.

As a result of the Self-assessment and discussion at the Governors' Training Day the Clerk presented the following three priorities for the further development of governance at HCUC during 2020/21:

- **To ensure that all member of the Governance team were 'Ofsted-ready' in order to support an Outstanding grade for Leadership & Management in a future Ofsted inspection of HCUC under the new Education Inspection Framework. (A full Ofsted Inspection was likely in 2020/21.)**
  - To ensure Governors have access to updated/ live performance data and ongoing briefing on curriculum areas of strength or underperformance during 2020/21.
  - To further develop governance training opportunities (internal and external) for all levels of governor expertise and to meet the challenges of a changing external environment; Governors to be kept appraised on all relevant legislative changes.
- **To work with SLT and take forward merger explorations with RuTC focussed through the Joint Steering Group but with input from all Governors during the due diligence process.**
- **To work with the College HR Director and CEO to ensure that the Senior Postholder (SPH) vacancy within the Executive Management Team was filled in a timely and efficient manner to meet good practice guidelines and the College instruments and articles.**

The meeting commended this comprehensive governance self-assessment process. Governors were reminded about the importance of realistic self-scrutiny by governors and senior leaders.

**The HCUC Governance Development Objectives 2020/21 as presented (in italics above) were APPROVED as presented.**

- **Governance Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

The Clerk presented draft KPIS for the Corporation to use within the 2020/21 self-assessment process.

**The Governance KPIs as presented were APPROVED.**

- **Feedback from October 2020 Training and Planning Day**

The Clerk provided a summary of the main items covered at the T&P Day in October 2020 and Governors feedback on their usefulness and relevance; responses were largely positive. A note of the discussions and actions was noted. Governors agreed that the training day had worked very well considering the impact of Covid-19 which meant that half of the attendees were in the room and half joined the training day via Zoom.

**NOTED**

- **College of the Future Report, October 2020**

The meeting noted the 'UK Wide report from the Independent Commission on the College of the Future' which was published in October 2020. The Clerk reminded the meeting that the recommendations within this report were expected to be reflected in the White Paper from DfE which was expected early in 2021.

**The report was NOTED**

## 8a. Modern Slavery Statement

The meeting considered the HCUC Modern Slavery Statement covering the period 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021 which was presented for annual approval. This document would be signed by the Chair of the

# MINUTES

Corporation and placed on the College website to meet regulatory requirements. SW also presented a 'Modern Slavery in the Supply Chain' supplier questionnaire that would be used by Tenet who provided procurement consultancy for HCUC.

***The Modern Slavery Statement and Supplier Questionnaire was APPROVED as presented.***

## 9. Self-Assessment Reports (SAR) 2019/20 and HCUC Overview

The meeting considered an overview Self-Assessment commentary 2019/20 that related to HCUC; this had been drawn from the individual Harrow College (HC) and Uxbridge College (UC) SARs and performance data. The SAR overview report for HCUC had been drafted to mirror the format of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and reported on the following: Quality of Education (curriculum intent, implementation and impact); Behaviour and Attitudes; Personal Development; Leadership and Management; Education programmes for young people; Adult learning programmes; Apprenticeships and High Needs Provision. The meeting also considered the SAR appendices, which provided more detail on the characteristics of each of the two constituent colleges in terms of learners, curriculum offer, outcomes, progression and destination data. The meeting noted the assessed SAR grades for overall effectiveness 2019/20 across HCUC compared with the comparable judgement for 2018/19.

Proposed SAR Grades - HCUC	2018/19 Judgment	2019/20 Judgement
Overall effectiveness	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>	Outstanding <i>with noted AFIs</i>
Quality of Education	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>	Outstanding <i>with noted AFIs</i>
• Curriculum intent	Outstanding	Outstanding
• Curriculum implementation	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>
• Curriculum impact	Outstanding	Outstanding
Education Programmes for young people	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>	Outstanding <i>with noted AFIs</i>
Adult Learning Programmes	Good	Outstanding <i>with noted AFIs</i>
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement <i>with good features</i>	Requires improvement <i>with good features</i>
Provision for High Needs	Good	Good <i>with Good features</i>
Behaviour and Attitudes	Good	Good <i>with Outstanding features</i>
Personal Development	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>	Outstanding
Leadership and Management	Good <i>with outstanding features</i>	Outstanding

The meeting was reminded that the SAR judgements had been built up through the College; each curriculum area self-assessed then validation panels were held to validate the judgement. Governors sought clarification on what external verification would be undertaken on this SAR and DM agreed that he would get an external validation - from peer review (colleagues from another college) or from an ex-HMI - before it was uploaded to the Ofsted portal. Governors commended the very strong results and asked SLT to consider further how staff were kept motivated now that HCUC was recording the best outcomes in London. Governors were reminded of the ongoing staff communications which remained very strong throughout lockdown – the All Staff zoom calls were congratulatory and aspirational. Governors agreed that the very detailed data gave assurance that there was 'clear-blue-water' between HCUC and other providers.

# MINUTES

## • **Emerging Strengths & Areas for Improvement (Afls) 2020/21**

The common strengths (i.e. a strength in each of the colleges) for HCUC to maintain were noted as:

### Curriculum Intent:

- HCUC curriculum well designed; takes into account employer & London's economic needs.
- The curriculum ensures that all learners benefit from high academic & vocational ambitions.

### Curriculum Implementation:

- High and improving standards in the majority of TLA across the majority of Schools.
- Highly qualified staff with expert knowledge in their fields.

### Curriculum Impact:

- QAR consistency between Subject Areas and Qualification Types is very good and improved over four years- particularly for 16-18s.
- 92% of enrolments 16-18s and 19+ Qualification Types have a QAR above National Average (NA).

### Behaviour & Attitudes:

- Learner's professional behaviour is observed as good across a range of different classes/workshops.
- Students behaviour is highly respectful, they are courteous to staff and one-another.

### Personal Development:

- Highly inclusive college environment.
- Good focus on student well-being, mental health and whether 'at-risk.'

The common areas identified across HCUC for improvement in 2020/21 were highlighted as:

### Impact

- 92% enrolments 16-18 & 19+ SSAs QAR>NA
- Consistency in Study Programme attendance
- WBL > timely & overall achievement across HCUC
- Ensure WBL are supported by robust employer/ learner IAG to support a positive experience and strong outcomes

### Implementation

- Test and respond to students' awareness of the intent of their learning
- Increase the volume of work experience >80% (incl. Significant Industry Placements under CDF3)
- Further enrich breadth of EIF TLA judgements to increase high performing (incl. micro tracking of 3Is and remote learning).
- Effectively track + support students with Covid-19 knowledge gaps (incl. through monitoring systems e.g. ProMonitor, catch-up strategies and formative feedback).

### Intent

- Curriculum planning: further enrich and review curriculum intent to evidence value of each course.

The meeting commended the detailed information provided in the SAR 2019/20, which enabled them to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the two colleges and provided a clear picture across HCUC. Governors agreed that they would concur with this anecdotal evidence and positive judgement. The meeting commended the increased consistency across the whole of HCUC in the judgements.

***The HCUC Self-Assessment Report 2019/20 was NOTED and APPROVED; it would be uploaded to the ESFA Gateway and to the Ofsted online portal.***

## **Higher Education (HE) SAR & Office for Students (OfS) update**

The meeting was reminded that the individual College's Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees (SSCs) had reviewed HE outcomes for 2019/20 and a full combined HE report had been presented to the Quality and Curriculum and Student (QCS) Committee on 19 November 2020. The very detailed HE SAR was taken as read along with the numerous appendices giving data by course level and protected characteristics as well as continuation rates and destinations.

# MINUTES

The meeting noted the following summary:

HCUC HNC/ HND outcomes 2019/20 overall retention was 88%, and 97% achievement (TBC). Within this Harrow College was 100% for retention and achievement and UC 87% retention and 97% achievement. Uxbridge College Teacher Training retention was at 98% and achievement was 100%.

The HE SAR (in relation to Condition B of the College's registration with the OfS) had been completed with robust actions identified to address areas for improvement (including student continuation rates – Condition B3 – for which the College received an enhanced monitoring notice from the OfS). The HE SAR had been reviewed in detail at the QCS Committee in November 2020. The summary strengths and AFIs for 2020/21 were noted as follows:

## HE Strengths

- High quality learning experience and reliable assessment leading to high levels of achievement
- Robust quality assurance processes and effective management of academic standards by curriculum teams
- Strong partnerships with HEIs to support Teacher Training and Pearson to support Higher National provision
- Well qualified staff many of whom have industry experience to enhance teaching and learning which leads to very good outcomes including for students with disabilities.
- Rigorous assessment feedback enabling students to improve the standard of their work
- Excellent progression to university and employment for those completing their programmes

## HE Areas for Improvement

- Improved support for Black African students to address some low continuation rates
- Further development of some resources to support teaching and learning including IT and Learning Resource Centre.

DM thanked governor MRW for her ongoing input to the monitoring of HE at HCUC; her knowledge of the university sector and new OfS requirements was proving extremely useful for the College. The CEO (DDS) highlighted a paper to be considered later in the meeting in relation to the Governance Scrutiny of compliance with the OfS requirements of registration during 2019/20.

***The HE Update Report and self-assessment 2019/20 was NOTED and RECEIVED.***

## **10. Audit of Financial Statements 2019/20**

***To receive, consider and approve the Report & Financial Statements of HCUC for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 as recommended by the Resources Committee***

The Group Director Finance and Resource Planning (GDFRP), presented the results for HCUC for the year-end 31 July 2020. It was noted that the Financial Statements and the associated audit reports had been considered in detail by the Resources Committee and the Audit Committee on 25 November 2020. The meeting was given assurance that the Resources Committee was recommending the Financial Statements 2019/20 to the Corporation.

## Financial Statements

The GDFRP (SW) introduced the draft reports and financial statements for the period ended 31 July 2020 and highlighted that the Resources Committee had considered the Report and Financial Statements at their meeting on 25 November and were recommending them to the HCUC Corporation for approval.

The following key points were highlighted:

The operating surplus for the year was £3,434,000 (compared with £1,006,000 in 2018/19).

Once the impact of the £16.9m actuarial FRS17 pension loss was applied this resulted in a 'Total Comprehensive Loss' of £13.481m.

The balance on the income and expenditure account (excluding pension reserve) now stood at £77.162m (compared with a figure of £71.777m in 2018/19).

Total income for the year was at £52.977m compared with £50.103m in the prior year.

# MINUTES

Total expenditure was at £49.543m compared with £49.097m in the prior year. The increase of £446,000 equated to a figure of less than 1% and the meeting noted that within this figure £33,000 had been spent on exceptional staff restructuring costs post-merger. Other operating expenses had been kept flat at circa £10.2m in the current and prior year.

The College had accumulated reserves of £41.15m, non-current assets of £105.388m and cash balances of £19.360m.

The LGPS pension liability was noted as £40.661m compared with £21.773m last year. Governors were reminded that the pension liability (FRS17) was not included by the ESFA when assessing the financial health of colleges as it was a factor outside Colleges control. The reason for this large movement was a change in the actuarial assumptions especially in the discount rate used which had been adversely affected by changes in bond yields due to Covid-19. The LGPS triennial revaluation had used a rebased discount rate of 1.4% (rather than the previous rate of 2.1%). The transitional provisions brought in because of the McCloud judgement had also been a factor in the increase although this had less of an impact (circa £500,000). The external auditors had confirmed that the assumptions used by the College actuaries were largely in line with those used at other Colleges. The meeting discussed the impact of the actuarial pension loss in year on the Statement of Comprehensive Income (SOI); the £3.4 million surplus was changed to a £13.4 million deficit. However, Governors were assured that within the sector there was a general awareness that the £16.9m pension loss was accounting adjustment; the key figure was the operating surplus. The GDFRP assured the meeting that he had accounted for the additional £1.5m cash element of the pension scheme into the budget 2020/21 and the mid-year review. The pensions factor – cash impact and long-term liability - would be included during the due diligence work with Richmond Upon Thames College.

The meeting considered the Income and Expenditure account and Balance Sheet. The meeting noted that in 2019/20 the College delivered activity that produced £44.850m in Agency main allocation funding (compared with £41.522m in 2018/19). The total Agency funding was at 82.7% of income in 2019/20 (81.4% in prior year). The meeting noted the detail of the fixed asset additions during the year, which amounted to £16.558m (compared with £6,833m in 2018/19). The meeting noted the strong financial performance indicators for the 2019/20 year which included a strong cash position even after the cash outflow of £0.6m as well as the following:

- Cash days in hand were 131.8 against a target of 119.1 at year-end 2019/20.
- Current ratio (assets over liabilities) of 2.23 against a target of 1.74 (2.12 in 2018/19).
- EBITDA (education specific) - earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation - at 13.18% which was a marginal increase on the prior year figure of 13.0%. The sector average was noted as 5-6%.
- Accumulated reserves were 144% of income against a target of 137%.

The meeting sought confirmation that the very high EBITDA was sustainable; SW confirmed that it was likely to move within the range 10-13% but this was considerably higher than the sector average of 5-6%.

SW highlighted the impact of Covid-19 on the financial results with the following income streams adversely affected by; other income £55,000; commercial activity £92,000; Work Based Learning provision £329,000. There had also been additional costs incurred of £89,000 in relation to PPE sourced. This was counter-balanced by a saving of £212,000 for the HMRC Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (to cover furlough payments for staff).

The meeting also considered and noted the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control and the assessment of the College as a 'going concern'. SW confirmed that the other senior members of the SLT at HCUC had contributed to the narrative of the Members Report on HCUC Strategy, curriculum and the summary of capital works undertaken across the campuses. The meeting commended the strong financial results and agreed that the College was able to meet current and future economic challenges from a position of relative strength when compared with many other FE Colleges. SW confirmed that HCUC was a strong cash generating organisation with an EBITDA ratio more than double the sector average. It was agreed that the College's key strategic aim in relation to finances 'To maintain the strong financial profile needed to ensure a secure future', had been fully achieved.

# MINUTES

## July 2020 Management Accounts

The restated Management Accounts for 31 July 2020 and the adjustments arising post-year end from the preparation and audit of the Financial Statements were noted by the meeting. Adjustments totaling £268,000 were made against the income and expenditure. As previously noted by the meeting the revised historical surplus was £3,434,000 against a forecast surplus of £2,607,000. The accounts were taken as read as they agreed with the Financial Statements.

**The 2019/20 Financial Statements and July 2020 Management Accounts were NOTED and RECEIVED, (they were recommended to the HCUC Corporation for approval by the Resources Committee).**

## Audit Findings Report of the External Auditors, Cooper Parry, following their audit of the HCUC Financial Statements for 2019/20, for APPROVAL & recommendation to Corporation.

The meeting noted the Audit Findings Report to the Governors from External Auditors Cooper Parry, which acknowledged the strong financial outturn and cash position for HCUC. The meeting was pleased to note the clean unqualified opinion on the financial statements and for the regularity audit. SW informed the meeting that the audit had gone very smoothly and Cooper Parry had been happy with the flow of information from management; this had been even more complicated during the current year when the audit had taken place completely remotely. The remote audit had been undertaken via real-time screen shares as well as Teams meetings online; it had been a very robust process.

The meeting was pleased to note that the audit conclusion on all qualitative aspects considered was clean; SA also highlighted the unmodified regularity audit opinion. The meeting noted the significant audit risks that had been identified by Cooper Parry and detailed in their audit planning letter. The key risks were noted as follows: income recognition; going concern; management override of control; related party transactions; and retirement benefits. Governors noted that Cooper Parry's conclusion against all five of these risks was clean and that there were no issues identified which needed to be reported to the Audit Committee. Governors also noted the positive assurances given by Cooper Parry around the risks of fraud and independence and related party transactions. SW highlighted the table on page 3 of the report which clearly presented an 'uncluttered' summary of the year-end outcome with an actual operating surplus of £5.4m before the in-year pension costs of £1.9m had been applied. Funds carried forward on the I&E were showing as £77million which all agreed was a strong outcome.

Governors noted the four low risk weaknesses of controls identified during the audit which had resulted in recommendations for improvement. These four risks were in relation to: Year End Stock Takes; Fixed Asset Register; Payroll and Salary Review Letters. All four recommendations were accepted by College management and would be actioned as soon as possible; SW confirmed that Cooper Parry were fully satisfied with the management response and planned actions. The Audit Committee Chair (NK) highlighted that the low number and low risk score of the recommendations highlighted an ongoing positive control environment at HCUC.

**The Audit Report and Management Letter of the External Auditors, Cooper Parry, for HCUC 2019/20 was APPROVED (on the recommendation of the Audit Committee).**

## iv) Letter of Representation

The meeting considered and approved the draft Letter of Representation; this had a standard format for all FE Colleges, which was required by the Joint Audit Code of Practice. Governors were assured that this did not include any non-standard narrative specific to HCUC.

**The Letter of Representation for HCUC was APPROVED and would be signed by the Corporation Chair and the Group Principal/ CEO as Chief Accounting Officer of HCUC.**

## **To receive the Audit Committee Annual Report to the Corporation 2019/20**

The Chair of Audit Committee presented the Annual Report from the HCUC Audit Committee for 2019/20. This detailed the membership and the activities of the Audit Committee during the academic year. It was noted that this report would be submitted to the ESFA to accompany the Financial Statements 2019/20.

**The Audit Committee Annual Report was RECEIVED.**

# MINUTES

## 11. Learner Involvement Strategy 2020/21

The meeting noted the annual update of the HCUC Learner Involvement Strategy. This strategy used both College led approaches and learner led approaches to seek the views on issues and develop systems and structures to empower learners to raise issues and promote discussion. Implementation of this strategy was the responsibility of the Director – SEND, Safeguarding & Prevent (UC), and the Head of Learner Services – Experience & Employment (HC) along with the Student Governor Representatives. The meeting sought assurance that the College had continued to deliver all the commitments within this Learner Involvement Strategy during the Covid-19 restriction. GH informed the meeting that all planned activity had gone ahead even if delivered remotely e.g. the student rep conference. Governors also sought confirmation that the additional Higher Education Students within the Institute of Technology (IoT) were adequately represented within this strategy. GH confirmed that HE students attended the Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committee meetings. In addition, there was a communication process from the college HE Committee through Academic Board to the Corporation's Quality Curriculum and Student Committee.

***The Learner Involvement Strategy 2020/21 was APPROVED as presented.***

## 12. Update on proposed merger with Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC)

The meeting noted an update on progress with the merger discussions with RuTC following the success of HCUC as the preferred merger partner through the RuTC Structure and Prospects Appraisal (SPA) process. The meeting considered and approved the Terms of Reference of the Joint Steering Group (JSG) as presented; it was noted that this group would meet at least once a month to work with project managers and drive forward merger activity in advance of the proposed merger date of 1 August 2021. The meeting also noted and received the document which outlined the agreed Principles of Merger and the minutes from the first JSG meeting which was held on 30 November 2020.

**The Terms of Reference for the JSG was APPROVED as presented.**

**The meeting NOTED and RECEIVED the Principles of Merger document and the minutes from the JSG meeting on 30 November 2020.**

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### 13. Statutory Updates: Annual Equality and Diversity Report

The meeting noted the annual Equality and Diversity (E&D) Report covering students across Harrow College and Uxbridge College during 2019/20. The annual quality assurance audit for equality and diversity would be completed and would review College practices for equality and diversity provision, including the effectiveness of College policies and procedures, response to new legislation, successful resolution of any complaints/grievances in relation to equality and diversity, the effectiveness of staff training, provision of support and services for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and health and safety aspects of equality and diversity. The detailed data for each of the Colleges were taken as read and the meeting considered the composite data for HCUC. Any strengths, weakness or areas of concern at individual college level were discussed by the meeting.

#### Learners

***HCUC Student Population:*** In terms of ethnicity the College was attracting similar percentages of the different ethnic groups as the previous year. The largest ethnic groups were noted as the following: Asian or Asian British: Indian – 17.4%; English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British – 16.1%; Black or Black British; African – 10.6%; Any Other White – 11.5%; Asian or Asian British: any other – 9.2%; Asian or Asian British: Pakistani -7.1%; Other – 6.8%.

***Gender:*** The gender breakdown by percentage for full time learners was broadly the same as during the prior year with 41% female and 59% male (prior year figure was 40.5% and 59.5%).

***Student Success rates for 2019/20:*** Student success rates for 2019/20 were higher than in the prior year and they remain high across most ethnic groups. All groups at HCUC level were above the QAR national average and all groups were within 5% of the college average (which was the target the College set itself).

# MINUTES

However, HC Black Caribbean (247 leavers) and UC Chinese (12 leavers) were more than 5% below the college average so would be a focus for the Equality and Diversity Action Plan in 2020/21.

Success by gender: The female/ male gap had decreased from 3.26% to 1.6% since the prior year; female QAR 2019/20 was 91% and male was 89.4%.

Socio-economic disadvantage: Learners living in postcodes identified as areas of socio-economic disadvantage performed 0.18% lower than those without a socio-economic disadvantage; this was an improvement on the prior year figure of 1.04%.

Free School Meals learners: Students receiving free school meals had a success rate 3.25% below students that did not; 87.19% versus 90.44%. This was an increase on the prior year gap of 1.49%.

Looked after children: The achievements of Looked After Children (LAC) had shown that these learners performed 5.0% lower than other learners (at 85.5%) and this would be a focus on the E&D Action Plan 2020/21. Detailed destination data for LAC was noted and the meeting was pleased to note that 99% had a positive destination recorded in 2019/20.

High needs learners: The meeting was reminded that in 2019/20 HCUC had seen an increase in the number of High Needs Learners as had been seen in the previous 3 years. As in the prior year the College supported the majority (80%) of these learners on mainstream courses. High Needs Students' success rates had decreased slightly compared with the prior year figure of 87.49% to 87.17% in 2019/20; the achievement gap had opened slightly from 1.98% to 3.17%. Further analysis showed that the area requiring improvement was basic skills English & maths; this would remain a continued area for improvement for 2020/21. Destination data for High Needs Learners was positive at 99% and the majority (72.9%) had progressed on to new full-time FE courses, many at HCUC.

Learners that declare a learning difficulty: The success rates of those learners that declared a learning difficulty were 2.57% below those that did not have a learning difficulty; this gap had decreased from 4.39% in the prior year.

Student Disciplinaries:

Uxbridge: There had been a smaller number of disciplinary hearings which reflected the pandemic closure: 102 in total. It was noted that 99 of these were Stage 3 and 4 compared to 170 in the prior year. The meeting noted the number of disciplinaries by ethnicity and the percentage figure compared with the percentage of the College population for 2019/20. A disproportionate number of disciplinaries involving Black African, Black Caribbean and Arab students was found in 2019/20 (this had also been the case in the prior year). The meeting was assured that the College's E&D action plan continued to identify and support 'behaviourally at risk' Black African, Black Caribbean and Arab students.

Harrow: There had been 56 Stage 3 Warnings (compared with 100 in the prior year). The figures showed similar disproportionate numbers of Black Caribbean, African, and Any other students. As with UC, this would be included on the HCUC E&D Action Plan.

The meeting highlighted the differences in the reporting of ethnicity categories of learners between Harrow and Uxbridge Colleges; **GH confirmed that this was easy to rectify and reflected the set-up of the ProMonitor systems at each College.**

*[The HR Director (IA) joined the meeting to present this section of the E&D report.]*

## Staff

Staff from BAME backgrounds: The BAME representation at HCUC was 36.0% which met the HCUC target of 36%. This figure was also in line with the 36% GLA figure for BAME who were economically active in the London population. Harrow College was well above the BAME target at 39.0% but Uxbridge College was marginally below at 35.0%.

Staff Gender: The breakdown of female/ male staff at HCUC was: UC 74%/ 26% and HC 75%/ 25%. Overall, the figure for HCUC was 72% female representation which was above the 46% GLA figure for females who were economically active in the London population. The percentage of staff in managerial positions at HCUC who were female was at 57.3%.

Staff Disability: The number of staff disclosing a disability was: UC 8% (v 6.01% prior year) and HC 6% (v 4.21% prior year). Overall, the HCUC representation of staff with a declared disability was 8% which was above the FE College average of 4.0%. The meeting noted that this figure had risen during the last year as staff had declared health concerns during the Covid-19 pandemic. The FE sector average was also pre-

# MINUTES

Covid so was to some extent out of date. The meeting noted that the higher HCUC figure at 8.0% was below 12% which was the GLA figure for disabled persons who were economically active in the London population.

Staff Age: The age profile of staff at HCUC was very similar to the prior year and was now 40% under 44 and 60% over 44.

Staff Recruitment: The data from each college was noted for 2019/20.

Harrow: there were 513 applicants from a total of 70 recruitment campaigns and 51 candidates were offered roles. Of the applicants 60% were BAME and 43% were to candidates from BAME groups. The gender split of offers was 61% female and 63% of those offered were in the 'over 41' age group. There were 14 internal promotions at HC during this period and of these 10 were from BAME groups (71%).

Uxbridge: There were 1,396 applicants from a total of 123 recruitment campaigns and 102 candidates were offered roles. Of the 102 offered, 47% were from BAME groups, 64% were female and 57% of those appointed were in the 'over 41' age group. There were 18 promotions and of these, 6 were from BAME groups (33%).

Training: 45 staff were trained in 2019/20 on Equality and Diversity during the Whole College Training Days, making a total of 783 staff having received E&D Training over the past seven years. Staff appraisals continued to be used to give staff the opportunity to explain how they have contributed to E&D across the protected characteristics. The meeting was reminded that E&D training was mandatory at the College for all new staff and new Governors; this was provided to all new College staff and every 3 years via online training. Feedback from new staff attending E&D training in 2019/20 had been positive.

## Policies and procedures

The meeting was pleased to note that the relative effectiveness of the E&D Action Plan was indicated by the fact that no actions were at red status ('no significant progress') by the end of the year. All actions achieved green status ('achieved', or 'progress as expected').

The meeting was assured that the College was mindful of the legislation in relation to E&D and complied fully with the Public Sector Duties contained in the Equality Act. Governors were reminded that the College published an E&D Report on the College website on an annual basis. The meeting was also reminded about the current College objectives in relation to E&D which were required to be reviewed every four years. These objectives were in relation to: student success for groups with protected characteristics to be within 5% of the College average; and, BAME staff employed within the College to be at 36% as highlighted earlier.

## Complaints

The meeting was reminded that complaints were also monitored through the E&D action plan and no significant anomalies had been found in relation to protected characteristics during 2019/20.

At Uxbridge College 19 complaints were received (compared to 20 in the prior year) of which 4 directly related to E&D; 2 relevant to Race and 2 to Disability. Of these 3 of these were not upheld and 1 was upheld.

For Harrow College 12 complaints were received (compared to 5 in the prior year) of which 5 directly related to E & D. Three of the complaints were not upheld, 1 was partly upheld and was not yet concluded.

The meeting was reminded that the complaints report was also monitored through the QCS Committee and at each of the individual college Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees (SSCs).

## Student Involvement in E&D Activities

The meeting highlighted that the Student Executives helped organise a range of activities to celebrate diversity including Black History Month tutorials, and cultural celebration events. Other international days were also celebrated. The College's Gender Identity Policy was used to support transgender students. An LGBT student group was active in 2019/20 and this helped to promote awareness and tolerance.

The College takes bullying extremely seriously. The College records bullying cases and takes appropriate actions including disciplinary hearings. The College promoted anti-bullying tutorials and events. During the year lecturers delivered internet safety e-tutorials and learners had access to a 'report abuse' button on its intranet pages. Effective 1-1 support for students experiencing bullying was provided by the Student support teams.

# MINUTES

## Response to legislation

Governors were assured that HCUC was mindful of the nine protected characteristics - age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; gender; and sexual orientation – as defined in the Equality Act 2010. In addition, the College was always mindful of socio-economic disadvantage as a particularly important area in education. Governors were reminded that as part of the legislation the College must set and review objectives for E & D every four years. The College's current E&D objectives in relation to student success and staff recruitment were noted by the meeting.

The meeting agreed that the annual E&D Report demonstrated that 2019/20 had been a successful year for Equality and Diversity in the College. There had been a general high level of success rates for different ethnic groups and a maintained narrowing of gaps in achievement for those with protected characteristics. However, there were some actions required for those groups of students with protected characteristics that were not performing to the high standards the College sets itself, and these would be addressed in the implementation of the E&D Action Plan for 20/21. The meeting commended the very thorough report and noted that QCS Committee would be monitoring actions against the E&D Action Plan through the year. The meeting was reminded that this E&D Annual Report was published on the College website on an annual basis with a comprehensive narrative summary to meet legislative requirements.

***The Annual Equality & Diversity report 2019/20 for HCUC was RECEIVED.***

## 14. Notification of any fraud 2019/20

The meeting noted the two incidents of Fraud that had occurred during the 2020/21 academic year to date: the cyber incident that had taken place on 13 August 2020; and a one-off 'phishing impersonation email' which took place on 23 October 2020 when the Director of HR (IA) had his email address compromised. A phishing email had been sent from IA's email to 1500 recipients but this was spotted and mitigation taken. Audit Committee Members were reminded that the August incident had been discussed in detail during the September 2020 Corporation meeting; an update is minuted at Part 2. The meeting was assured that there had been no impact from the second incident which was spotted very quickly by College IT staff. The meeting noted that two-factor authentication had now been put in place on staff email accounts to heighten security. The IT Team were also planning a 'penetration test' to ensure that recent changes had increased security.

***The report was NOTED***

## ITEMS TO BE TAKEN AS READ (with questions from Governors)

### 15. Partnerships Report

The Principal Harrow (PC) presented this report which gave the meeting an update on employer engagement and partnership activities for HCUC for the autumn term 2020. Governors commended the wide range of activities and partnership development work across HCUC. The detailed report was taken as read but Governors noted the key points as follow:

#### Apprenticeship Recruitment:

The vast majority >80% of the profile for non-levy and levy was planned for delivery between August and November. However, 171 actuals vs 163 compared with same period last year.

Non-levy	Levy	Filled Vacancies	Pipeline	Vacancies	Filled Vacancies	Pipeline	Vacancies
296	162	110	20	20	61	0	16

#### Employability Funding Actuals v Profile YTD:

2020/21	£46,500 achieved YTD	Full year target	£263,000
(2019/20)	£137,000 was achieved by 30/11/19	Full year target	£263,000)

# MINUTES

The College was now looking at offering sector based work academy model rather than just training as Job Centre Plus were favouring training providers who had direct link with employers. Also started on-line level 2 courses through the Skills Network's Equal platform. These are offered as roll-on roll-off.

## Successful formal tenders:

HCUC was now an approved supplier with Slough and Harrow, Hillingdon Councils for various apprenticeships, but predominantly for Teaching Assistant and Business Admin, Management.

- Traineeships planned for Jan 2021 with Brunel University in Business Administration.
- Working with Harrow Council and London Progression Collaboration with Levy Transfer.

## West London IoT:

Recruitment was below HCUC budgeted target for levels 4 and 5 (220 vs 282) DfE target was 365. No new higher apprenticeships were yet in place.

**The Partnerships Report was NOTED and RECEIVED.**

## 16. Projects Report

The meeting noted that a detailed report on the development of T Levels and associated projects had been presented to both SSCs and to QCS Committee. The Corporation noted a summary which outlined the key activity as follows:

- T Levels: Uxbridge College had started delivering the first Digital T Level (11 enrolments) and the Early Years Education T Level (13 enrolments) in September 2020. Staff teams had reported that learners were challenged by the T Levels content and were ensuring that delivery was being adjusted to support learners, particularly in relation to preparation for external assessments in the summer. Preparation was underway for additional T Level delivery in 2021/22, supported by Early Adopted funding. The teams involved in developing the T Levels at Harrow College had now been established. The T Levels Implementation Plan and Statistical Annex had been submitted to the DfE to meet the deadline. The Statistical Annex provided indicative numbers for all HCUC T Levels routes up to 2023/24. HCUC had expressed an interest in delivering the Hairdressing T Level (UC) and Beauty T Level (HC) from September 2023. The meeting was pleased to note that 2 T Levels Managers, one for each College, had been recruited to support the development of this work through the Capacity Development Fund (CDF).
- Capacity Development Funding (CDF2): HCUC had submitted a return to the DfE to demonstrate how CDF2 had been used to achieve targets in 2019/20 – including during lockdown. A budget for a £187,000 underspend had been included in financial forecasts. HCUC had been awarded Capacity Development Funding for round three (CDF3) for 2020/21; it has been confirmed that HCUC would receive £500,000 funding for CDF3 in 2020/21 which would have to be spent in-year. The meeting was reminded that HCUC's target for Substantial Industry Placements (SIPs) was for 25% of the eligible cohort (499 students) to complete a SIP during 2020/21. The meeting was reminded of the ongoing challenges in securing SIPs during pandemic lockdown and remote working however there was still no provision for remote SIPs (even though many employers state this is how they are currently working.) HCUC was employing 5 Industry Placement Development Officers to support Schools achieve their SIPs targets; 2 of these have been targeted at securing placements for both Digital and the Science T Levels
- Transition Programme: The meeting was reminded that in June 2019 the College agreed to participate in the development of the Level 2 Transition Programme; £20,000 funding had been received to support this activity. Three Transition Programme groups (1 x Early Years and 2 Digital) had been recruited across HCUC. Programmes include some T Levels specific technical content, English and maths, industry placement and a particular focus on developing the employment related behaviours and attitudes required by the T Levels. Curriculum areas were being supported by the T Levels Development Managers to ensure the Transition Programmes provided the best opportunity for learners to progress to the respective T Level in 2021/22.

Governors commended the considerable partnership work that was being undertaken across a number of different projects and curriculum areas; there was clearly a great deal of valuable work going on to put HCUC

# MINUTES

at the forefront of new initiatives. The meeting discussed the ongoing issue with the lack of work placements for T levels and the DfE ongoing insistence that virtual/ remote work placements would not qualify (even this was currently the normal way of working within the digital industry). Governors suggested that Ofsted should be lobbied to raise this issue with the DfE.

## **NOTED**

### **17. Finance and Funding Update**

#### **17.1 Covid-19 Pay Award**

The meeting was reminded that the approved HCUC budget for 2020/21 included a provision of a 2.4% cost of living pay award in line with a pre-Covid AOC pay award recommendation. SW highlighted that since the start of the academic year, a 1% cost of living had been applied to all HCUC staff except those on protected salaries. It had been agreed by Governors that a further release of this provision would be considered if conditions were favourable and was dependant 16-18 enrolment, Covid-19 impact on Apprenticeships and Commercial activity, and the performance of the IoT programmes. In light of Covid the AOC had recommended that Colleges should entertain a 1% pay award or £250 whichever was the greater. This recommendation was based on tough and challenging circumstances caused by the pandemic. The chancellor had also announced that a pay freeze had been imposed on public sector workers during the 2021/22 financial year. In light of this the SLT were recommending that any decision in relation to an additional 1% award to staff should be revisited after the mid-year forecast and plan year had been reworked. SW confirmed that each 1% pay increase would cost HCUC circa £300,000 including on-costs.

However, SLT were making a further recommendation for a one-off Covid-19 Pay Award in light of the strong financial performance and staff commitment that delivered high learner performance outcomes during the pandemic. The meeting considered a recommendation that a one off £250 pay award be paid in December 2020. The one-off payment would be awarded pro rata:

- More than 1 year service £250
- 1 year service £125
- Less than 1 year service £ 0

SW confirmed that this one-off pay award would cost circa £150,000. Governors noted that in addition to the above proposal, a day had been added to the Christmas closure days which would allow staff an extra day of leave in this academic year. This would also recognise staff's contribution during a difficult year. The meeting had a lengthy debate about the rationale and mechanism of this payment to ensure that it was fair.

#### **The meeting:**

- i) APPROVED the one-off Covid-19 recognition payment up to £250 per person as outlined above.**
- ii) AGREED that any decision in relation to an additional 1% award to staff during 2020/21 should be revisited after the mid-year forecast and plan year had been reworked.**

#### **17.2 HCUC Management Accounts for the quarter ending 31 October 2020.**

The GDFRP presented the composite HCUC management accounts to 31 October 2020. These showed an historical cost surplus for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 of £3,272,000 compared to a budgeted surplus of £2,098,000 giving a favourable variance of £1,174,000. The significant variances were highlighted as follows:

- Education Income of £13,614,000 compared to budget of £13,804,000, (adverse variance of £190,000). Within this major variances were noted as: a positive variance of £50,000 in agency Other Funding against a budget of £764,000 due to increased 16-18 Bursary income (this was balanced by increased expenditure against this line); £23,000 adverse variance for Tuition Fees Home; a large adverse variance of £300,000 in HEFCE Funding (Fees) due to enrolment numbers being below target in Engineering ME, Engineering TI and Computing; and a positive variance of £50,000 against the £3,000 budget for Other Funding which was in relation to the HMRC Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant for furloughed staff.
- Employer Services income of £1,116,000 an adverse variance of £56,000. The meeting discussed

# MINUTES

the various short-courses and the negative impact of the pandemic on short course income in ENGTI and the Business schools. SLT confirmed that the biggest effect of the pandemic was at HE and higher apprenticeship levels whilst core delivery at lower levels of engineering remained strong. However, the negative impact of Covid-19 on Heathrow was affecting many smaller employers in their supply chain. SLT were hopeful that short-course income could be recovered later in the academic year.

- Employee costs of £7,752,000 compared to budget of £9,060,000, (favourable variance of £1,308,000 due to vacant posts within Academic and Support staff). Members were reminded that the budget assumed all posts would be filled for the whole year.
- Expenses: a favourable variance of £248,000 against the budget of £4,226,000. This was noted as mainly being due to timing issues with 19+ Learner Discretionary Support Fund expenditure earlier than anticipated. Depreciation was £128,000 positive variance against the budget of £1,210,000 due to timing of capital expenditure in the prior year – especially IT equipment.
- Balance Sheet remained strong with a cash balance of £26,747,000. This was against a budget of £24,628,000 due to the funding from the ESFA and the GLA being front-loaded as well as higher accruals and Other Creditors. Fixed Assets were £364,000 ahead of forecast due to the timing of capital projects.
- All ratios were healthy: cash days in hand at 170.8 (forecast of 157.2); current ratio at 1.77 (forecast 2.43); and reserves/ income at 141% (forecast 138%).

***The Management Accounts for the first quarter to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 were RECEIVED.***

### **17.3 Update on performance against target for ESFA contract 2020/21**

The meeting noted an update report on performance against the ESFA contract for 2020/21. The meeting noted that the actual learner numbers were 335 below target at 5,717 vs 6,052. Harrow College was 256 learners lower than target (1,560 vs 1,816), Uxbridge College was 79 learners lower than target (4,157 vs 4,236). Even though HCUC was below target there were 176 additional learners compared to the prior year, 5,717 vs 5,541.

The estimate for 16-18 funding for HCUC was £2,030,112 below target (£31,962,650 vs £33,992,762). The meeting was reminded that due to the lagged funding methodology, the decrease in funding would take effect in 2021/22.

The areas of comment at Harrow were noted as:

- 16-18 recruitment against target was at 85.9% and all areas were under target apart from ELD and Med.
- All areas were above target for 19+, except HSC, ELD and Med.

The areas of comment at Uxbridge were:

- 16-18 year-old recruitment against target was at 98.1% and all areas were under target.
- All areas were above target for 19+, except BS and UCA.

### **NOTED**

### **17.4 Capital Update**

The meeting took the Capital Update Report as read, this had been considered in detail at the Resources Committee meeting in November 2020 and there were no decisions currently required. Key current bids and projects were noted as follows:

The Skills for London Capital Fund Stage 2: The meeting was reminded that there had been a partial handover of the Armstrong Building on 22 August 2020 to enable students to use the new entrance. All landscaping, new pedestrian routes, reception, student services and canteen were now completed with only minor works still to be finished.

Institute of Technology: SW confirmed that the fifteenth drawdown had taken place on 7th November 2020; the year-to-date grant funding drawn down was now £8,382,266. The car park was now complete with the exception of the parking management system. The second phase for the new building was now complete and the third phase - a refit of existing accommodation - was also complete. The list of specialist equipment

# MINUTES

required for the IoT for 2020/21 – at a cost of circa £500,000 - had now been ordered after approval by DfE, the furniture and IT equipment had been delivered and the higher spec IT equipment was expected soon.

House at Harrow Weald: The meeting noted that an offer of £505,000 had been accepted for the house at Harrow on the Hill. GDFRP was currently progressing the sale with solicitors. This had been further complicated by the buyer seeking legal approval of conversion to a block of flats. SW confirmed that the historical charge held on the house had now been released.

GLA Small Equipment and Project Application: Governors were reminded of the work undertaken to create a gas workshop in the disused training kitchen next to the new Construction Centre (Newton Building). This would allow the College to meet the requirements of the new gas and plumbing curriculum which would replace the existing plumbing framework and level 3 plumbing qualifications. The major work had been completed during October half-term 2020; there was no ongoing disruption to current students.

ESFA Further Education Capital Allocation (FECA): SW confirmed that HCUC had submitted the FECA return on 15th October expressing interest to spend the full £2.058m (not £1.058m as stated in the report) including the College's contribution of 25%. Details of spend had now been work through and the GDFRP was currently responding to some queries from the FECA Capital Team. The meeting noted that a list of works would be brought to the Resources Committee and Corporation once finalised. SW reminded the meeting that the deadline for completion of this work was 31 March 2021.

GLA Tackling Digital Exclusion: The meeting noted that the College was finalising the eligibility process of learners who qualified to receive IT equipment under this GLA scheme. Orders for laptops had been placed in anticipation of the list being finalised.

**The Property Update Report was RECEIVED.**

## 17.5 Risk Register

The meeting received the HCUC Risk Register that had been updated by the Executive Team, through a review of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 corporate goals, and projects coming on stream throughout the year. The meeting discussed risks with changed risk profile and the key 'red' rated risks in more detail and the mitigating actions that had been put into place:

- 1.08 Insufficiently qualified and equipped staff to support the delivery of study programmes and quality outcomes for learners. (Risk score unchanged at 12 'red').
- 1.09 Failure to recruit sufficient staff, qualified at the appropriate level. (Risk score still at 12 'red').
- 1.13 College SAR and/ or Ofsted rating falls below Outstanding within the new Ofsted EIF. (Risk score remains at 12 'red').
- 3.07 International income fails to meet financial targets due to unforeseen events. (Risk score remains at 10 'amber'). The meeting discussed this item and agreed that this risk would not decrease soon but HCUC were currently planning on maintaining a pipeline for this work for the foreseeable future.
- 3.11 Underachievement of funding targets (Risk score still at 15 'red'). The ongoing impact of Covid-19 on particularly Apprenticeship work was being very carefully monitored.
- 3.12 Failure to secure and respond to large levy paying employers could impact on apprenticeship income. (Risk introduced in June 2020 and still had a risk score at 15 'red'). This risk had become ever more of a threat during Covid-19 lockdown; the college had recognised this and the Business Development Consultants (BDCs) were working hard to stay in touch with employers during Covid-19 business disruption.
- 3.20 WBL non-levy 16-18 and 19+ apprentices target not met. (Risk score still at raised level of 15 'red'). Current WBL delivery against the ESFA allocation was being closely monitored but had been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.11 Compliance with GDPR and other data related regulation (Risk score raised from 12 'red' to 15 'red'). SLT were concerned that despite staff training and advice from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) on best practice, destruction of obsolete data was not always happening as quickly as recommended. The Chair sought clarity on whether the College had the correct policies in place in

# MINUTES

relation to data destruction. SW confirmed that HCUC had put all requisite policies in place during 2018/19 but the issue was non-compliance from staff. AM confirmed that the HCUC Policy clearly identified all types of data – operational and personal – and gave staff time limits for holding the data before destruction. The time limits were based on AoC and JISC recommendations. **The Chair asked the SLT to focus on how they would ensure staff compliance with the policy requirements for data destruction in order that this risk score could be reduced.**

- 5.12 College loses IT capability and/ or data following a cyber-attack. (Risk score remains at 12 'red'). This risk was very real despite IT Services using up to date security software and policies.
- 5.13 Operational impact due to Coronavirus (Covid-19). (This new risk added in March 2020 was still deemed as a risk score of 12 'red'). The meeting was reminded of the measures in place and the adherence to all Public Health England and Government guidelines.

**The HCUC Risk Register was NOTED and RECEIVED.**

**The Finance Directorate Report was RECEIVED.**

## 18. Academic Report

The meeting considered a report from the Deputy Principal (DM) which covered the following: HCUC Year-end QARs including retention and achievement rates 2019/20; provisional review of A, AS and GCSE 2019/20 results; English and maths results; summary attendance and punctuality rates; complaints report; Lesson Observations; Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2019/20 updates for each of the separate colleges; and HE Outcomes. This report was largely taken as read after the time spent considering the SAR at item 7 of the agenda.

Year-End QARs 2019/20: The meeting noted the finalised QAR reports which summarised the confirmed College performance during 2019/20. Governors were pleased to note that headline QARs for both HC and UC indicated that the already high level of learner achievement had been increased [HCUC 16-18 QAR 89.6% compared with 87.5% in prior year (NA 83.4%); 19+ QAR 91.1% (91.7% in prior year) with WNA 89.3%]. The meeting took the detailed report as read but noted that there was good consistency across Qualification Types; consistency was high across Subject Sector Areas (SSAs), a key & Corporate Goals measure, with 11 of 13 SSAs above NA (13/14 in 2018/19) and with 93% 16-18 students in these SSAs (92% 2018/19). Similarly, there was a consistent QAR across qualification types which evidenced a high quality offer: 11/12 were above NA with 99.9% of students in these groups (10/12 & 89% 2018/19). A further 0.33% of learners were on awards and were just 0.07% below NA - once final achievement was captured this would move to be above NA. DM informed Governors that it was too early to comment on the consistency of 19+ QAR due to some data challenges. However, 19+ SSA consistency was significantly improved with 12/15 areas above Weighted National Average (WNA). WBL 19/20 overall QAR for HCUC is 63.6%, however lower than the Provider National Average of 66.7% and All Provider National Average of 64.7% (these NA had not been amended to reflect the impact of the pandemic).

A level and GCSE 2019/20 Results: The meeting was reminded that all A-Level, AS-Level and GCSE grades for 2019/20 were Centre Assessed Grades, with the exception of a relatively very small number of GCSE English and maths exams which were taken in November 2019. Although a very considered statistical modelling approach was taken there had been an increase in the AS and GCSE pass rate, and GCSE high grade rate, which could be seen as grade inflation. A2 results had only really benefitted from an improved retention rate as pass rate for A2s is normally very high (e.g. 98% in 2018/19). The overall HCUC A2 QAR was 98% compared to 94% in 2018/19. The AS QAR was 84% compared to 78% in 18/19; both benefited from an improvement in retention which ran up until the point of lockdown. DM highlighted that Value Added data would give a more complete picture of performance when available.

GCSE at HCUC is dominated by English and maths entries and this provision is commented on below. The QAR and high grade rate for the rest of the GCSE provision have both improved compared to the previous year. The QAR is 95% vs 91% in 2018/19 and high grades (9-4) of starts are 72% vs 64% in 2018/19.

# MINUTES

## English & maths results 2019/20:

**Functional Skills:** some passes are from early sittings in year, but the majority are from Centre Assessed Grades. Functional Skills English QAR has declined from 77% in 18/19 to 73%. QAR for Functional Skills maths has also declined from 82% in 2018/19 to 75%. Although the Functional Skills QAR has benefitted from an improved retention rate 96% for 2019/20 compared to 91% in 2018/19, due to the lockdown, the Functional Skills pass rate has declined from 90% in 2018/19 to 77%. Functional Skills specifications changed in 19/20 and have become more challenging, evidenced by early exam sittings. So, although the majority of the results were from Centre Assessed Grades the decline in pass rate reflected the more challenging courses.

**GCSE English & maths:** the meeting noted the detailed data for Functional Skills and GCSE English and Maths.

GCSE headline QAR (9-1) for English had improved across HCUC from 90% in 2018/19 to 95%, mainly due to the improved lockdown retention rate. High grades (9-4) of starts improved from 28% in 2018/19 to 31%. The GCSE maths headline QAR improved from 91% in 2018/19 to 95%. High grades (9-4) of starts improved from 27% in 2018/19 to 32%. However, indicative data from the AOC suggested that the NAs for GCSE English and maths high grades would be significantly higher than previous years.

**Summary Attendance and Punctuality Rates 2019/20:** Although the College had met the overall target for attendance of 86% at the point of lock-down in March 2020, this would not have held until July 2020 and should be seen as inflated and as below target. Similarly, for the attendance measure including authorised absences at 89%. A number of Schools did match or better target, but the large volume of English & Maths FS & GCSE classes, despite improvement, showed lower than average attendance (77-82%). Lateness remained within the target set (6%) but was noted as an area for ongoing attention.

## Complaints Report 2020/21:

**Uxbridge College:** Year-to-date in 2020/21 there had been 9 complaints compared with 10 at the equivalent time last year, of which five were upheld. The meeting noted that 2 of the ongoing complaints were deemed high-risk in relation to Health and Safety.

**Harrow 2018/19:** To date in 2020/21, there have been 8 complaints compared to 8 at the equivalent time last year, of which 3 were upheld.

**Lesson Observations 2019/20:** The meeting noted that the 83% positive lesson observation profile over the year for HCUC (+1% on 2018/19) provided evidence of good or better quality of TLA delivery and is based on a 100% externally validated sample co-observed by EIF inspection-trained observers. The Winter/Spring external; observation activity employing ex-HMIs and using the current Ofsted inspection "full-observation" methodology found some variation and indicated areas for attention in 2020/21- noted below:

1. Planning in schemes of work and lesson plans with associated objectives to focus consistently on learners' acquisition of knowledge skills and understanding
2. Lesson plans to routinely indicate how individual learner needs will be addressed
3. Underdeveloped recapping and consolidation of learning
4. Insufficient attention to spelling grammar and the appropriate development of learners' maths skills

The meeting was reminded that external 2020/21 lesson observations have been paused because of lockdown; this had been in response to concerns expressed at a Staff Focus Group.

**QIP 2019/20:** As discussed earlier in the meeting, (agenda item 9) the main Strengths and Areas for Improvement (Afi) emerging from the self-assessment process had been identified for HC and UC separately and an overview of the HCUC position had also been provided. Governors were assured that the key whole College areas for improvement were being addressed alongside the individual College QIPs.

**The Academic Report was RECEIVED.**

## **19. Higher Education: Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration**

The meeting noted a report which outlined the role of the Governing body in maintaining oversight for the quality of HE provision and ensuring that the College continued to meet the Conditions of registration set

# MINUTES

by the OfS. It was clear that the Accountable Officer (Principal/CEO) and Chair had key responsibilities within this but there was also collective responsibility for all Governors.

The meeting was reminded of the OfS' expectation of Governors:

- Collective responsibility under lead of the Chair
- Oversight of the provider's corporate and academic activities
- Ensure the provider has adequate and effective arrangements to ensure it is complying with all of its conditions of registration and knows how it is complying
- Ensure action plans contain key information and that arrangements are in place to monitor and evaluate compliance with the plans and progress against targets

The meeting was assured that effective evaluation and monitoring of HE provision and HE students at HCUC existed within the College's academic structures and these ensured compliance with ongoing conditions of registration. The reporting mechanism to Governors was to the Corporation and via sub-committees, in particular QCS, Audit and Resources. A risk management spreadsheet provided finer detail for scrutiny and allowed identification of actions required and checks on progress and improvement; the focus on this was via QCS Committee. In addition, both of the two Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees had discussed HE updates and a combined HE report had been presented to QCS (19/11/20). A short summary was considered by the meeting:

- Enrolments 2020/21: Harrow College (HC) enrolments 22, Uxbridge College (UC) 218. Overall HCUC HNC/HND 240 HE enrolments, IOT 176, and Teacher Training 47.
- HNC/HND retention to date was HC 100% UC 99.7% HCUC HNC/HND is at 99.8% and Teacher Training at 100%,
- Due to there being no two year courses, HCUC will not be participating in the National Student Survey during 2020/21.
- A start of year student survey has been conducted. Findings in summary: students were happy with their experience in general, but preferred face to face delivery to online wherever possible; learners felt safe in classes, however there were concerns with regards to overall numbers in entrances, exits and social areas in relation to Covid-19.
- All HE students had been advised of the possibility of partial or fully remote delivery throughout the year dependent on Covid restrictions. However, they were also assured of high standards of delivery if this were to be the case. No objections to this had been received.
- HE Programmes Committee has focused on sharing practice in relation to modes of delivery, including ensuring H&S in relation to adult classes was being met and remote sessions. There had also been in-depth discussions on the interventions required to ensure improved outcomes for Black students and the impact of Brexit on European student status for next year.
- Access to HE programme across HCUC continued to be closely monitored. HC Enrolments 94, UC enrolments 71, HCUC 165 HCUC Retention to date 163 - 99%.

It was noted that the Resources Committee (November 2020) had considered an annual report to Resources Committee which evidenced compliance with condition C 'Protecting the interests of all students'. This new annual report had covered the following areas:

- Publication and review of the Student Protection Plan
- Publication and review of Terms and Conditions
- Review of policies and procedures relating to the provision of information.
- Any engagement with OfS regarding consumer protection law
- Engagement with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

The Chair of Resources (AMcL) confirmed that after considering all the evidence the Resources Committee had concluded that they could take full assurance that HCUC had been compliant with HE consumer protection law during 2019/20.

The paper drew Governors attention to Condition E – Good Governance and, within this, the entries relating to the OfS' Public Interest Principles. In order to provide assurance on this matter the Clerk presented a

# MINUTES

RAG rated summary document which provided detailed assurance for Governors that HCUC had complied with the 10 OfS Public Interest Governance Principles for 2019/20.

***The meeting AGREED that there was sufficient assurance for Governors that the College continued to comply with its ongoing requirements as set out under conditions of registration.***

## 20. Corporate Goals 2020/21 – Update on progress

The CEO (DDS) provided an update on the Uxbridge College's and Harrow College's Corporate Goals YTD achievement. The meeting was reminded that this was the first update since the approval of the Corporate Goals at the September 2020 Corporation meeting and reflected the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Governors were reminded that the format now reflected further alignment of common HCUC KPIs that each College was working towards. The detailed commentary now also prioritised the HCUC joint perspective but with some flexibility to account for the local Harrow or Uxbridge context. The front page now better reflected the emphasis on the '3 Is' within the Ofsted Education and Inspection Framework. DDS also highlighted the following factors:

- Quality of Education (previously TL&A) had been refined further to reflect increased importance of remote learning delivery as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Governors were informed that it was understood that Ofsted would be examining this as a specific aspect during future inspections. The importance of Curriculum intent continues to be emphasised. Until Inspections return, less reliance is being placed on external validation of observations in the autumn term; 'Drop-in' observations would be retained as a further means of gauging and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Governors were assured that as Ofsted inspection cycles resumed (expected January 2021) and reports become available, this HCUC methodology would be revised, as necessary. There are indications that Inspections even if they do return in the new year, will not be graded.
- Learner Outcomes section had been updated where 2019/20 comparative data had been confirmed.
- Finance & Funding section had been amended to reflect Covid-19 impact and additional sources of funding. The funding picture for 2020/21 was now confirmed following the ILR R04 submission.
- Under responsiveness and compliance, focus is on main Government backed projects. These being, Institute of Technology (IoT), T-level pilots and associated substantial Industry Placements, Mayor's Construction Academy (MCA) and activity linked to the newly available Covid-19 London economic recovery projects

DDS highlighted that the RAG rating system flagged up those items on the front page where progress in relation to a particular KPI or performance area had either faltered, prompting mitigating actions (amber rating), or stalled such that full achievement was now not possible (red rating). Governors were reminded that considerable further detail was provided within the body of the Corporate Goals reports about the amber and red rated items flagged on the cover pages. In addition, some other items within the extended commentaries were flagged as amber or red because progress had not been as expected; a brief explanation was included in the right hand column where this was the case. Due to the demanding agenda, the meeting took the detailed reports 'as read' but Governors were invited to contribute any queries.

***The meeting RECEIVED the Corporate Goals update report.***

## 21. QCS Committee – 19 November 2020

The minutes of the meeting would be circulated as soon as available. MRW gave the meeting the following update on the key items discussed by the meeting:

- 1st Impressions Survey responses were very positive from learners and on a similar level to the previous year. This was good to hear in the current difficult environment due to the Covid-19 measures in place.
- The current workload for teaching staff was huge to ensure learners received the necessary teaching in all modes of delivery as well as identifying any additional needs due to skills gaps/ gaps in learning.

# MINUTES

- QCS scrutinised the HE Reports covering the college's compliance with the detailed OfS conditions of registration and were fully assured that the College continued to meet all the OfS conditions.
- The meeting wanted it recorded that it had recognised that HCUC was very good at seeing and seizing new opportunities to develop as a College - e.g. IoT and T Levels, merger opportunities. However, there were 2 sides to being a pioneer - the challenges that this presented and the hard work by management and staff needed to be recognised by the Corporation.

**NOTED**

## 22. Audit Committee – 25 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting would be circulated as soon as available. All items covered had been brought to the current Corporation meeting.

**NOTED**

## 23. Resources Committee – 25 November 2020

The minutes of the meeting would be circulated as soon as available. There were no additional items to highlight that had not already been covered within the Corporation meeting. Key items included the important consideration of the College's compliance with the OfS Condition C of registration; the Human Resources Report; and the recent Staff Focus Group feedback.

**NOTED**

## 24. Search Committee

Key items had been considered earlier in the meeting. The minutes of the meeting would be circulated as soon as possible.

**NOTED**

## 25. Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees (SSCs)

The meeting received the minutes from the two individual College SSCs which had been held on 10th November at Uxbridge and 11th November at Harrow. The specific feedback from each of the SSCs for the HCUC Corporation was noted.

Uxbridge SSC had commented on:

- the adaptability and resilience of academic and support staff during the pandemic – online and face-to-face delivery had been implemented as required at short notice and to good effect.
- support to students had remained during the periods of remote working.
- the very useful document presented by the Deputy CEO which outlined the current landscape during the pandemic and looked forward to the role for colleges in the economic recovery.

Harrow SSC spent time discussing:

- the 'Landscape paper' and also the current challenges faced during the pandemic.
- The challenges around T levels and gaining meaningful work experience for T level learners.

**NOTED**

## 26. To confirm the dates and times of the meetings for 2020/21 (currently all via Zoom to meet Covid-19 guidelines)

- Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 5.30pm
- Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April, Training and Planning Day, 8.45am (*SSC Members to be invited.*)
- Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 5.30pm
- Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 5.30pm

## 27. Feedback to Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees

The CEO reminded the meeting of this new agenda item to improve the flow of communication from the HCUC Corporation to the individual Colleges Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees. After consideration the meeting agreed that the following three key items would be taken to the SSCs in advance of the formal Corporation minutes becoming available to SSC members.

# MINUTES

- SSC Members may need to provide advice and guidance to RuTC Governors on the remit/ operation of the Richmond SSC.
- The detailed Covid updates would be taken to the SSC for information.
- The SSCs would be asked to do a deep-dive examination of Apprenticeships in each of the colleges.
- Details of the Covid-19 'pay bonus' which had been approved for payment to all staff (contingent on length of service).

***The feedback to the SSCs was AGREED***

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 28. Any other business as previously notified

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 7.05pm.

Signed .....

Date.....

# MINUTES

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