

LUMINATE EDUCATION GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE KEIGHLEY COLLEGE BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 JUNE 2022

Present

Colin Booth	Group CEO
Matt Findull (from item 8)	Co-optee
Kate Gledhill	Co-optee
Jamie Sunter (up to item 10)	Staff Member
David Yates (Chair)	Governor

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

In Attendance

Philip Brewster	Senior Finance Business Partner
Kevin Burke (up to item 8)	Head of Academic & Social Sciences
Janet Faulkner	Dean of Higher Education
Melanie Halstead	Director of Governance
Stuart Jolley	Chief Financial Officer
Steven Navotni (from item 6)	Learning & Organisational Development Business Partner
Kevin O'hare	Principal, Keighley College
Gemma Simmons-Blench	Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality
Paul Szulc (from item 6)	Head of Learning & Organisational Development
David Warren (up to item 10)	Group Vice Principal, Development

The meeting took place via Microsoft Teams and started at 4pm

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies for absence were received from Ian Hargreaves (Co-optee), Jon Skurr (Co-optee) and Bill Jones (Deputy CEO & Executive Principal, Leeds City College). Caroline Firth (Co-optee) was also absent on maternity leave.

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

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 Meeting held on 16 March 2022 and Rolling List of Actions and Matters Arising

The board considered the draft minutes of its meeting held in March and the rolling list of actions/matters arising from previous meetings. Having discussed the latter, members were satisfied that all identified items had been completed or appeared separately on the agenda for this meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the board held on 16 March 2022 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. Communications

The HR/EDI link governor provided feedback from her recent meeting with the college's Senior HR Business Partner. The Chair also provided feedback from his own link governor activity at college and group level.

Board members were updated on some of the key topics of discussion at the most recent Group Board meeting held in April which included consideration of the group's strategic priorities and financial objectives for 2022/23, the latter being expanded to include a new objective regarding cash days in hand. The board had also been alerted to an incident which had resulted in temporary loss of access to the group's finance system due to problems experienced by the external data centre provider. Members were assured that this had been resolved and heard about the measures in place to prevent any reoccurrence.

It was reported that the group had been successful in its four FEETF bids, with Group Board discussions now focused on the affordability of these projects. The Group Board had also received and noted the group's 2021 Gender Pay Gap Report, with a mean pay gap of £0.77 and the median pay gap being £0.85.

STRATEGY AND POLICY

6. Principal's Report

Outcomes of Strategic Seminar

The Principal presented a summary of the outcomes from the board's recent strategic seminar. A proposed realignment of the curriculum was endorsed by the board as part of the college's strategy for 2022/23 onwards. The Principal also provided an update on the stakeholder consultation carried out on the college's mission and values and board members supported a proposal to reduce from six to four values. It was noted that the proposed strategic priorities for Keighley College were now more closely aligned to the Luminate Group's priorities. The Principal undertook to present a final draft of Keighley College's new strategic plan for approval at a future board meeting.

Review of Risk Register

The board reviewed the college's risk register as at June 2022 with a particular focus on the two red (significant) risks identified. These related to (i) failure to recruit and retain high quality, experienced staff and (ii) critical failure of mechanical/electrical systems or buildings infrastructure. Board members felt well sighted on the former, having carried out a 'deep dive' as part of a recent board away day. With regard to the latter, it was reported that a condition report had been commissioned. Arising from discussion, the Principal undertook to review the wording of a risk relating to the college's 2021/22 self-assessment to better reflect the current position.

RESOLVED:

To approve the latest iteration of the risk register subject to a review of the wording of a risk relating to the college's 2021/22 self-assessment.

7. T-Levels

The board welcomed a presentation updating members on the development of T-Levels and endorsed the proposed direction of travel. Employer engagement was highlighted as

being key, the feeling being that current messaging to employers was unclear. The board went on to discuss the need for Keighley College to grow its Level 3 provision, including A-Levels and T-Levels.

8. Staff Voice

In considering the outcomes of the 2022 staff survey, board members were pleased to note an upward trend within the results. The highest scoring area (98%) related to how roles impact on the student experience. Software and system accessibility was identified as the main area for improvement. The results were very positive overall and were felt to be reflective of the developing culture at Keighley College. However, board members highlighted that >50% of staff had left the organisation within 5 years and asked that the reasons for this be explored. The HR link governor also undertook to discuss this further outside of the meeting.

9. Keighley Towns Fund

The Group Vice Principal (Development) updated the board on the progress of the Towns Fund, reporting that £0.95m had been allocated to the Adult & Skills Hub scheme (pending approval by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities) and £3m being secured for the Technology & Engineering Hub, to be released following acceptance of the business case. It was noted that a Levelling Up bid was also in development.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND SCRUTINY

10. Ofsted Outcomes

Board members reflected on the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection, noting that the inspectors had not identified any areas for development that the board and management were not already aware of and identified in the college's rapid improvement plan.

11. Monitoring of Progress against 2021/22 Rapid Improvement Plan

The Principal presented a report detailing the progress made against the college's 12-point rapid improvement plan. Whilst there was clear evidence of improvements across all three departments, challenges around staff recruitment and retention remained. Student attendance was a continuing concern for the board and members therefore explored with management the plans in place for the start of the new academic year.

12. Predicted Outcomes 2021/22

The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality talked the board through the college's predicted outcomes for 2021/22 including retention, predicted achievement, value added and GCSE exam attendance.

Overall retention at 88.7% was 1.2% lower than the same point in the previous year and below the national rate. Retention rates for both age groups had performed consistently below the national average with withdrawals at levels 2 and 3 being the main contributing factor of the decrease in retention for 16-18 year olds. For Adult Programmes, the dip was reported to be primarily attributed to Access to HE, Certificate and Diploma provision.

The 16-18 current predicted achievement was below target but 11 percentage points above the previous year. 19+ achievement was slightly below target but 4 percentage points above the previous year. Overall achievement was predicted to improve by 10% points.

For apprenticeships, the predicted best case achievement rate was reported to be 70% against a national average of 60% and 4 percentage points above target, demonstrating a 3

percentage point increase on the previous year. The Deputy CEO explained that the implications of Covid-19 and the delay in the completion of End Point Assessment was continuing to impact this provision.

Board members noted that although predicted achievement rates remained good, predicted Value Added was showing a decline for Applied Generals. The Deputy CEO advised that the impact of Teacher Assessed Grades in Summer 2021 had raised the starting points for many learners in addition to the gaps in learning due to Covid-19 and learners had not made the predicted progress despite extra support and intervention provided with the use of the Tuition Fund. This remained an area of focus through the use of additional group and one to one sessions.

English and maths Progress Scores were currently below target. The Deputy CEO explained that due to the cancellation of exams for the past two years, grade boundaries from the last exam series in 2019 had been utilised at Keighley College and nationally to assess student progress. Ofqual had directed the exam boards to set grade boundaries to reflect the pandemic context, to avoid disadvantaging some students who might otherwise have just missed out on a higher grade, meaning that overall 2022 results were likely to be higher than in 2019 but lower than in 2021. Members were advised that grade boundaries would be set at a national level, but only after students had taken exams, and only after papers had been marked; it was noted that this should have a positive impact on final achievement and progress at Keighley College.

The board was pleased to hear that GCSE exam attendance was excellent at Keighley College - all absent learners had been contacted and special considerations were in place for the learners that were impacted by ill health due to Covid-19.

13. Student Progression and Sustained Destinations

The board considered the sustained destinations of Keighley College students who studied in 2020/21. Following discussion, it was agreed that progression into higher education should remain an area of focus for the college. Arising from a question from members, the Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality advised that the increase in negative destinations was linked to post-pandemic recovery and was replicated across the sector.

14. Stakeholder Satisfaction

The Deputy CEO Curriculum & Quality presented an analysis of the Student On Programme Survey results and an overview of the Induction Survey and the Exit Survey. The results validated what had been identified during the year through, for example, student focus groups. Board members were particularly pleased to note that the results confirmed that students feel safe at Keighley College. The Deputy CEO advised that an Exit Survey was currently underway, the results of which would be shared with the board when available.

15. Annual Complaints and Compliments Report

It was reported that Keighley College had received three formal complaints during 2021/22, the same number received during 2020/21. In addition to this, three informal complaints had been investigated, compared with one the previous year.

A total of 17 compliments had been submitted during 2021/22, an increase of 240% points from the previous year's record of five. The main themes identified were positive experiences at open days and taster events, the support given by staff and their approach to meeting learner needs, and the dedication of staff to learners' progression.

16. Higher Education (HE) Update

The Dean of HE presented a report regarding the performance of HE provision at the college and drew the board’s attention to the low application numbers. A discussion followed around the challenges to HE recruitment at the college, including lack of awareness/marketing, and the board asked that management discuss this further outside of the meeting.

Board members were also briefed on the Office for Students (OfS) revised conditions of registration relating to quality and standards which came into effect on 1 May 2022.

FINANCE

17. Financial Position and Forecast 2021/22

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) explained the current and projected income shortfall and confirmed that the forecast EBITDA position remained strong.

18. 2022/23 Operating Budget

At its previous meeting the board had considered the high-level budget assumptions for 2022/23 and discussed the likely impact of rising energy prices. The CFO now presented the college’s draft operating budget for board review and approval. In considering this board members spent time discussing the negative EBITDA figure of £349k, this being a significant change from the positive position in the previous year. The CFO advised that this was felt to be a temporary blip for the coming year only. Board members also challenged the HE budget calculation as this represented an increase from the current year’s forecast and asked that this be reviewed. In conclusion, the board agreed the budget subject to a full review of HE numbers.

RESOLVED:

To approve the 2022/23 operating budget, subject to a full review of HE numbers, and that the budget be recommended to the Group Board for consolidation into the group budget.

INFORMATION AND ASSURANCE REPORTS

The board received a mid-year assurance report on HR and organisational development, noting that the 2021/22 annual report would be presented in the autumn term.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm

Signed: (Chair)

Date: