**LUMINATE EDUCATION GROUP**

|  |
| --- |
| **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE****KEIGHLEY COLLEGE BOARD****HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY 2022** |

**Present**

Colin Booth Group CEO

Caroline Firth Co-optee

Kate Gledhill Co-optee

Ian Hargreaves (from item 5) Co-optee

Jon Skurr Co-optee

Jamie Sunter Staff Member

David Yates (Chair) Governor

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

**In Attendance**

Mala Dhillon (item 16 only) Group Director of Development & Strategic Projects

Janet Faulkner (item 7 only) Dean of Higher Education

Melanie Halstead (from item 9) Director of Governance

Chris Johnston (up to item 16) Senior Finance Manager

Bill Jones Deputy CEO & Executive Principal of Leeds City College

Kevin O’Hare Interim Principal, Keighley College

Michelle Ritchie (up to item 9) Governance Manager

Gemma Simmons-Blench Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality

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

**MEETING ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE**

 **1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Matt Findull (co-optee). The Chair reported that Naz Kazmi had stepped down from the board and attendees were encouraged to promote board vacancies within their own networks and signpost any expressions of interest to the Chair or Director of Governance.

**2. Determination of Observers/Attendees at the Meeting**

The board agreed attendees/observers at the meeting as per the above attendance list. The Chair asked all attendees to follow accepted online meeting etiquette and flagged the confidential nature of agenda item 16.

**3. Declaration of Interests in Agenda Items**

Board members were reminded of the requirement to declare their interest in any agenda items. There were none specific to the agenda for this meeting but the standing declarations as per the register of board members’ interests were noted.

**4.**  **Minutes of the Meetings held on 17 and 24 November 2021 and Rolling List of Actions and Matters Arising**

The board considered the draft minutes of its meetings held on 17 and 24 November 2021 and the rolling list of actions/matters arising from previous meetings. With regard to the latter, all identified items had been or were on schedule to be completed.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings of the board held on 17 and 24 November 2021 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**5. Communications**

The Chair provided feedback from the group board meeting held in December 2021 which included updates on the group’s financial position, FE College Safeguarding Policy and the Strategic and Operational Development Plan (SOPD). It was noted that statutory policies and the SODP were available to view in Virtual Boardroom (VBR).

The Group CEO reported on the pay increase discussions at group board and confirmed that Luminate Education Group was committed to paying the ‘real living wage’. It was noted that since the group board meeting in December the Association of Colleges (AoC) had made a national recommendation of a 1% increase. Board members asked that Keighley College work with sub-contractors that are equally committed to the ‘real living wage’. Keighley College’s ‘real living wage’ commitment was also recognised as a positive news story for the wider Keighley community and the Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality undertook to progress this with the communications team.

The board was informed that, following Lydia Devenny’s departure in December, the Group CEO was reshaping the Executive Leadership Team.

**6. Proposed Link Governor Arrangements**

 Board members considered a proposal to revise the link governor arrangements for Keighley College to reflect changes in board membership and the college’s Rapid Improvement Plan, as discussed by the board in November 2021. It was confirmed that the central purpose of the governor links scheme was to provide board members with an insight into all areas of the college and to create a better understanding of the way in which the strategic decisions of the board impact provision at an operational level. Link governors were encouraged to follow up specific matters relevant to their link area(s) following each board meeting to assist with triangulation. It was also confirmed that board members were welcome to visit the college to meet with students and staff as part of their link governor role.

 RESOLVED:

 To approve the proposed link governor arrangements for 2021/22, as detailed within the circulated report.

**PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND SCRUTINY**

**7.** **Higher Education (HE) Deep Dive**

As previously requested by the board, the Dean of HE joined the meeting to present the outcomes of a ‘deep dive’ review into the college’s HE provision. The review had identified a lack of resource and lack of management structure resulting in insufficient oversight of the quality of provision and failure to promote staff development in the curriculum areas reviewed. Board members asked about the impact of the actions implemented in response to the deep dive and any further action or resources required. The Dean of HE summarised the actions to date and advised that these had already had a huge impact, providing a level of confidence that the HE provision at Keighley College was improving. It was proposed to consolidate the provision this year to ensure that all necessary processes are in place with good engagement with a view to then considering future growth of the provision. Arising from this discussion it was identified that the college would benefit from some market research around HE student recruitment.

Board members welcomed the paper which provided them with assurance in relation to the quality of provision. It was acknowledged that the deep dive had identified a number of issues and the report provided good triangulation for the board. The Dean of HE was thanked for her contribution to the meeting.

**8.** **Principal’s Report**

Covid-19 Arrangements

The Principal advised that Covid-19 government rules and guidance continued to be followed at Keighley College. However, now that mask wearing was no longer compulsory students were challenging the college rationale and logic to continue mask wearing in its public spaces, particularly as Keighley College public spaces were more airyated than classrooms, where students could remove their masks. The number of restorative conversations to address non mask wearing was rising and time consuming for teaching staff.

In discussing this matter, board members considered vulnerable staff and students. The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality articulated that the best mitigation was vaccination and that Keighley College, having been a vaccination centre, would be a vaccination centre again in the future.

The Principal was advised that a group level response would apply and therefore the issue would be picked up by the Covid-19 Steering Group and the outcome communicated in due course.

Progress against Strategic Priorities

The Principal reported that the college was focused on improving its ITSS service to students. IT improvements were also required to enable the college to pivot its curriculum towards digital technologies.

Board members heard that recent open events had more engagement than the previous round and were reassured that the Principal and Heads of Department were developing recruitment ideas.

The Principal also provided a progress update on the Keighley Towns Fund and specifically the Future Technology Hub and Adult Skills Hub. Suitable lease sites were being explored in the Town Centre. The project bid was £3m and the board recognised the broader value of this project to the town and the partnership opportunities for the college. The Principal further advised that a project manager had been identified within the college but a project sponsor/lead was still required.

**9.** **Quality Improvement**

Review of Progress against Rapid Improvement Plan

At its previous meeting the board had scrutinised and approved the college’s Rapid Improvement Plan. The Interim Principal now presented a detailed update on the progress made against the plan and in doing so drew board members’ attention to a risk around staffing. The board therefore explored with management the strategy for addressing the staffing risk identified, recognising it as a significant factor in the college’s recovery. The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality advised that the initial area of focus needed to be on the way in which Keighley College is marketed as an employer to potential staff. In addition, recruitment processes were being reviewed as they were not currently considered user friendly. The ‘Building a Resilient Workforce’ link governor undertook to explore this issue further with the Interim Principal.

The staff member reflected on how there was now a real drill down into performance data and optimism amongst staff in terms of this year’s results. The support being provided centrally by the Luminate Group was commended. In response to a question from members, the Interim Principal confirmed that the improvement plan had been shared with every member of staff at Keighley College, ensuring that all were aware of the issues and planned actions.

When discussing student attendance, members noted that further needed to be done to persuade students of the benefits of attending college rather than relying on on-line resources and emphasising the importance of tutorials to staff.

Monitoring Visit Report

The board received and discussed an overview of the feedback from a monitoring visit carried out in December 2021 by the central quality team. The purpose of the visit was to sense check the progress stated in the Rapid Improvement Plan and to ensure focused action moving forward. It was reported that whilst there was insufficient evidence to award reasonable or significant progress against the themes in the plan, the central team were reassured that plans were in place to ensure progress is made. The Interim Principal advised that he and his leadership team found the process extremely valuable and would continue to work with central teams to implement the actions. It was confirmed that the findings had been integrated into the improvement plan update presented at this meeting.

The board thanked the Interim Principal for a very informative report, backed up by helpful context. Members particularly welcomed the level of detail provided as this was felt necessary at this stage in the college’s recovery to inform governance oversight, scrutiny and challenge. The update presented at this meeting had provided the board with a clear assessment of the current position.

Whilst acknowledging that the quality of staff recruitment and how that is prioritised would influence the pace of change and improvement, the board asked whether achieving a grade 2 self-assessment by next summer was still realistic. The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality advised that some areas of provision would certainly move two grades but that it was highly unlikely that there would be enough of these to achieve an overall grade 2. The board was mindful that restricting staff recruitment to protect financial resources would not aid the college’s recovery.

**10.** **In-Year Quality of Education**

The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality introduced a paper providing an in-year update on the Quality of Education and the implementation of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy, the Quality Review Process and the current position in English and maths. Board members were satisfied that the key areas for focus had been covered during discussion of the rapid improvement plan and the Quality of Education link governors also undertook to carry out a ‘deep dive’ outside of the meeting.

**OTHER ASSURANCE REPORTS**

**11.**  **2021 Staff Survey – Analysis and Action Plan**

The Interim Principal shared an analysis of the 2021 staff survey and presented a draft action plan for addressing the areas for development identified. The board endorsed the proposed actions whilst noting that future surveys would benefit from a higher response rate.

**12.**  **Group Performance Review and Business Planning Process**

 As previously requested by members, the board received a briefing paper on the group’s performance review and business planning process. Board members were invited to observe a Keighley College business planning session to gain further insight.

**13.**  **Review of Strategic Risk Register**

The Interim Principal presented the latest iteration of the college’s strategic risk register. The key changes since the previous iteration related to risks around the recruitment and retention of staff and mechanical/electrical systems and buildings infrastructure. The former had been discussed at length earlier in the meeting. With regard to the latter, it was reported that internal and external lighting and CCTV were the key areas for maintenance.

 RESOLVED:

 To approve the Keighley College risk register as at January 2022.

**14.**  **Financial Position and Forecast**

The Senior Finance Manager confirmed that the overall financial position remained unchanged from the previous board meeting. The EBITDA position at the end of period five represented a positive performance against budget.

**15.**  **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report**

The Deputy CEO & Executive Principal of Leeds City College suggested that the EDI Annual Report be treated with caution as it was an unusually small data return for 2020/21. This was attributed to low disclosure rates and Covid-19 impairing normal data collection processes. Board members reflected on the key issues presented in the report and noted that Keighley College had continued to work towards its EDI objectives, celebrating Black History Month and Pride. The board therefore congratulated the college for maintaining momentum with its EDI objectives.

Board members observed that they themselves were not representative of the Keighley town demographic and requested that addressing this be triangulated with the EDI Link Governor.

Within the Race Equality Roadmap, the Keighley College student population was reported as 40% BAME and of these 60% from the Pakistani community. Board members welcomed the Deputy CEO & Executive Principal’s suggestion that students would benefit if Keighley College staff had EDI training that featured the Pakistani community.

In response to a question about regulatory and funding requirements for reporting staff and students’ protected characteristics, the Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality confirmed that the group can expand its data capture lists at enrolment. However, challenges exist with the ILR reporting format, governed by the ESFA, as it does not provide a non-binary response option.

It was suggested that consideration be given to the inclusion of mental health data (although covered within the Safeguarding Annual Report) in future EDI Annual Reports. In conclusion, the board supported the recommendations identified within the report.

**CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**16. Outcomes of Investigation into issues at Keighley College**

At its meeting in November 2021 the board had received interim feedback from an internal investigation into issues identified at the college and now received the final report and action plan resulting from that investigation. It was confirmed that many of the identified actions were already underway.

The meeting closed at 7pm

Signed: ……………………………………. (Chair) Date: …………………………