

LUMINATE EDUCATION GROUP

<p style="text-align: center;">DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE KEIGHLEY COLLEGE BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2021</p>

Present

Colin Booth	Group CEO
Matt Findull	Co-optee
Caroline Firth	Co-optee
Kate Gledhill (up to item 10)	Co-optee
Ian Hargreaves	Co-optee
David Yates (Chair)	Governor

The quorum for the meeting was three members (including at least one governor)

In Attendance

Lydia Devenny	Deputy CEO Services
Melanie Halstead	Director of Governance
Chris Johnston	Senior Finance Manager
Bill Jones	Deputy CEO and Principal, Leeds City College
Kevin O'hare	Interim Principal, Keighley College
Gemma Simmons-Blench	Deputy CEO Curriculum and Quality

The meeting took place remotely via Google Meet and started at 4pm

MEETING ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed Chris Johnston (Senior Finance Manager) to his first meeting of the Keighley College Board. Apologies for absence were received from Naz Kazmi and Jon Skurr (co-optees). Jamie Sunter (staff member) was also absent from the meeting.

2. Determination of Observers/Attendees at the Meeting

The board agreed attendees/observers at the meeting as per the above attendance list.

3. Declaration of Interests in Agenda Items

The Chair reminded board members of the requirement to declare their interest in any agenda items. There were none other than standing declarations which were noted.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 June 2021 and Actions/Matters Arising

The board considered the draft minutes of its meeting held on 30 June 2021 and its rolling list of actions and other matters arising from previous meetings. Members asked that further detail be added to section 9 of the minutes to record board members' questions and challenge on the HE Performance Report. With regard to the actions and matters arising, all identified items had been completed or were scheduled for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the board held on 30 June 2021 be approved for signature by the Chair subject to the additional detail being added to section 9 as requested by board members.

5. Communications

Board members received feedback from the Group Board meeting held in October which included a review of group strategic risks, revisions to the group's risk management policy/procedure to reflect work carried out on risk appetite, an updated curriculum, student growth and property strategy, capital grant bids, performance against the group's 2020/21 strategic and operational development plan, Covid-19 response and recovery planning across the group, and 2021/22 student recruitment. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Luminare Group Board had also been reappointed and a revised group scheme of delegation approved.

The Link Governor for finance provided feedback from his most recent meeting with the Deputy CEO Services and the Finance Business Partner. It was confirmed that at its meeting in July 2021 the Luminare Group Board had agreed the recommendation of the Keighley College Board that the college's financial recovery plan be formally closed down, having been exceeded. The Link Governor clarified that the Quality and Financial Targets paper presented separately on the agenda for this meeting was in fact the 2021/22 budget as previously agreed by the board with the overarching financial target for Keighley College being to deliver EBITDA of £0.9m in year. A brief discussion took place around financial forecasting with an acknowledgement that this had been impacted somewhat by the cyberattack in 2020. The Link Governor drew attention to financial risks going forward which the board needed to remain cognisant of and which required careful management to mitigate any impact. It was noted that lagged funding implications would mean that some of the impact of current issues would not occur until next year and the year after that, however, some of the impact would be felt in-year. Papers on the 2020/21 year-end outturn and the 2021/22 financial position were presented separately on the agenda for this board meeting.

As this would be her last meeting of the Keighley College Board, members thanked the Deputy CEO Services for her support of Keighley College over the years and wished her well in her future career.

The Deputy CEO & Principal of LCC shared feedback from the 2021 AoC (Association of Colleges) Annual Conference which had staff wellbeing as a key feature and a well-received contribution from the Luminare Group around race equality and its Race Equality Roadmap.

Board members conveyed their congratulations to the Chair of the Luminare Group on his new role at Durham University.

6. Review of Board Terms of Reference and Annual Reporting Schedule for 2021/22

The Director of Governance presented proposed changes to the board's terms of reference and, in response to a question, confirmed that these were consistent with the terms of reference for other FE boards within the Luminare Group, including terms of office. It was noted that a recruitment campaign was being planned for the New Year with the aim of strengthening board diversity across the group. The board's annual reporting schedule was also presented for review and approval.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed revisions to the Keighley College Board terms of reference be recommended for approval by the Group Board.
- (b) To approve the Keighley College Board annual reporting schedule for 2021/22.

STRATEGY AND POLICY

7. College Update

Covid-19 Response and Recovery

The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality confirmed that the Covid-19 risk assessment had been updated to reflect the latest guidance. The college maintained a cautious approach with the continued wearing of face coverings in communal areas and twice weekly testing. Board members were reassured to hear that since the start of term in September the impact on learners had been much reduced due to the change in government policy. The focus in term one had been on student attendance, induction and TLA (teaching, learning and assessment).

Induction Survey

The board was presented with a summary of the outcomes of the most recent student induction survey. A 90% satisfaction target had been set for all 10 questions, with 80% scoring above target. The areas identified for improvement related to IAG and Additional Learning Support. Board members queried whether the responses referred to guidance provided outside of as well as within the college. The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality advised that this would be an area for exploration as part of planned focus groups with students as follow-up to the survey. It was acknowledged that technical and vocational qualifications often require hands on experience to help learners understand what they will be doing in industry which unfortunately had been lacking during the pandemic. The Interim Principal advised that the results were not inconsistent with other parts of the group. Overall board members welcomed the distance travelled, particularly in the current circumstances, and expressed thanks to all staff who had contributed. The Chair reported that he had taken on a link governor role at group level around IAG and undertook to keep this board informed of progress and any developments.

Attendance

Student attendance had been too low and inconsistent to identify students at risk and provide adequate intervention and this therefore remained a key area of focus. Attendance during the first half term was reported to be 83%, compared with 76.5% at the same point last year, with weekly attendance increasing rapidly in all curriculum areas and in some areas exceeding 90%. However, some areas required further focus, namely Plumbing, Electrical, Construction, Fabrication & Welding. English & Maths attendance (16-18) was reported to be 68% which, whilst 10% points above 2020/21, remained too low. Actions for addressing student attendance were included in the college's Rapid Improvement Plan, a final draft of which was presented separately for board approval.

8. Risk Management

The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality introduced the annual risk management report for 2020/21. The board was satisfied that good progress had been made in mitigating the risks throughout the year. The annual report was therefore agreed for presentation to the Audit Committee, informing its annual opinion on the group's risk management arrangements.

The Group Risk Management Policy and Procedure had been updated for 2021/22 to include new risk appetite categories and descriptions. A copy of the revised document had been shared with the board in advance of this meeting and was welcomed by members.

The board also reviewed and approved the current iteration of the Keighley College risk register, including the addition of a new risk (KC:13 - Impact of work undertaken by the Keighley College leadership team is not rapid enough to enable a Self-Assessment of Grade 2 in 2021/22) to reflect the instability of the existing leadership team with a lack of defined roles, accountability, confidence and assurance. One risk was removed from the register (KC:19/20.02 - Failure to meet outcome and progress targets, particularly English and Maths), being superseded by the new risk referenced above.

Board members asked that reputational risk relating to the college's results be added to the risk register and the rapid improvement plan. Members also suggested that a financial risk relating to a failure to recruit students be added, reflecting the discussion earlier in the meeting and referencing the mitigations provided via the wider group. Board members also queried whether there were any risks relating to the Towns Fund that ought to be reflected on the risk register; following a brief discussion around the potential arrangements, it was agreed to return to this when more information became available.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To approve the Risk Management Annual Report for 2020/21 and that this be presented to the Group Audit Committee.
- (b) To approve the Keighley College risk register as at November 2021, including the addition and removal of risks as detailed above.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND SCRUTINY

9. Quality Improvement

The board reviewed proposed quality and financial targets for 2021/22. A discussion took place around whether the quality targets were achievable in one year. The Deputy CEO Curriculum and Quality expressed confidence in the proposed targets based on legacy data and confirmed that the Heads of Department had contributed to the setting of targets. Overall, whilst the targets were felt to be ambitious, members recognised that they were necessary to achieve a grade 2 self-assessment, with all of the targets sitting within Quartile B, and therefore agreed to recommend them for inclusion in the Group Strategic and Operational Development Plan for 2021/22. It was confirmed that the financial targets were consistent with the budget previously agreed by the board and the quality targets were in line with the trajectory set out in the college's rapid improvement plan. The finance link governor also reminded board members of the college's overarching EBITDA target, as referenced earlier in the meeting.

Board members also scrutinised an updated version of the rapid improvement plan. Members recognised that a tremendous amount of work had been done on the plan in a short period of time and were satisfied that the revised version reflected the feedback from the board meeting held the previous week. Some of the outcomes within the plan were delayed until July 2022 and board members therefore asked how they could be assured throughout the year that sufficient progress was being made, attendance being one example. The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality advised that progress updates would be available for each reporting period and that progress against the plan would be reported in detail at each board meeting. The Deputy CEO also shared with members a proposed template for these reports with progress being RAG rated. Members went on to discuss ways in which the board could be assured around the accuracy of the information presented through various means of triangulation. At its meeting the previous week the board had also suggested a peer review/audit of the college's quality assurance processes which the Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality undertook to consider. Peer review/validation of the college's self-assessment report for 2021/22 was also suggested, as was a briefing for board members on the self-assessment process.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To agree the proposed quality and financial targets for 2021/22 and recommend the same to the Group Board for inclusion in the Group Strategic and Operational Development Plan.
- (b) To approve the Keighley College Rapid Improvement Plan.

10. Student Recruitment

The board was updated on 2021/22 student recruitment against target and budget and the likely drop in lagged income for 2022/23 was highlighted. In response to a question from the board the Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality advised that new 16-year-old students was the main area where recruitment numbers had dropped. HE recruitment was also disappointing and it was noted that the board had requested a 'deep dive' on HE at its next meeting.

11. Finance

The EBITDA position at the end of period 12 (2020/21) represented a positive performance against budget, this being the net result of income being down by £28k, and underspend of £622k against expenditure. The EBITDA position at the end of period 3 (2021/22) of £561k represented a positive performance against budget of £284k, again being the net result of income being down by (£103k), and underspend of £387k against expenditure. However, the board was informed that the issues currently being experienced at the college would impact the budget next year, with EBITDA likely to reduce to around 5% in 2022/23.

Board members sought and received assurance that the reported underspend on staffing resulted mainly from posts not being filled during the pandemic and not as a result of any freeze on recruitment.

The finance link governor advised that he had explored the 2020/21 forecast versus the outturn position during his recent meeting with the Deputy CEO Services and Finance Business Partner and was satisfied that there was nothing of concern to report. He commended the robustness of the financial information presented to the board.

12. Assurance Reports

The board received a series of reports designed to provide assurance as to how the college continued to comply with its statutory duties in the following areas:

- (a) Safeguarding and Prevent
- (b) Health and Safety
- (c) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- (d) Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- (e) Human Resources and Organisational Development

In response to a question around the increase in safeguarding concerns, the Deputy CEO and Principal of Leeds City College advised that the increase was statistically insignificant but would be closely monitored. He also confirmed that the central safeguarding team was working closely with the staff at Keighley College to ensure that they are sufficiently trained. Board members asked whether it was possible to provide further breakdown by gender which the Deputy CEO undertook to introduce for future reporting. At the request of members, the Deputy CEO undertook to report back on the next steps and timescales for this development. Board members also questioned the reported take up of Prevent mandatory training for staff; the Deputy CEO assured the board that the figures had increased and were now closer to 90%, with a continued drive for 100%.

Board members welcomed the comprehensive report provided on health and safety and in particular the confirmation that the group's internal auditors had provided substantial assurance following their review of health and safety which had focused on the FE colleges' arrangements post Covid.

In considering the EDI report members were pleased to note the positive feedback from the EDI themed staff development day and asked that the resources be shared with board members. For the benefit of new board members, the Chair confirmed the group's adoption of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and its intention to develop further statements around all equality priorities including Islamophobia and Trans Rights in order to be responsive to changing contexts locally, nationally and globally. Board members asked that EDI themed 'deep dives' be scheduled for future board meetings, the first of which to focus on disability.

The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality introduced the SEND update, highlighting specific challenges in Technology and confirming that these were covered in the college's rapid improvement plan. It was noted that the deep dive on disabilities requested by board members would provide additional assurance in this respect.

The Deputy CEO Services advised that the sickness absence lost days reported in the Human Resources paper were misstated, being just under 3%. In response to a question from the board, the Deputy CEO Services advised that whilst staff sickness had been fairly high during the pandemic, which was out of kilter with other parts of the group, it was not out of step with prior years' Keighley College data. The Chair emphasised the need for a focus on diversifying the workforce, referencing the current gender bias at Keighley College. The Deputy CEO Services advised that this was common across the sector. The need for a strengthened exit interview process was also highlighted by the board.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm

Signed: (Chair)

Date: