

SOUTH THAMES COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION

Minutes of Corporation Meeting 21 May 2020 held remotely by skype

(All resolutions passed were the unanimous decision of the Governors present unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Title	Corporation		
Date	21 May 2020		
Members present	Mr G. Allen Mr J. Azah Mr D. Cheema Cllr J. Cook Ms K. Driver Mr R. Foulston Cllr. B. Fraser Cllr S. Gordon	-Chair	Mr P. Mayhew-Smith - Group Principal / CEO Mr T. Monger-Godfrey. Ms J. Murphy Mr N. Ratnavel Prof P. Reid Mr M. J. Stone Mr G Willett
In Attendance	Mr R. Greenaway Mr J. Pemberton-Billing Mr A. Slade Mr M. Tweedale Mrs H. Meredith Paul Tunnicliffe Suna Marfe	- Deputy CEO - Principal Carshalton and Merton Colleges - Principal, South Thames College - Principal Kingston College - Head of Governance - Blast – design consultancy – for Item 6 only - Head of Marketing -for Item 6 only	
Key Meeting Outcomes			
	The meeting was held remotely as this took place when the college was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and consequential national closure of all schools and colleges.		
1.	WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTEREST		
1.1	Apologies were received from Dr J. Brumwell. Ms Murphy sent apologies in advance of joining the meeting late. The Student Governors and student observer did not attend the meeting. The Head of Governance reported that Dr J. McSherry had resigned as a governor.		
1.2	DECLARATION OF INTEREST Interests previously declared by Governors were noted. Governors confirmed that they did not have any other new pecuniary or other interest in any item on the agenda other than interests which have previously been declared.		
2.	MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETING OF 31 MARCH 2020 AND MATTERS ARISING		
2.1	Accuracy. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record to be signed by the Chair.		
2.2	Matters arising		
2.2.1	The action log from the last meeting is shown below with actions shown in the final column:		
	Hold a joint meeting or back to back meetings of FP& R and Audit Committees to agree the Financial Statements.	HoG	Included in meeting dates planned for November 2020
	All governors encouraged to take part in Additional Risk Register review meeting on 7 July 2020	All governors	July 2020 Noted by governors
	Governors were asked to complete and return the Skills Audit form	All governors	23 April 2020 Governors yet to complete this were asked to complete and return this to the Head of Governance
2.2.2	The Group Principal reported that the FE Commissioner's office will soon be updating him on the delayed Richmond Upon Thames College Structure and Prospects Appraisal.		

<p>3.</p> <p>3.1.1</p> <p>3.1.2</p> <p>3.1.3</p> <p>3.1.4</p> <p>3.1.5</p> <p>3.1.6</p> <p>3.1.7</p> <p>3.1.8</p> <p>3.1.9</p>	<p>UPDATE ON COLLEGE RECOVERY PLAN FROM COVID-19 CLOSURE</p> <p>The Group Principal updated Governors on the Group’s Re-opening Strategy following the publication of the DfE’s Guidance (14 May 2020) ‘Maintaining education and skills training provision: further education providers’. This Guidance changed the position on college closures, seeking the return of three main groups of students, and opening the option of colleges bringing in all students before the end of the summer term. The priority groups of students are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable students • Year 12 equivalent students with assessments in the following academic year • Students required to undertake a practical task on-site to complete assessments for their qualification or licence to practise <p>The paper outlined the Group’s proposed approach to reopen for two of these sets of students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable students- the Group will remain open as before based at Merton College and the extent of its service will be reviewed to establish whether more on-site activity will be required. • Students who have to complete practical assessments to pass their qualification or secure a licence to practice - the Group is planning a partial reopening from June 15th for these students. <p>The Group is not planning to bring back Year 12 equivalent students on-site for progression tutorials and will instead offer all f/t students (about 6000 Year 12 and Year 13 equivalents) on-line face-to-face or telephone progression support. The Group Principal outlined reasons for this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group’s risk assessment is that 2-3000 young people and 400 staff using public transport for the most part would be too great a risk to handle; • It was felt that take-up for this service would be greater online than on-site; • The Teaching Trade Unions are encouraging the College not to re-open at all without them being satisfied with detailed Health and Safety risk assessments for all sites; • The decision is based on making sure that students and staff are not exposed to any risk. <p>Where ESOL students are still required to sit exams to complete their qualification, this will be delayed as the numbers affected will be significant.</p> <p>The Group Principal reported that some Awarding Bodies (including City and Guilds) had not yet published their adapted assessment methodologies.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ms Murphy joined the meeting at 17.47pm</i></p> <p>The intention is to re-open Carshalton, Kingston, Merton and South Thames Colleges but not Tooting and Richmond Road for three weeks from 15 June to 2 July 2020 in the first instance, subject to review. Teaching and learning will continue on-line for the vast majority of students.</p> <p>The Group nursery is planning to reopen on 1st June 2020 with up to 13 children and 4 staff.</p> <p>A number of issues need further clarification including, among others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether to introduce temperature checks for all attendees • Adoption of track-and-trace technology by all individuals based on Government timetables <p>The Group is taking the following action currently to progress these proposals aimed at confidence building with staff and students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations with unions and management teams • CMTs to identify which curricula will need to bring which students into college • Facilities Team determining generic actions for the four sites: staffing, catering, PPE, signage, risk assessments etc. • Health and Safety Committee meeting cycle to be agreed with trade unions • The return of Staff and students in June 2020 is to be on a voluntary basis
<p>3.2</p> <p>3.2.1</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning Activity during the college closure</p> <p>The Corporation received a report reviewed by the QLS Committee on 12 May 2020 and noted that since closure, teachers and learners have enthusiastically developed innovative and active distance learning technologies and opportunities and that transition to remote working has been</p>

<p>3.2.2</p> <p>3.2.3</p> <p>3.2.4</p> <p>3.2.5</p>	<p>very successful. In some areas the level of student engagement is higher than 90%. The detail of the update is set out in the minutes of the QLS Committee.</p> <p>A minority of learners are not able to engage for a variety of reasons, including some not having access to technology. For these learners, teachers are continuing to find ways to maintain engagement in learning (including sending work/work books home, phoning etc.).</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>The Group Principal reported that the Student Services team have been continuing their work remotely to support students and are continuing to make referrals to the appropriate authorities in cases where there are significant concerns for a student.</p> <p>Assessment – the Group has been working to meet the requirements and challenging deadlines set by the awarding bodies for Exceptional Arrangements for Assessment and Grading in 2020.</p> <p>The College Principals updated governors on the activity at each of their colleges.</p>														
<p>3.3</p> <p>3.3.1</p> <p>3.3.2</p>	<p>Financial Impact of the college closure</p> <p>The Corporation received the report reviewed by the FP &R Committee on 28 April 2020 from the sensitivity analysis in the March 2020 Management Accounts. Key points highlighted included:</p> <p>Adult Education Budget (AEB) –The main uncertainty relates to Sub-contracted delivery The March forecast is based on franchising £2,106k of AEB funding to partners. However, only two contracts (one for £800k and one for £100k) had been granted. .</p> <p>Restructuring costs The Group has decided not to undertake an institutional review this year and not carrying that out will save £0.5m of re-structuring costs.</p> <p>Impact on EBITDA If all the worst case changes arise the impact on EBITDA for 2019-20 could be £2.4m. The impact of the pandemic on EBITDA for 2020-21 could be £1m.</p> <p>Governors noted that the continued ESFA funding for 16-18 year olds has created a degree of stability which makes the Group Budget for 2019-20 likely to be deliverable. The main uncertainties are how learners and funding bodies will behave in 2020-21.</p>														
<p>3.4</p> <p>3.4.1</p> <p>3.4.2</p> <p>3.4.3</p> <p>3.4.4</p>	<p>Early Indicators for 2020-21</p> <p>The plan assumes continuing restrictions and risks in relation to Covid- 19 affecting the main enrolment period (August) and start of the new academic year in September 2020. This further stage of re-opening will be subject to ongoing review. The Group will need to identify those student cohorts most likely to need to attend Colleges in September. These will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable students • Students needing to complete a license to practice which is not possible to undertake online • Vocational students requiring practical workshop time • New students needing induction <p>Enrolment will, wherever possible, be completed remotely. The induction period will be extended from one to two weeks so that students can attend College once during that time to meet their peers and teachers.</p> <p>Indicative timetabling guidelines envisage the following maxima for different student cohorts:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="419 1704 1297 1989"> <thead> <tr> <th>Student cohort</th> <th>Maximum weekly attendance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Vulnerable students and HNS</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vocational students requiring access to practical workshop facilities</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vocational students based entirely in classrooms</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HE students</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESOL students</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Part-time students</td> <td>Only where necessary</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This is intended to bring the capacity of the Group's delivery up to approximately 25% and allow for a detailed risk assessment to be conducted on this basis at each site.</p>	Student cohort	Maximum weekly attendance	Vulnerable students and HNS	100%	Vocational students requiring access to practical workshop facilities	50%	Vocational students based entirely in classrooms	10%	HE students	10%	ESOL students	20%	Part-time students	Only where necessary
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3.4.5	<p>Facilities Management of buildings and equipment and rules for working safely are being reviewed and will need to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE requirements. • Rules governing student attendance to aid delivery of social distancing 2m rule • The impact of restricting lifts only for people with mobility impairments • Use and handling of learning materials needs to be considered • Identification of Staff who should not or cannot not return immediately full or part-time
3.5	<p>The Group Principal took questions from governors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the Group is planning for the possibility of another lockdown. The Group Principal confirmed that this would be similar to what has happened under this lockdown; • Whether the Group is being unambitious about the re-opening in June and what other colleges are doing? Is sufficient focus being given to the Year 12 equivalent students or is the decision making being driven by the Unions? The Group Principal did not accept that the plan is unambitious. There is currently 90% engagement by Year 12 equivalent students and the risk to the health and safety of 2-3000 students and 400 staff travelling on public transport and socially distancing requirements is too great and currently unmanageable. The Group needs equally to support the Year 13 equivalent students in their progression and has decided that the best way to support both year groups is through an online or telephone one to one tutorial. The Group is not being driven by the Unions as there remain legitimate concerns about the safety of staff and students. Governors also flagged up the increased risk to the BAME communities and supported the Group's view that the plan is not unambitious. • Are we focusing sufficiently on disengaged students? It is not clear how many would attend if invited back in June. However, under the current lockdown arrangements all vulnerable students receive a regular cycle of contact calls and a number of supporting measures have been put in place for them. • What work has been undertaken to gather student feedback on the proposals? The College Principals and curriculum staff have been gathering feedback from students by dropping into Team meetings with students or holding virtual Student Focus Groups. A key concern are the safety risks from students travelling to the colleges by public transport. <p>It was resolved to note and approve the plan for the re-opening of the college sites.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting the Chair, on behalf of the Corporation, thanked the Group Principal and the College staff for all their hard work to keep the Group functioning so effectively throughout this period.</p>
	<p>The DfE Guidance suggested considering whether to establish a Coronavirus governance and leadership group to monitor the plan for reopening and consider any adjustments needed and /or circumstances that may require an immediate policy response.</p> <p>After discussion it was RESOLVED to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The setting up of a Covid-19 Governance and Leadership Working Party. including the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Corporation, the CEO/Principal, and 5 governors including a Staff Governor. The following governor members were appointed: Mr Foulston, Dr Brumwell, Ms Driver, Cllr Gordon, Mr Monger-Godfrey, Ms Murphy, Mr Stone and Mr Willett. • Officer members should include the Group Health and Safety officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead and may also include other senior staff as agreed by the working party. • The Membership of the working party will be reviewed after 3 months. • Draft Terms of Reference subject to finalising some details in these. • That the Working Party will review the detailed Health and Safety Risk Assessments for the re-opening of the College Sites • The first meeting of the Working Party to take place in week commencing 1st June. • Any questions asked by governors using the chat facility and left unanswered will be carried forward to be followed up by the Working Party.

<p>4.</p> <p>4.1.1</p> <p>4.1.2</p> <p>4.1.3</p> <p>4.1.4</p>	<p>TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT REPORT FROM QUALITY, LEARNING & STANDARDS COMMITTEE</p> <p>Mr Willett moved the adoption of the minutes of the Quality, Learning and Standards Committee meeting of 12 May 2020</p> <p><u>Accuracy of Minutes</u> The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.</p> <p>The meeting covered the period from March to May 2020 during the College Closure. Key items discussed related to the impact of the closure and plans for re-opening the college including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning during the college closure (copied to governors as Item 3.2 on this agenda); • Implications of cancellation of summer exams and arrangements for exam grading and assessment for summer 2020 qualifications • Impact of closure on data including work experience; • Impact on Curriculum Planning; • The risk allocated to the committee in relation to student numbers is very much a red risk • HE – The Chair, Principal, South Thames College and Head of Governance will be making proposals to the next meeting about governance of HE at STCG. <p>It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes.</p>
<p>4.2</p> <p>4.2.1</p> <p>4.2.2</p>	<p>FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS RE OFSTED REPORT STCG FEBRUARY 2020</p> <p>Feedback from stakeholders on the Group's OFSTED report was copied to governors who congratulated the Group on the excellent feedback received.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note this</p>
<p>REPORTS FROM CORPORATION COMMITTEES</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1.1</p> <p>5.1.2</p> <p>5.1.3</p>	<p>FINANCE, PLANNING & RESOURCES COMMITTEE</p> <p>Mr Ratnavel moved the adoption of the minutes of the Finance, Planning and Resources Committee meeting of 28 April 2020.</p> <p><u>Accuracy of Minutes</u> The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.</p> <p>Mr Ratnavel reported that the key item reviewed was the Group management accounts for March 2020 with a detailed focus on the COVID-19 sensitivity analysis discussed under Item 3.3 above.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes.</p>
<p>5.1.2</p>	<p>MARCH 2020 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS</p> <p>The Corporation received with the meeting papers the March 2020 Management accounts.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the management accounts.</p>
<p>5.2.1</p> <p>5.2.1.1</p> <p>5.2.1.2</p> <p>5.2.1.3</p>	<p>SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</p> <p>Cllr Gordon moved the adoption of the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting of 5 May 2020. The meeting looked at</p> <p><u>Accuracy of Minutes</u> The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To re-designate to allow for a second Staff Governor -- one from Academic Staff and one from organisational staff. 2. Governor vacancies to be filled with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A financially qualified governor; • A governor to join the Audit Committee ideally with some relevant experience such as audit / risk management;

5.2.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Academic Member of College staff; • (From September 2020) a replacement for Mr Allen – for a well-rounded individual ideally with strategic management / board / trustee experience; • More diversity in terms of equalities characteristics particularly more female and younger governors; • A nominee from RBK- ideally also filling some of the other skills / protected characteristic gaps identified above. <p>3. Link Governors should be encouraged to keep in touch with their Linked departments during the college closure due to the pandemic;</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes.</p>																
5.2.2	<p>CORPORATION STANDING ORDERS</p> <p>The Chair presented the revised Standing Orders for approval</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Standing Orders.</p>																
5.2.3	<p>CORPORATION BUSINESS CYCLE</p> <p>The Chair presented the Corporation Business Cycle for approval</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve the Business Cycle.</p>																
6. 6.1 6.2 6.3	<p>GROUP BRANDING AND NEW WEBSITE</p> <p>The meeting was joined by Brand Consultant Paul Tunnicliffe and the STCG Head of Marketing, Suna Marfe for a presentation on Group Branding and proposals for a new Group website.</p> <p>The presentation was introduced by the Principal, Carshalton and Merton Colleges who explained the need for a new Group Brand and a new Group website which is currently under development for release in early Autumn 2020. The presentation outlined the need to develop the Group brand with links between the individual college brands in order that stakeholders can make sense of external references such as OFSTED, and to allow for better promotion of all Colleges. There is also an urgent need to update the very tired visual language of the 4 College and Group brands. The presentation by the Brand Consultant presented the concepts and logos under development with examples of their possible uses.</p> <p>Following the meeting the two presentations were circulated to governors for feedback particularly on the overall idea of moving to a more unified identity, whilst maintaining the individual College brands.</p>																
	<p>TO NOTE DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporation Risk Review Meeting Tuesday 7 July 2020 @ 6 pm by Skype for all governors • Corporation meeting Tuesday 7 July 2020 @ 7pm by Skype 																
	<p>The Open Business of the meeting closed at 7.05 pm and was followed by a Confidential Session.</p> <p>Signed:..... Date:.....</p>																
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