



MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE

TUESDAY 6 JULY 2021 – 9.30 AM

TO BE HELD VIA ZOOM

PART I

Clerk: Mrs R Clare

Attendance:	M Sharples (Chair), C Trasler, K Williams, S Musgrave, R Kay, M Wright, M Grant, N Schofield, G Lagan, A Sutcliffe, P Newell, G White
In attendance:	L French, L Reed
Apologies:	J Walters, E Kennedy, Y Saxon

Actions:

36/21 SMT Presentations (College Career Service) Q: Will there be any quick changes to the College career service? The service was impacted because of Covid 19. The College will continue with tutorials and this area will be reviewed in further detail in September and any next steps brought forward to the October Corporation meeting.	LR
40/21 Debt Write Off Reference numbers will be included in future Debt Write Off reports.	LF
40/21 Financial Dashboard In future where the signature of the Chair and Accounting Officer is, a date will also be included.	LF
41/21 Bid update Q: Would it be possible to include timescales in the table in future?	LR

MINUTES

Item	Title
30/21	Welcome and Apologies for Absence The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies for absence was received for J Walters, Y Saxon and E Kennedy.
31/21	Declaration of Members' Interest M Sharples declared an interest as his wife works for Cheshire East.

34/21 **Minutes**

To confirm and approve the Part 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2021

The minutes of the Part 1 Corporation meeting held on 11 May 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

35/21 **Matters arising from the meeting held on 11 May 2021**

To discuss any matters arising from the meeting held on 11 May 2021

The two teaching and learning actions will be carried forward for future reports. Number of enrolments and the number of in person lesson observations and online lesson observations will be included in future reports.

LF stated that HR had confirmed that BAME is the title that is being used within Education reporting at the current time.

36/21 **SMT Presentations**

Receive presentation on Staff Survey

ZB was welcomed to the meeting to present the staff survey. The main points from the presentation were the following:

- The staff survey was sent to all members of staff electronically and 70% of members of staff completed the survey (this met the KPI target and was an increase from 65% in 2019/20).
- There were 37 questions asked with 9 themes (the themes were presented).
- It was difficult to analyse the data this academic year as it was compared to 57 colleges who used the survey, some of the colleges had not had as many lockdowns as the North West and colleges had carried out the survey at different times of the year. Macclesfield College completed the survey in May.
- The analysis the college will be focussing on is 'percentage agree' rather than distance travelled. Distance travelled was too difficult to measure due to isolations and how Covid19 had impacted colleges differently depending on the region.
- The highest percentage agree statements were in 'Safety, Health and Environment' and 'The work itself'.
- The strong positive statements were shared with Corporation Members.
- The areas to explore further were shared and these responses required further analysis with HR leading on cross department focus groups to discuss the survey in more detail. An action plan will be created once managers have scrutinised the survey results at department level to identify any particular focus areas.
- The questions will be better worded in the future as some of the questions were misleading.

Q: The question relating to planning has a lower percentage, is that a problem area for members of staff?

A focus group will be conducted with members of staff to explore in greater detail.

Q: My efforts at work are recognised received 59%, do you know why?

This was thought to be related to the challenges of the pandemic but will be explored within a staff focus group.

Q: What software was used to conduct the survey?

QDP was used to conduct the survey, however it had a number of discrepancies. The survey was conducted at different times, the survey did not report against colleges to show distance travelled. A different tool to conduct the survey in the future will be explored.

Receive presentation on Student Survey

ZB presented the student survey. The main points from the presentation were the following:

- 60% full time learners and 37% part time learners completed the survey.
- The survey was conducted from March to June.
- It was noted that the Progress Coaches conduct the survey but they were isolating due to Covid 19 through some of the period that the survey was conducted. The examinations were also brought forward due to Covid 19 and therefore examinations took place through some of the period the survey was conducted.
- The questions related to Macclesfield College and the course.
- The analysis the college will be focussing on is 'percentage agree' rather than distance travelled. Distance travelled was too difficult due to isolations and how Covid 19 had impacted colleges differently depending on the region.
- 89% of full-time learners indicated percentage agree for questions relating to Macclesfield College and 86% of full-time learners indicated percentage agree for questions relating to 'My Course'.
- 96% of part-time learners indicated percentage agree for questions relating to Macclesfield College and 97% of part-time learners indicated percentage agree for questions relating to 'My Course'.
- A strong positive percentage agree was indicated for 'I feel safe at College'. The strong positive statements were reported for both full-time and part-time students.
- ZB explained that there were highly positive responses from Adult Learners.
- The areas to explore further included the 'careers services being helpful' received 76%. This is currently an external service but members of staff could be upskilled and this could become an inhouse service in the future.
- The next steps for full-time learners include a tutorial induction focussing on lost learning due to Covid 19 and bring topics that require further learning to the beginning of the academic year. A focus will be on assessments, target grades and teacher assessment.
- The next steps for part-time learners include completion in a timely manner due to the impact of Covid 19 and capturing learner voice earlier in the academic year, this is in order to capture evidence in relation to course review.

Q: The 'Assessment tasks were made clear to me' received 84%, was there any correlation with this question and underperformance?

This was due to the BTECs being brought forward and mark boards switched off due to Covid.

Q: The College must be pleased with the positive student responses?

Yes, we can confidently state that it was a positive learner voice and students are happy at Macclesfield College.

Q: Will there be any quick changes to the College career service?

The service was impacted because of Covid 19. The College will continue with tutorials and this area will be reviewed in further detail in September and any next steps brought forward to the October Corporation meeting.

Q: Has there been an impact on employers?

Yes, the College is hoping this will improve after 19 July 2021 when restrictions may be lifted. The College will continue to work with employers to alleviate any concerns. LR is a member of the Pledge Board. However, a number of engagement activities did not take place last year due to Covid.

Q: Was the survey impacted by low engagement in any particular course areas?

Engagement was across all courses and was not low in any one area. Engagement was evenly spread across all courses.

Q: Did the survey include questions relating to mental health and pastoral care?

Yes, the questions in the survey related to all support channels.

Receive presentation on Employer Survey

TC joined the meeting to present the Employer Survey. The Chair welcomed TC to the meeting. The main points from the presentation were the following:

- The survey was conducted during April and May.
- 33% of employers completed the survey which was higher than the previous year.
- There was a low response rate in Hairdressing and Hospitality due to business closures due to Covid 19.
- There were 21 questions and two themes within the questions; the employer experience and experience on programme.
- The analysis focussed on percentage agreed and distance travelled.
- Strong positive responses were shared.
- Areas to explore further included 'assessors' online visits were well planned' and 'assessor provides sufficient feedback on apprentice progress'. All but one question showed an improvement in distance travelled.
- The next steps include student progress reports and members of staff will have employer feedback KPIs linked to their appraisal. There will also be further compliance checks in some sections including scrutinising of diaries for assessor visits.

Q: Does the assessor meet with students for reviews?

Yes, the assessor meets with the students for reviews but there is not an employer present. Going forward the employer will receive an update following the meeting.

Q: Who leads the approach to employers from the College?

There is a lead for training and sign ups but it is not always one person who responds to emails and enquiries. The apprenticeship agreement is set up from the beginning and communication is always from a member of the Maxim team. Every apprenticeship will be given a line manager and this person will always be involved and take responsibility for the agreement. TC confirmed that the number of apprenticeships who require Functional Skills has reduced.

The Corporation congratulated TC on her progress and distance travelled within a challenging year.

37/21 KPIs 2020/21

To review the Key Performance Indicators for 2020/21

The Principal presented the KPI document for 2020/21 in advance of the meeting. The summary document shared the list of detailed changes since the last report was received. There were no further questions.

38/21 Governance

To receive the Corporation structure for 2021/22 and Calendar of meetings

The Director of Governance shared the Corporation structure for 2021/22 and calendar of meetings. The calendar of meetings was approved.

Verbal update from the Vice Chair to recommend a new appointment

MS, MW, RK and RC had held a meeting with IC, a potential new governor. IC would bring a range of skills to the Corporation as the Managing Director of the Forum of Private business. His role included taking control of all the key management functions of the organisation, setting the strategy, controlling the budgets and instigating a wholesale change within the Forum. It was recommended that the Corporation appoint IC as a new Member. This was approved and the Director of Governance will complete the process.

Governor Engagement

A number of Government Engagement activities had taken place since the last meeting. This included the following activities and was reported within the Annual Impact Report shared with the Corporation in advance of the meeting:

12 May PN met with LF (remotely)

18 May JW sent her apologies and this will be rearranged for the autumn term

9 June KW Core visit attended a Student Council meeting (remotely)

18 June GL rearranged to autumn term to include a teaching and learning visit

The Director of Governance thanked the governors for their time and commitment with the engagement activities that had taken place.

39/21 Audit Committee

The Director of Governance provided a copy of the Audit Committee minutes in advance of the meeting. The Chair of the Audit Committee provided a verbal update on the meeting. This included under item 14/21 of the minutes, no matters relating to fraud, GDPR or reportable incidents was reported. The following Internal Audits will be carried over and reported on at the autumn term Audit Committee: MIS: Apprenticeships and Follow Up.

BDO have carried out three assignments to date and have provided the following levels of assurance and number of recommendations for each assignment:

Audit Assignment	Design	Operational Effectiveness	Number of recommendations
Cyber Security	Moderate	Moderate	7
Accounts Payable	Substantial	Substantial	2
Curriculum Planning	Substantial	Moderate	3

There was a detailed review of the Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22. The committee reviewed the amount of days required for each audit in detail. It was agreed that:

- Budget control and Treasury Management is merged into 'Budget control and cashflow', with days (for original Treasury Management audit) increased from 4 to 5.
- Health & safety – days reduced from 5 to 4.
- Follow-up – days reduced from 3 to 2.

The updated plan was recommended for approval by the Corporation and was approved.

The Chair of the Audit Committee recommended the Internal Audit Fees for approval:

The Internal Audit fees for 2021/22 will be 33 x £488 per day= £16,104. The Director of Governance confirmed that the proposed fee increase considers RPI/CPI and the general inflation seen across audit firms at present. The Internal Audit fees were approved.

The Chair of Audit recommended the External Audit Fees for approval: The external auditor's fees were received in advance of the meeting. Macclesfield College engaged with Wylie and Bissett as external auditors for the college with effect from 2020-21 financial statements audit. The cost to the College will be £16,595 plus VAT for the year end audit, including audit of the Teachers' Pension Scheme. The additional work required for the additional point in the Audit Code of Practice will be at an additional cost. At this time, the cost is not known as the guidance has not been published. The increase will be shared once the guidance has been reviewed and the extra work required is known. The Corporation agreed the proposal for the fees for the external audit.

The Director of Governance explained that this was M Grant's last meeting as Chair of the Audit Committee. M Grant will be leaving the Corporation in March 2022 and she will be remaining as an Audit Committee Member until this time. The Director of Governance thanked M Grant for her time, commitment and attention to detail during her time as Chair of Audit during her 4-year term. The Director of Governance informed the Audit Committee that M Wright will become Chair of the Audit Committee from September 2021 and she looked forward to working with him.

40/21 **Business**

i. Receive the College accounts for the period ended March 2021

LF presented the May Management Accounts for review. LF is expecting to deliver a small improved surplus budget, with a financial health grade of 'Outstanding'. LF confirmed that there is an increase in the Apprenticeship budget and a reduction in tuition fees. The KPIs on page 3, show 'Outstanding' Financial Health, 46 days cash in hand and the bank covenant is forecast to be compliant.

The challenges around Covid 19 indicate that the AEB may be difficult to achieve and revision to forecasts have now been made. The full year forecast is reduced to £425K from the original budget of £566K. Unearned income below 90% threshold will be clawed back, this was included in the forecast as £360K after the clawback. There has been a recruitment drive in apprenticeships and there was an increase in June. The tables on page 10 of the report, highlight the 269 starts from May through to August. The staff costs are in line with the FE Commissioners recommendation. The pension is unknown until it is actual but has been well controlled. Page 12 of the report explains the pay costs in further detail and where costs have been controlled.

The Chair of the Corporation congratulated the team on presenting a small surplus, in an unpredicted year. The ELT had taken swift business action and as a consequence this had placed the College in a positive position when there would be a number of colleges in the sector facing financial difficulty.

ii. Budget 2020/21 and two-year Financial Forecast 2021/23 including applications

LF presented the Budget 2020/21- and two-year Financial Forecast 2021/23 including applications. It was noted that the College is required to submit a forecast return for the period 2020-21 to 2022-23 by 31 July approved by the Corporation. The new proforma the ESFA provided has been used so the tables within the report do look different than in previous years. The College health is forecast to be Outstanding for the duration of the plan. The College KPIs are shared within the report for each financial year and shared with governors. A small surplus is expected to be achieved in each financial year.

On page 4 of the report the ESFA recommended within their guidance to remove borrowing and replace this with debt service cover so this is included as suggested.

On page 5 and 6 of the report the planned income is shared and for 2020-21 the College received an allocation to fund 1100 learners. For planning purposes in 2021/22, the college has planned for 1,241 learners with no further growth in 2022/2023. The 2020-21 revised forecasts indicate that the college can expect to receive £1,785K apprenticeship income and is forecasting to achieve £2,451K in 2021-

22 and 2022-23. This is achievable and any changes can be made going forward as further income comes in.

The Vice Principal explained that due to Covid 19, the ESFA confirmed that there would be clawback on the Adult Budget in 2020-21 of any unearned income below 90% of the allocation for AEB. In 2020/21 the college reduced its income target to £425K and has also used this as the basis for budget planning in 2021/22 and 2022/23 to be prudent in its approach. The allocation received from the ESFA regarding AEB is £566K for 2021-22. In relation to Advanced Learner Loans, for 2020-21 income has been reduced due to the impact of Covid 19 and the lockdown situation the college has encountered. For 2021-22 and 2022-23 the college has included income up to its allocation provided at £253K and has curriculum plans in place to deliver this.

iii. Debt Write Off

The Vice Principal presented the debt write off report in advance of the meeting. For 2020-21 there are ten debts which require approval for write off. These debts relate to tuition fees dating back to 2017. All of these debts are fully covered by the bad debt provision within the college accounts.

In line with the college's tuition fee policy, the learners were liable for the fees and the college pursued the collection of these debts via the debt collection agency used by the college. LF confirmed that all avenues have been explored to enable the collection of the debt.

Governors approved the debt write off within the report. **Reference numbers will be included on future reports.**

iv. Financial Dashboard and ESFA letter

The Financial Dashboard and ESFA letter confirmed the financial grade as 'Good' for 2019/20. The ESFA have reviewed the College's audited financial statements, the financial statements management letter and the annual report of the Audit Committee and no issues have been identified and no significant financial control concerns from the review. **In future where the signature of the Chair and Accounting Officer is, a date will also be included.**

41/21 Teaching and Learning

i. receive Equality and Diversity report

The Corporation received an updated summer term copy of the Equality and Diversity report, prepared by the Director of HR in advance of the meeting. The Chair of the Corporation had attended the Equality and Diversity Committee meeting where the full report was reviewed. The report provides an overview of the college recruitment activity for the period September 2020 - June 2021 and provides key statistics around gender profile and ethnicity of applications and appointments made. It also contains the corporate profile of staff by age; gender and ethnicity together with disability under the equality act statistics. There were no further questions in relation to the report.

ii. Bid update

The Vice Principal presented an update report on the bids. The Vice Principal explained that there are currently three large bids that are awaiting outcomes; including FECA condition monies, LEP Digital Skills Hub and CDF for 16-19 Study Programmes. The other sizeable bid related to the collaborative strategic fund. The bid table demonstrated the size and scope of investment.

Q: Would it be possible to include timescales in the table in future?

Yes, this will be included in future reports.

The Principal explained that the DfE RoTAP related to the register of training providers and the application is resubmitted annually.

Q: Is the Accelerate bid with Chester University?

There is a wider Accelerate bid for HE that is individual and also the IoT covering L4 and L5 provision in health, science, construction and engineering which is a project across four colleges. Macclesfield College will specialise in Digital and Creative Media. RK also continues to Chair the Principals Group for the local colleges to ensure there is a collaborative approach.

Q: Is there any further development with T Levels?

The College will look to launch the Creative T Level in 2023/24. The numbers for this have been kept cautious.

Other income for 2020-21 included monies received from the ESFA in relation to the Estates FECA grant and also Covid support income in relation to the furlough of some staff during lockdown, alongside income received from students for bus passes. For 2021-22 and 2022-23 planned income only relates to income received from students for bus passes.

The Vice Principal explained that a pay award for staff during was given in 2020-21 of 1%; a further 1% pay award has been budgeted in 2021-22 and 2022-23 within the plan. Staff costs as a % of income (excluding restructuring) is planned to be 64.42% for 2020-21; 65.28% for 2021-22 and 65.6% 2022-23.

The Vice Principal pointed out other areas to note including the increase in teaching costs from that of 2020-21. These relate to the restoration of EPA costs in 2021-22 and future years where EPA costs reduced in 2020-21 due to the pandemic and reduced completions in year. The operational and maintenance costs in 2020-21 included the costs relating to the FECA grant received in 2020-21, this was a one-off addition for the remedial works required which were funded by this grant.

The bank covenant is in place for the duration of the plan. The plan is cautious and includes cash days in hand remaining at 50 and an estimated reduction in apprenticeships and loans and possible loss of income.

A member congratulated the team on achieving the AEB.

Q: The plan only allows for a 1% pay rise for members of staff, is there any way this can be increased?

The Principal confirmed that there is a contingency budget but the College will be holding strong to include a 1% pay rise for the duration of the plan. This was a positive position taking into consideration the impact of Covid 19 and other colleges may not be in a position to be able to offer this.

Q: Is there a Union recommendation in relation to staff pay?

Yes, there is a union recommendation that arrives each year. It is normally different to the AoC recommendation. The College always aims to deliver the AoC recommendation if the financial position is stable and supports the College sustainability.

Q: Will the College see a reduction in apprenticeships?

The dips have been included in the forecast but the College has built back post lockdown and will increase in different areas.

The Chair thanked the executive for all their hard work in submitting the bids to date and all the extra work that had been submitted to tight deadlines.

42/21 **Policies**

The following policies were reviewed and approved:

- Advanced Learning Loan Bursary
- Discretionary Learner Support funds 16-18-year olds
- Discretionary Learner Support funds 19+ students
- Higher Education Fee Payment Policy
- Higher Education Refund and Compensation Policy
- Business Continuity Policy
- Critical Incident Policy

43/21 **Date and time of the next meeting**

The first meeting of the academic year will take place on 5 October 2021 at 9.30am. The Director of Governance will confirm nearer the time if the meeting is to be held remotely or in person.

The Chair thanked the Principal and Executive Team for all their hard work this academic year, it has been an extremely challenging year but both the financial and teaching and learning position have remained strong.

Impact of the meeting:

A detailed review of the financial current position and future financial forecast (Outstanding financial health for the duration of the plan).
--

Comprehensive review of year end KPI document.
--

The staff survey, student survey and employer survey were shared. Two members of SMT presented the surveys and provided detailed analysis.
--

The Governance Impact plan was reviewed and evidence was included showing positive engagement.
--

Update on all bids and development areas was shared, detailing the enormous amount of work carried out to date.

Signed by Chair:	
------------------	--