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Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
<p>Board members</p> <p>In attendance</p>	<p>Bishop Auckland College Patrick Lonergan (Chair), Natalie Davison-Terranova (Principal/CEO), Sharron Trevor, Keith Ivory, Chris Hutchinson; Graham Currie; Kim Neilsen; Di Gowland; Simon Peacock</p> <p>Judith Layfield, Lynn Heighton, Ann Robinson-Ruddock (Clerk to the Corporation)</p>	
	<p>5.30 p.m. until 6.10 p.m. – Board Training in Careers Education and Student Progression given by Jennifer Phillips, Student Progression Manager.</p>	
<p>01</p>	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Steve Robson, Grant Sowerby and Clare Groves.</p>	
<p>02</p>	<p>Chair’s Address:</p> <p>P Lonergan thanked everyone for attending and announced the overall “good” rating from the Ofsted inspection of SWDT Centre (subject to moderation and publication).</p>	
<p>03</p>	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>i. <u>Approval of College Visit to Barcelona 14.5.2023 to 18.5.2023:</u> A Dixon had organised a further trip to Barcelona for 13 BSc Sports Coaching Students.</p> <p>It was AGREED in principle for the visit to go ahead, subject to A Dixon completing the latest Planning & Risk Assessment Form for Off-Site Visits and obtaining the signature of the College Health & Safety Officer. This would then be signed off by N Davison-Terranova and P Lonergan.</p>	
<p>05</p>	<p>Declarations of Interest: None declared.</p>	
<p>06</p>	<p>Staff Governor – continuation of Term of Office until 10.4.2024:</p> <p>S Trevor was asked to leaving the Meeting whilst a decision was made.</p> <p>It was AGREED that S Trevor should continue as Staff Governor until 10.4.2023.</p> <p>S Trevor returned to the Meeting, was informed of the decision and confirmed that she would be happy to continue in the role for a further year.</p>	
<p>07a</p>	<p>Previous Board Meeting: <u>Part “A” and “B” Minutes of the Board Meeting of 12.12.2022 and matters arising not on the agenda:</u></p>	

	<p>The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12.12.2022 were AGREED as a true record. No matters were arising.</p>	
<p>07b</p>	<p>Feedback from Governance Developmental Review:</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova gave feedback on Meeting observations from the recent governance developmental review: Board members agreed that the developmental review had been valuable and actions emerging would be taken forward within the broader context of the Governance Improvement Plan. Feedback in relation to EDI would be used to inform planning for the next Board strategy day. D Gowland stated that she had accessed the last Board Meeting remotely and the issues with IT had made it impossible for her to interact sufficiently and that in future any technology issues needed to be ironed out prior to the Meeting.</p> <p>Questions then followed:</p> <p>Q: Is the relationship between SWDT and the College Board clearly defined anywhere?</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova replied yes, the legal relationship is clearly established, with the College being the sole member of the SWDT company. Corporate Board members should be aware that they have overall responsibility for SWDT through appointment of appropriate directors and ensuring that stewardship of the subsidiary is in line with requirements set out in the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges. Oversight and effective information flow is maintained by having an overlap between the SWDT Executive Council and the College Board, as she, P Lonergan and K Ivory sit on the Council.</p> <p>Q: How do we implement change to address the review comments regarding the Board Meeting on 12.12.2022?</p> <p>J Layfield replied that it might be more appropriate to reduce the Agenda items at the December meeting and have fewer significant items on each Agenda.</p> <p>G Currie commented that the reason behind having Sub-Committees was for full discussion on particular items to take place there and then reporting back to the Board, where only questions needed to be asked. Going through the whole item again negated the need for the Sub-Committees.</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova explained that certain things needed to be approved at Board level, including the financial plan and SAR.</p> <p>P Lonergan commented that the Board and Sub-Committees should have strategic focus and always be looking forward. Board members were supplied with minutes from Sub-Committee Meetings and questions should be based on the outcomes of those Meetings.</p> <p>Q: Would more Board Meetings be appropriate?</p>	



	<p>N Davison-Terranova replied that additional Board meetings alongside the subcommittees would significantly increase workload and potentially lead to a reversion back to the issue of increased duplication. The previous 'unitary' structure had 7 Board Meetings per year with no Resources or Curriculum & Quality Committees. This structure had been effective but was changed as a result of the former FE Commissioner expressing his preference/instruction for colleges to have a committee structure.</p> <p>ARR suggested that the current Meeting schedule be continued, ensuring that Agendas and papers were circulated at least 7 days prior to each Meeting and those producing reports attempt to reduce them in size.</p> <p>It was AGREED to continue with the current format going forward.</p>	
<p>07c</p>	<p>Actions Register:</p> <p>1302 L Heighton to add percentage variances next to figures on management accounts. CLOSED</p> <p>1303 C Hutchinson stated that ETF had introduced a new training platform for Governors and would forward the information. The new platform contained 32 modules. ACTION: ARR to divide modules appropriately for Sub-Committees and circulate.</p> <p>1304 ARR to organise Board strategy and workshop would take place on a Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. AGREED: This would now be held all day Friday, 19.5.2023 instead. ACTION: ARR to organise with Park Head.</p> <p>1305 L Heighton had looked into asset sales being used for debt reduction/elimination and would report back in Finance Matters. CLOSED</p> <p>1306 ARR to invite K Turnbull and D Blackmore to next Board Meeting on 27.3.2023 - J Phillips giving careers training instead. ACTION: ARR to organise Apprenticeships training for next Board Meeting.</p> <p>1307 ACTION: L Heighton to look at insurance going forward. L Heighton reporting back in Finance Matters. CLOSED</p> <p>1308 ARR to check on training uptake prior to next Meeting. Still some outstanding training for new Board Members. ACTION: ARR to monitor.</p>	<p>ARR</p> <p>ARR</p> <p>ARR</p> <p>ARR</p>
	<p>Reports</p>	
<p>08a</p>	<p>Durham Gateway performance update:</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova gave the following update:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issue was the level of safeguarding incidents around sexual harassment and grooming. The College had a responsibility to support and educate young people about these difficult issues. • Attendance was 66.5%, in line with norms for this type of provision. The previous year, whilst based at Spennymoor, attendance had been 10% lower. • Work was being done on student progression and trying to implement work experience for the current cohort. • Student Progress – The mock GCSE results had been disappointing and students had not taken the exams seriously, however, progress was improving now. <p>Q: Are the safeguarding issues in hand?</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova responded that yes, the issues were in hand, but this was an ongoing process of trying to improve these students’ awareness and understanding of the issues.</p> <p>Q: Is that reflected in the College?</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova replied yes, these are issues across College and nationally, but presently even more prevalent amongst the 14-16-year olds.</p> <p>Q: Are the issues more prevalent than previously at Durham Gateway?</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova responded that this was a problem in the past, but awareness of the issues had improved as a result of the ‘Everyone’s Invited’ website. According to a subsequent OFSTED review, this was a national issue. A huge piece of work has been carried out across College to improve understanding of healthy relationships and reinforce positive behaviours.</p>	
08b	<p>Nursery Provision Update: A report had been circulated prior to the Meeting and no questions arose.</p>	
	<p>Board Meetings</p>	
09c	<p>Resources Committee Headline Report from Meeting held on 27.2.2023:</p> <p>G Currie reported that two items had been discussed which required Board approval.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Sub-Contracting Policy:</u> This had been updated due to changes in rules. This was AGREED by the Board. <u>Quarter 2 Reforecast:</u> At the December Meeting, a number of key risk areas had been identified, which could impact on the year end outcome. A discussion had taken place and L Heighton had been tasked with implementing cost savings and she had completed a great deal of work in that area. The Committee felt that the Quarter 2 reforecast was achievable and conservative. This was AGREED by the Board. <p>Concerns raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to pay market rates for certain salaries, as the College had been unable to fill 2 long-term IT vacancies. This could 	

	<p>potentially lead to a downturn in income due to inability to run courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale of assets and how proceeds could be spent. L Heighton reported that following the ONS reclassification, proceeds from the sale of assets were supposed to be spent on capital only. However, L Heighton had queried this with the DfE and was awaiting a response. It was hoped that these proceeds could be used to pay off debt arising from historic capital expenditure. • Tying into safeguarding, the figures for the number of students visiting the Emotional Resilience Nurse were concerning and it was recognised how important that service was. <p><i>G Currie left the Meeting at 7.17 p.m.</i></p>	
09a	<p>Search & Governance Committee Headline Report from Meeting held on 30.1.2023:</p> <p>P Lonergan reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advertisement for Governor recruitment was being prepared and would be circulated in the local press and social media. • It had been suggested that Meetings be moved from Mondays to Wednesdays from the next academic year forward and this was AGREED by the Committee. 	
09b	<p>Curriculum and Quality Committee Headline Report from Meeting held on 13.3.2023:</p> <p>D Gowland gave the following report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time had been spent looking at recruitment and numbers going forward. • Attendance was never above 90% even at the start of the academic year and a vast amount of resource was allocated to improving attendance. N Davison-Terranova commented that attendance had become a serious issue in schools and colleges nationally following the pandemic, with a 6% attendance gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students being reported for schools. • Curriculum Quality Reviews were well under way. • The Quality Improvement Action Plan for Aspire was robust. 	
09d	<p>Audit Committee Headline Report from Meeting held on 6.3.2023:</p> <p>J Yarrow gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The internal auditors had raised concerns in November about the lack of response to some of their recommendations. At the last Meeting, they reported that response had improved significantly. • The internal auditors had previously recommended that the College undertake a full audit of the SWDT apprenticeship provision. A lack of time and resources had meant that this had not been and was unlikely to be done in the future. As the internal auditors were looking at apprenticeships, the Audit Committee would await the outcome. 	

	<p>L Heighton stated that AuditOne were stepping back from FE, but would complete the current year’s audit. They were prepared to continue for the next academic year, but at a much higher cost. L Heighton would put this out to tender from 1.8.2023. They would be carrying out an apprenticeship audit in May at SWDT Centre and L Heighton would give feedback to the next Audit Committee Meeting.</p>	
09e	<p>SWDT Executive Council Headline Report from Meeting held on 23.3.2023:</p> <p>K Ivory reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recent Ofsted inspection had gone extremely well and everyone was pleased with the outcome. All aspects were graded ‘good’. The Lead Inspector had described the SAR as very accurate. The areas that had been identified as needing improvement had already been included in the Quality Improvement Action Plan. • The Executive Council now wanted the Centre to have a more strategic outlook and work was being done with the interim General Manager to develop a strategic plan. • Regarding Health & Safety, the Executive Council wanted clarity on how incidents and “near misses” were reported and the College Health & Safety Officer was being invited to attend the next Meeting in May to provide input on any trends around accidents and incidents and risk assessments. • The latest financial forecast showed a small increase in revenue, mainly due to adjustments to non-pay costs. 	
09f	<p>Remuneration Committee Headline Report from Meeting held on 1.3.2023:</p> <p>P Lonergan reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several activities were ongoing, including senior staff salary benchmarking with other colleges in the region and future proofing the College, particularly with regard to senior leadership. A further update would be given to the next Board Meeting. 	
	Finance Matters	
10	<p>Year to Date Position @ 28.2.2023:</p> <p>L Heighton explained that she had completed and submitted the Financial Record to ESFA. This was a complex document which matched the financial statements for the last academic year. The document had been returned in early March for adjustment.</p> <p>From an intervention perspective, over the past year, intervention criteria had been softened, due to the cost of living crisis, lack of increase in funding rates and staffing costs on Colleges. Intervention from the ESFA, DfE, etc. started at “inadequate” and the College had just gone into “requires improvement”. The release of the final document on the College’s financial health was awaited. L Heighton might be expected to complete additional returns throughout the year.</p>	

	L Heighton confirmed that the College had moved from 180 to 200 points and was in good financial health.	
11	<p>Financial Matters:</p> <p>L Heighton reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Quarter 2 reforecast had been completed in January. • New SWDT management accounts were being completed. These were circulated to Board members as well as SWDT Executive Council. • It had been confirmed that the College could continue with the current insurance arrangements. A survey was being done to find out what cover Colleges currently had in their insurance policies to ensure sufficient cover was in place. It was AGREED to continue with the current insurance cover until further notice. L Heighton would update the Board as and when there were any developments. 	
12	<p>Approval of updated Finance Regulations:</p> <p>L Heighton reported that there were significant changes to the Regulations and requested that this be deferred until the next Meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: ARR to add to Agenda for 10.7.2023</p>	ARR
13	<p>Approval of updated Sub-Contracting Policy:</p> <p>This had been approved in 09ci. Above.</p>	
	Student Engagement	
14	<p>Feedback from Student Forums:</p> <p>S Peacock had carried out a student survey and gave feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response rate had been received. • All age groups had been surveyed. • With regard to equipment provided to students, the response was very favourable. • Students had requested a quiet place to sit at lunchtimes. • Issues with chair comfort for HE students. <p>S Peacock would meet with J Layfield to discuss further.</p>	
	Quality and Performance Matters	
15	<p>Key Performance Indicators monitoring report:</p> <p>No questions arose from the document circulated prior to the Meeting.</p>	

	N Davison-Terranova pointed out that there had been some miscommunication with staff regarding curriculum performance reviews and this had now been addressed.	
	Strategy and Risk	
16	<p>Strategic Developments Update:</p> <p>There were a number of updates including the McIntyre Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timeframe for the building opening was spring/summer 2024. • Builders were currently treating dry rot. DCC had allocated a conservation grant for that work, sourced through the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone. • A planning application had been submitted. • N Davison-Terranova, J Layfield and L Heighton would be developing plans after Easter following a steering group meeting involving external consultants. <p>Regarding Higher Education Developments, validation (subject to conditions) had been received for the Masters Degree in Counselling (Psychotherapy Studies). A further validation for Healthcare Studies was expected.</p> <p>With regard to the sale of assets, information from DfE indicated that it was likely that the proceeds could be used to pay off debt. A local authority had confirmed interest in entering negotiations.</p> <p>Work was progressing on T-Levels for launch in September 2023. Recruitment had been slow on the Digital Course, but Early Years and Engineering had attracted a good deal of interest. Capital funding had been allocated to the College and SWDT to support delivery of the new courses.</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova commented that following on from discussion at the 2022 strategy weekend around the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), the North East Automotive Alliance had made good progress on development of the plan. Most emerging priorities were already on the College’s agenda.</p> <p>N Davison-Terranova would be asking the Board to sign off the Accountability Statement prior to the end of May.</p>	
17	<p>Risk Management Report including Risk Register and Risk Appetite:</p> <p>J Layfield explained that risk appetite had now been introduced, with all of the elements of risk on the register being reviewed and the appropriate appetite for risk identified. As with the risk register as a whole, this would continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.</p>	
	AGM	
18	<p>Terms of Reference for Board and its Committees Review:</p> <p>In accordance with recommendations from the Internal Auditors, the frequency of all Board and Committee Meetings had been added to the Terms of Reference.</p>	

	The Board APPROVED the revised Terms of Reference Document.	
19	<p>Instrument & Articles of Government Review:</p> <p>A RESOLUTION was PASSED by the Board for the following amendment to the Instrument & Articles of Government:</p> <p>3. Changes to the composition of the Corporation (2) a. The total number of Governors of the Corporation will not be less than nine or more than fifteen.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the revised Instrument & Articles of Government.</p> <p>ACTION: ARR to add revised document to website.</p>	ARR
20	<p>Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members: Deferred until 10.7.2023)</p> <p>ACTION: ARR to add to next Agenda.</p>	ARR
21	<p>Governance Attendance Record:</p> <p>Circulated prior to the Meeting.</p> <p>Q: Is there anything within the Instrument & Articles of Government regarding non-attendance at Meetings?</p> <p>ACTION: ARR to check and report back (<i>Checked and no reference to Governor attendance in Instrument or Terms of Reference.</i>)</p>	ARR
22	<p>Committee Memberships:</p> <p>It was AGREED to defer this item to the next Board Meeting on 10.7.2023.</p> <p>ACTION: ARR to add to Agenda for 10.7.2023.</p>	ARR
23	<p>Draft Calendar/programme of work for 2023/24:</p> <p>Subject to Curriculum & Quality Meeting being changed from 7.2.2024, the 2023/24 calendar and programme of work were AGREED. (<i>C&Q Meeting changed to 21.2.2024</i>)</p>	
Part B		
24	<p>Property Update:</p> <p>J Layfield reported that the financial regulations meant that if a figure of more than £50k was being spent, Board approval must be sought. Fire dampers were being installed at a cost of £200k, with half being installed during the current academic year and the remainder in 2023/24. A grant had been received which would cover this.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the purchase.</p>	



	The sale of the BTS Training Centre in Newton Aycliffe would be completed by 31.3.2023.	
25	Summary and appraisal of Meeting: P Lonergan ended the Meeting by posing several questions from the Post-Meeting effectiveness questionnaire to the Board. It was AGREED that, going forward, the Agenda format for Meetings would be looked at more closely to ensure constructive, time-managed Meetings.	
	Date of next meeting: Monday, 10 July 2023 at 5.00 p.m.	
	Ann Robinson-Ruddock Clerk to the Corporation	

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.31 p.m.

Signed
Patrick Lonergan
Chair

Date 10.7.2023

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