

ESCG Board Meeting MINUTES

Date	29 th March 2022	Time	14:00-17:00
Venue	Station Plaza Campus, Hastings		
Chair	David Smith		

Membership – David Smith (Chair), Ian Mehrstens (Chair Designate), Rebecca Conroy (CEO & Principal), Mark Fisher, Gill Short, Marie Sangster, Steve Hedges, Graham Cook, Catherine Manning, Angela Smith, Alex Cheeseman, Priscilla Kendall, Averil Price, Becky Cooke, Nicola Taylor, Len Senior, James Cooper-Lloyd.

In Attendance – Tim Hulme, Martin Penny (Interim CFO), Mark Wardle (Deputy Principal), Hayley Robertson (Head of Partnerships), Lauren Crawley (Director of People), Nick Backstrom, (FE Consultant), Belle Howard (Director of Governance), Claire Alexander

Apologies: Tim Hulme, Angela Smith, Nicola Taylor, Len Senior, Lauren Crawley

Pre-Meeting

a)	SUSSEX LSIP AND SDF UPDATE	14:05
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS opened the pre-meeting at 14:05 with a warm welcome to participants. • DS explained that the first part of the pre-meeting would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A presentation and Board discussion on the Skills & Post-16 Education Bill currently with parliament and its potential impact for Sussex skills planning and collaboration. ○ An update from the Project Leads working on the Strategic Development Fund ‘trailblazer’ arrangements for collaborative ‘accelerator’ capital and revenue programmes, to boost the capacity of FE Sussex colleges to offer green technology training and carbon saving technical solutions. • DS then delivered a presentation to the Board, which focussed on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National & Local Landscape – an outline of the FE sector historical context since 1992, including variances in approach between England and the rest of the UK. Emphasis on the current activity to establish a collaborative approach to local skills improvement planning (LSIP). ○ Sussex Context – as a recipient of both LSIP and Strategic Development Fund (SDF) funding, there were far reaching implications for a range of stakeholders. As an area with a diverse and multi-faceted socio-economic profile, Sussex (East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove) had significant potential as a test area. However, additional complexity arose from the presence of two local education partnerships (LEPs) in the area – ‘Coast2Coast LEP’ and the ‘South East LEP’. ○ Key Questions - Was there sufficient interest/understanding across the key stakeholders? Where do we stand on ‘accountability v autonomy’? Who was prepared to ‘give’ as well as ‘take’? Was FE Sussex ‘fit for purpose’? Why would Chichester College Group (and the Sussex Sixth Form Colleges) want to collaborate? Who pays and how? 	

Pre-Meeting

- **Sussex Chairs Forum** – led the drive for a Sussex Skills Stakeholder event on 8th March 2021, resulting in the successful ‘trailblazer’ programmes now in delivery across Sussex.
- In the light of the Bill progressing through parliament and the prospectus calling for proposals for the next round of collaborative skills planning activity, key next steps moving forward:
 - Sussex to consider the collective governance framework implications for LSIP delivery.
 - DfE’s proposal for strategic funding expected 1st April 2022, for which Sussex was well positioned to submit a bid.
 - To determine whether Sussex is deemed a suitable ‘economic area’.
 - To continue to engage in learning from trailblazer activity.
- RC reflected that FE Sussex needed to evolve and review its approach and was currently focussed upon appointing a new CEO. There had been recognition of ESCGs success in establishing robust relationships between sixth forms, general further education (GFE) colleges and land-based colleges.
- RC added that moving forward there were a number of opportunities that arose from engagement with the governance framework, as well greater collaboration in a range of projects and learning together. Priority projects would include digital technology, health sciences & social care, in addition to the existing focus on green technology.
- RC then introduced Hayley Robertson (Head of Partnerships) and Nick Backstrom, (FE Consultant), who had been invited to share an update on the Decarbonisation Academy Project.
- HR and NB then delivered a presentation to Governors, which focussed on the following project objectives:
 - Develop curriculum and fit out decarbonisation academies across East and West Sussex.
 - Deliver pilot courses to employers, students and staff.
 - Create a sustainable legacy.
- HR and NB concluded their presentation by outlining the following key next steps:
 - **The Skills Gap** – development of continuing professional development (CPD) for staff.
 - Executive Team to drive SDF bid, starting 1st April–16th May 2022.
 - The course modules need to be inserted into the prospectus and the current study programmes, T levels and apprenticeships. Additionally, develop a commercial suite of courses.
- The following Governor discussion then occurred:
 - **GS noted that a former student had since developed a small-medium sized construction business and asked – how would similar organisations find out about this project?** NB advised that they had been working with the Green Growth platform, with a view to engage a wide range of target audiences. Additionally, a formal launch had been planned for July 2022, which would enable engagement with a wide range of employers.

Pre-Meeting

- **AP asked – have you heard of the South East Consortium?** HR confirmed that they had not. AP explained that this membership body was owned by 49 housing associations and local governments, which had developed in excess of 450,000 homes. **AP agreed to put HR and NB in touch with the South East Consortium.**
- IM reflected on the skills gaps highlighted in the presentation and suggested that it may be prudent to raise this for discussion at the next local college board (LCB) meetings, for which local employers were key participants. IM then considered the associated linkages with curriculum delivery.
- **IM reflected on the ‘commercial offer’ and asked – who owns the intellectual property?** NB confirmed that this was jointly owned by the colleges in the partnership. NB also explained that there was a centralised Learner Management System, so the colleges could equally profit from the technology, though the intent was for the colleges to work together to deliver the project.
- **IM noted that the ‘end point’ in the emerging offer for employers, was higher education and asked – should this be extended to include CPD?** NB/HR agreed, noting that this could also be extended to higher apprenticeships and doctorates.
- MF reflected on the importance of creating a range of career/learning pathways outside of the traditional university route. MF also considered the need to future proof for subsequent changes in government priorities by ensuring a balanced and collaborative approach.
- IM reflected that rather than reshaping the focus and remit of FE Sussex, it may be more useful for a new organisation to be established with an entirely fresh perspective, with particular clarity on whether it was Executive or Governance led.

SH joined the meeting at 15:20.

#	Item	Action
1. ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS		
1.1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	15:21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair opened the ESCG Board meeting at 15:21 with a warm welcome to colleagues. • Apologies were received and accepted from AS, NT, TH, JCL, LS and LC. • DS noted that this would be his final meeting as Chair (and member of the Board) and at its close, he would formally handover to IM. • DS reminded participants of the format for the meeting, where confidential items relating to commercial sensitivity and staffing matters would be covered in the confidential section of the agenda, with just the Independent Governors (and CEO if appropriate) in attendance. • DS welcomed BH to her first full Board meeting, as the newly appointed Director of Governance. 	

#	Item	Action																								
1.2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no new declarations of interest received. 	15:26																								
1.3	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING <p>1.3.1 Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors considered the minutes from the following meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15th December 2021 31st January 2022 – <i>Extraordinary Meeting</i> 21st February 2022 – <i>Extraordinary Meeting</i> Governors agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate record of what was discussed. 	15:27																								
1.4	MATTERS ARISING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters arising were noted as follows: <table border="1" data-bbox="181 954 1366 2152"> <thead> <tr> <th>Matters Arising</th> <th>Update</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="2">21st February 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>No matters arising.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">31st January 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1. RC noted that she would reflect on that agreement [Chalkpit sale] and ensure the PMO is kept up to date on the position when this is clarified.</td> <td>Closed – This action had been completed. RC confirmed that the Chalkpit had now been successfully sold and that funds had subsequently been received.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. RC and MP will take forward the next stage of negotiations [re Chalkpit sale] and come back with a firmer view.</td> <td>Cancelled – This action was no longer required.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. MW agreed to have a think about how many meetings would be most effective and it was agreed to take a programme to C&S.</td> <td>Pending – This action had yet to be completed. This relates to routes, meetings and forums through which the student voice was elicited. MW advised that he would work with BH to agree a schedule of student voice meetings.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">15th December 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1. The Chair to take forward the link governor student voice role with BC and NT.</td> <td>Pending – This action had yet to be completed. IM reflected that he may approach student voice differently for LCBs, with a view to enable a more targeted campus specific focus.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. A robust handover with a timetable and a focus on FE, national and regional FE networking to take place. (DS, IM, CM)</td> <td>Closed – This action had been completed. CM confirmed that a robust handover process had been established to ensure a smooth transition.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. DS to circulate the summary from governor 121 meetings</td> <td>Closed – This action had been completed.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. A group is being arranged to get engagement with a Hastings local employer around curriculum, teaching and recruitment. To look at this being rolled out over all the LCBs. (RC/LCB Chairs)</td> <td>Pending – This action had yet to be completed.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Matters Arising	Update	21st February 2022		<i>No matters arising.</i>		31st January 2022		1. RC noted that she would reflect on that agreement [Chalkpit sale] and ensure the PMO is kept up to date on the position when this is clarified.	Closed – This action had been completed. RC confirmed that the Chalkpit had now been successfully sold and that funds had subsequently been received.	2. RC and MP will take forward the next stage of negotiations [re Chalkpit sale] and come back with a firmer view.	Cancelled – This action was no longer required.	3. MW agreed to have a think about how many meetings would be most effective and it was agreed to take a programme to C&S.	Pending – This action had yet to be completed. This relates to routes, meetings and forums through which the student voice was elicited. MW advised that he would work with BH to agree a schedule of student voice meetings.	15th December 2022		1. The Chair to take forward the link governor student voice role with BC and NT.	Pending – This action had yet to be completed. IM reflected that he may approach student voice differently for LCBs, with a view to enable a more targeted campus specific focus.	2. A robust handover with a timetable and a focus on FE, national and regional FE networking to take place. (DS, IM, CM)	Closed – This action had been completed. CM confirmed that a robust handover process had been established to ensure a smooth transition.	3. DS to circulate the summary from governor 121 meetings	Closed – This action had been completed.	4. A group is being arranged to get engagement with a Hastings local employer around curriculum, teaching and recruitment. To look at this being rolled out over all the LCBs. (RC/LCB Chairs)	Pending – This action had yet to be completed.	15:28
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	5. Coaching and mentoring opportunities to be looked into and support for the new DoG. RC, DS and IM to give thought to and bring to SPR Committee in January 2022. (RC/DS/IM)	Closed – This action had been completed and a comprehensive induction plan was in place.
	6. RC to share details of the new Director of People with the Board as soon as the role is confirmed.	Closed – This action had been completed.
	7. An agreement for continued interim governance support is required as the current agreement expires on the 31 st December. (DS/RC)	Closed – This action had been completed.
	8. Update on the senior team – RC confirmed this will come to the Board after the extraordinary SPR Committee on the 13 th January 2022.	Closed – This action had been completed and a further update was planned in the confidential section of the agenda.

2. BOARD MEMBERSHIP & EFFECTIVENESS

2.1 COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS 15:36

- IM directed participants to the 'Committee Arrangements' paper and shared the following proposal for chairing arrangements moving forward:

Corporation/Committee	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement
Corporation Board	David Smith	Ian Mehrtens
Finance	Mark Fisher	Mark Fisher
Audit, Risk & Compliance	Angela Smith	Angela Smith
Curriculum & Standards	Gill Short	Gill Short
Search, Performance & Remuneration	Ian Mehrtens	Priscilla Kendall
People & Culture	Gill Short	Becky Cooke
Capital Development Board	Ian Mehrtens	Graham Cook

Eastbourne Local Board	Graham Cook	Graham Cook
Hastings Local Board	Ian Mehrtens	Nicola Taylor
Lewes Local Board	Gill Short	Gill Short

- RESOLUTION: Governors approved the proposed Committee and LCB chairing arrangements, effective 1st April 2022.**
- IM then shared the following update on the Vice Chair role:
 - Two vice chair roles were being considered.
 - These would reflect the Executive Team structure, with one focused on 'Resources & Operations' and the other on 'Curriculum & Student Voice'.
 - A proposal would be brought to the next meeting for Board approval.
- Governors agreed to proceed on this basis.**
- Action 2.1.1 – Committee/LCB Chairs to feedback any corrections to the 'Committee Composition' paper to BH.**

MF/AS/
GS/PK/
BC/GC

#	Item	Action
2.2	<p>BOARD EFFECTIVENESS 15:42</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IM outlined the following approach for internal assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-Assessment Process from 2021 to be replicated (i.e. Board/Committee questionnaires and Skills Audit) – April/May 2022. ○ 1:1 Annual Conversations – December 2022. ○ SPR scrutiny of Governance Improvement Plan (GIP) – review and overhaul (Summer 2022). ○ Chair Appraisal (not applicable in 2022) but exit interview report to SPR. • IM reflected that the existing internal assessment process was effective and any gaps were proactively addressed. • IM advised that a priority focus area would be to refresh the GIP, noting that this had become unwieldy and too detailed. Instead, IM proposed that this be refocused to align more closely with the Strategic Plan and positioned at a summary level. Governors agreed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action 2.2.1 – Redesign the Governance Improvement Plan as output of the internal assessment process, with a view to simplify the format and align this more closely to priorities in the Strategic Plan. • IM then outlined the following approach for external assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider external peer benchmarking with appropriate college(s). ○ External review guidance update to be considered by Board and external review planned for either Autumn or Spring 2022/23. ○ Alignment with ESFA/FEC on governance discussions as part of the Post Intervention Monitoring & Support (PIMS) process. ○ ARaC/SPR to consider internal audit programme 2022/23 and potential inclusion of governance element. • IM reflected that there can be a risk of external reviews being overly focussed on what had been done wrong. Instead, it was important to leverage an effective framework for benchmarking against other colleges. Key insights could then inform the GIP moving forward. • IM noted the following discussion items for Governors to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee Chairs – should appraisals be conducted? ▪ Meeting Evaluations – should these continue or be modified? ○ External: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance discussion with stakeholder groups, e.g. Local Authorities? ▪ Early (pre-formal external review) overhaul by ‘trusted professional’? • BH suggested that as part of the meeting evaluation process, Governors may wish to reflect on the level of impact of discussions, aligned to key strategic objectives. • Governors also noted the recent introduction of online meeting evaluation surveys, which may encourage participants to be more candid in any feedback. 	IM/BH

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PK considered whether Committee Chair appraisals were necessary given that Governors were volunteers. PK suggested that feedback could be addressed as 'appreciative enquiries', with focus on whether Governors were working together effectively. • GS asked – how would this approach address any underperformance? PK reflected that this would be managed through courageous conversations, but noted that the emphasis would be on both what was working well and any opportunities for improvement. • PK also suggested that Committee Chairs could complete a 360-degree leadership review, as an additional data point. • IM noted that from an external assessment perspective, that it would be important to speak with local employers and other stakeholder groups. Governors agreed. • Additionally, IM reflected that ahead of the formal review process being introduced, there could be value in scheduling a 'pre-external review' in order to gain a clearer view of the current picture. DS noted that National Leaders of Governance (NLGs), the ETF and/or AoC may be well positioned to facilitate this process. 	
2.3	<p>GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT UPDATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IM shared the following update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It had been agreed at the last Chairs Meeting for IM to contact existing Co-opted Governors to explore their readiness to transition into Independent Governor roles. ○ As such, Kim Butler (ARaC Committee), Aly Coleman (C&S Committee) and Charles Dudley (Capital Development Board) had already expressed interest in moving into Independent Governor roles, all of whom would be well positioned to fill specific skills on the Board. ○ IM noted that Charles Dudley had also expressed willingness to join the ARaC Committee as well. ○ MF noted that Tom's term of office as a Co-opted Governor was due to expire on 31st March 2022. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Action 2.3.1</u> – Facilitate the renewal of Tom Sanderson's term of office as Co-opted Governor. ▪ <u>Action 2.3.2</u> – In the light of now enhanced capacity on the Board, explore the need for further Governor recruitment. ▪ <u>Action 2.3.3</u> – Explore options for a streamlined application process to transition existing Co-opted Governors into Independent Governor roles. ○ IM reflected that historically, Co-opted Governors had found it more difficult to contribute to Committees as any decision making was made in a vacuum, given that they received limited information on the wider workings of the Board. As such, it would be preferable to reduce the number of Co-opted Governor moving forward, though this could be leveraged as needed. 	<p style="text-align: right;">15:59</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BH</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BH</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BH</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IM noted that further Governor recruitment may also be needed to further supplement skills/experiences on the Board. ○ PK asked – has the option of ‘trainee’ Governors been considered? GS noted that Governors had previously had ‘buddies’ as a means of mentoring support. IM suggested that another channel for Governor recruitment could be via LCBs. ○ BH noted however, that these channels would not necessarily assist the Board in achieving its objective of increasing the level of diversity on the Board, so a wider range of recruitment options should still be considered. Governors agreed. 	
2.4	<p>STUDENT GOVERNOR UPDATE</p> <p style="text-align: right;">16:04</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AC shared the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It had been positive to see the level of focus and progress on the carbon literacy agenda, with involvement from higher education (HE). ○ HE marketing strategy, in the context of falling student numbers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further to a recent open evening and conversations with staff and students, a change in approach may be needed in terms of the way that the college was marketed. ▪ Anecdotally, staff and students had indicated that the “<i>degree beside the seaside</i>” slogan was not popular. ▪ Some staff and students had expressed a willingness to support the college with its recruitment efforts in local schools, with a view to attract students to complete their degree at ESCG. ▪ Falling student numbers had been noted, particularly in Business, Graphics and Fine Arts where there were significantly reduced numbers in the cohorts this academic year. ▪ Further work was therefore needed to attract student students, ideally with a wider range of choice for courses. ▪ A number of students had requested student accommodation, which could be a very popular unique selling point to potential students. ○ Representation of the Hastings local area in the Board and college: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hastings is the 13th most poverty-stricken town in the UK, with the highest levels of child poverty in East Sussex. ▪ As ESCG is the largest local educator, it could be appropriate for the college to adopt a strategic approach in trying to address this important issue. ▪ Similarly, from an equality and diversity perspective, it would be desirable to have a greater level of representation on the Board from people with backgrounds in poverty. ● Governors thanked AC for sharing her thoughts and suggestions. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RC shared the following response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was an important objective for the college to develop a carefully designed higher education (HE) learning pathway. ○ A cross-campus event was held in the Spring Term to support FE students in transitioning to HE and several insights arose as output of this activity. ○ A key aspect of the ESCG FE/HE offer was providing access to local, supported, accessible and affordable learning pathway for young people. Further work was needed on both internal and external promotion. ○ It was important to map out a clear pathway to ensure there were defined routes of progression, with specialisation in those areas that particularly added value. ○ Hastings in particular benefited from both the expertise and facilities from a HE perspective. Further work was needed to enrich the offer on other campuses. With the departure of the University of Brighton from Eastbourne in 2025, this created a range of extra opportunities. ○ Further work was now needed to refresh the marketing strategy, in collaboration with student groups to explore the messages and tone that were most likely to attract potential students. Additionally, a dedicated HE member of the marketing team was now in place. • MW advised that intended leaver destination information data would be captured from the Summer Term, with a view to target those Level 3 students who had expressed uncertainty on what they would like to do next. • MW advised that from a student accommodation perspective, there were 49 dedicated and privately managed student rooms, which were expected to be competitively priced, based in the local Hastings area and due to open from September 2022. • IM reflected that diversity of thought on the Board was equally important as diversity in protected characteristics. IM suggested that it may be helpful to establish a Parents Council forum, with a view to ensure stakeholder engagement and to potentially attract new Governors to the Board. Governors agreed. 	
2.5	<p>STAFF GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS noted that the terms of office for the existing Staff Governors (MS and SH) were due to expire in September 2022. • To ensure a robust handover process, DS reflected that the recruitment process for new Staff Governors would therefore need to be conducted in the Summer Term. • Governors agreed that it would be preferable to recruit both a member of support staff and teaching staff to the open roles. 	16:11

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS suggested that Governors may also wish to consider representation from all three campuses, with a view to recruit three rather than two Staff Governors. IM noted that this was allowable in the Instrument & Articles. • Action 2.5.1 – Liaise with LC, Director of People to initiate the Staff Governor recruitment process. 	BH
3. EXECUTIVE ITEMS		
3.1	<p>EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORT & PERFORMANCE UPDATE AGAINST KPIS</p> <p style="text-align: right;">16:14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP shared the following update on the ESCG Dashboard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The format of the dashboard matched the colour scheme used in the Strategic Intentions Operation Delivery Plan (SIOP). ○ Currently working to arrange licences for Governors, so that they will be able to access live data in the Summer Term. • RC shared the following update on Student Recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This remained a top priority focus area, particularly for adult and 16-18 students. ○ 16-18 student recruitment process was in full flow for the 2023-24 intake. ○ Interactions with schools were now senior leader led, which includes building key relationships, attending school assemblies etc. ○ Recent open evenings had seen increased levels of engagement, at which students were able to submit their application on the day. ○ The student Lewes Pride event had been scheduled for 30th March 2022, which was another opportunity to attract potential students. ○ The Schools Liaisons Teams had been working systematically to target those students who have yet to secure a place, to attend onsite for a tour. ○ Similarly, the Employability Service was now based at the Hastings campus, supporting those not in education, employment or training (NEET). ○ Further work was still needed to boost levels of recruitment. The structure of the Marketing Team was therefore under review, to ensure the right level of expertise was in place and develop a strong messaging strategy. ○ Student recruitment levels were up 11% year on year, with applications still being received. ○ The A Level curriculum offer had been significantly enhanced at the Eastbourne campus, which was a key focus of the recent open evening and was particularly well attended. ○ The two new Vice Principal posts would be critical in driving up both adult and 16-18 student recruitment levels. • MP shared the following update on Finance & Cash: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There had been significant pressure on the adult education budget (AEB), with mid-year delivery down by £1m (thus suggesting the strong possibility of clawback). ○ In house apprenticeships had seen good levels of growth, in direct contrast with market place pressures around Childcare, where the college's subcontractors had not been able to deliver, resulting in a net impact of £200,000. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cyber security had been a priority focus area and the IT Manager had worked hard to protect against various cyber-attacks on the college's servers. ○ As reported to the Finance Committee, earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) was down by £324,000. ○ Cashflow was stronger than expected at this point in the year, with a current balance of £7.3m. This was due to a combination of effective cash management and because a number of capital receipts had been received in advance of 31st March 2022, with spending yet to be made against the payments. ○ However, it was important to note that a significant proportion of this cash was already committed elsewhere and effective cash management remained a top priority. ○ That said, it was estimated the closing cash balance at the end of the academic year (31st July 2022) would be £4m. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RC shared the following update on the proposed <u>Staff Pay Award</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The college remained mindful of the rising cost of living for its staff. ○ The UCU Trade Union had submitted a pay claim of 6.5%, in recognition of the fact that staff had not received a pay increase in September. ○ Further to recent negotiations, a proposed pay award of 1.5% (effective 1st April 2022) had been agreed in principle with the trade unions, with a view to agree a further award in September 2022. ○ However, it was not possible to approve back pay to September 2021, due to the college's current financial position. ○ Additionally, a range of creative options were being explored to supplement staff pay, e.g. increasing the number of points on pay scales to enable further development and growth, fuel payments and making provision for the lowest paid. ● The following discussion then occurred: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MS advised that she had received feedback from staff colleagues, who had noted that there had not been any pay rise in September, but that there had been a number of appointments to the senior leadership team. RC explained that recent recruitment activity had been balanced by some recent staff departures. ○ RC explained that options for voluntary redundancy were being explored, which could enable the college to identify some efficiencies, subject to business need. ○ GS reflected that it had been useful to have the UCU Trade Union representative in attendance at the recent People & Culture Committee meeting, though noted that there had not been a representative for support staff from Unison. RC agreed and noted that further work was needed to ensure that discussions were balanced. ● RESOLUTION: Governors agreed to approve the proposed staff pay award of 1.5%, effective 1st April 2022. 	

#	Item	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RC provided the following <u>Capital Development Update</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Executive Director – Resources & Organisational Development (EDROD) was currently on a period of sickness absence. ○ An interim resource (Nathan Haffenden) had been appointed on a part-time, three month secondment basis (from Eastbourne Borough Council/Lewes District Council), to ensure momentum was maintained on key capital development projects. ○ Nathan had extensive experience and already established relationships with a number of key stakeholders. ○ Some questions and concerns had initially been raised about the projects, but a further update would be shared at the next Capital Development Board meeting. • GC considered the ‘Executive Team Report’ and asked – had there been any conversations with Eastbourne Borough Council regarding the proposed hospitality and catering training academy? MW advised that discussions were ongoing with Eastbourne Borough Council to identify a potential location, possibly at Devonshire Park. • MW shared the following update on the <u>Curriculum Planning Process</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Curriculum Planning proposal developed by Sue Dare (Special Advisor) was shared in detail with Governors at the Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting. ○ There were two phases of curriculum development work planned, initially focussing upon ensuring cross campus consistency and subsequently in the development of end-to-end learning pathways. ○ A longer-term focus would be on breaking down silos and ensuring greater collaboration and partnership between teams; this would, however, take time. ○ Business planning work was now in progress, with a view to feed into the 2023 prospectus. • RC shared the following update on the <u>Post Intervention Monitoring & Support (PIMS)</u> process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formal notification had now been received from the ESFA that the college had been moved out of the intervention phase and into the PIMS phase. ○ As a result, a clear and achievable action plan was now in place, which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need to ensure stability in the leadership team, from a recruitment perspective. ▪ The need to attain a ‘requires improvement’ financial health grade for this financial year. ▪ The provision of specific information related to the monitoring process and full engagement throughout. • IM asked, how long does the PIMS process last for? MP confirmed that this process was due to conclude at the end of December 2022. 	

#	Item	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC advised that further to the recent round of recruitment for the Deputy CEO vacancy, it had not been possible to appoint at this time. A further update would be provided in the confidential section of the meeting. 	
4. CONSENT AGENDA		
4.1	<p>POLICIES & KEY DOCUMENTS 16:28</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following policies were scrutinised/recommended for approval by Finance/ARaC Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition & Other Fees Policy Procurement Policy Environmental & Sustainability Policy Health, Safety & Welfare Policy The following discussion occurred: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IM noted that some of the role titles detailed in the Health, Safety & Welfare Policy no longer existed, which was particularly important given that the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) tend to use this policy to review and track roles/responsibilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 4.1.1 – Update the Health, Safety & Welfare Policy to remove/replace any discontinued role titles. GS asked – should the Procurement Policy include reference to engagement with local providers? MP/RC advised that this point was discussed at length during the ARaC Committee meeting. MP confirmed that ESCG’s local procurement strategy was addressed in the SIOF document as a key performance indicator. SH asked – how do staff gain visibility of updated policies once they have been approved by the Board? RC confirmed that once approved, policies would be accessible on the new staff portal. RESOLUTION: Governors agreed to approve the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition & Other Fees Policy Procurement Policy Environmental & Sustainability Policy Health, Safety & Welfare Policy – subject to agreed amendments. Governors also noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Risk Management Policy had been deferred for approval. The Gifts, Hospitality & Declaration of Interests Policy would be submitted to Governors for consideration and approval by electronic resolution, following scrutiny at the recent ARaC Committee meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 4.1.2 – Issue Gifts, Hospitality & Declaration of Interests Policy to Governors for approval via electronic resolution. 	<p style="text-align: center;">MP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BH</p>

#	Item	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quality Improvement Plan, which had been scrutinised by the Curriculum & Standards Committee. 	
5. COMMITTEE MINUTES, APPROVALS AND MATTERS FOR NOTING		
5.1	SEARCH, PERFORMANCE & REMUNERATION COMMITTEE	16:33
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted the minutes of the meetings on 13th January 2022 and 9th March 2022. • There were no questions. 	
5.2	CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD	16:34
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted the minutes of the meeting on 24th January 2022. • There were no questions. 	
5.3	CHAIRS MEETING	16:35
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted the minutes of the meeting on 10th March 2022. • There were no questions. 	
5.4	CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	16:36
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted the minutes of the meeting on 16th March 2022. • Governors also noted the Specialist Advisor Curriculum Report. • There were no questions. 	
5.5	PEOPLE & CULTURE COMMITTEE	16:37
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted that the minutes of the meeting on 17th March 2022 had been delayed due to the relative close proximity to the Board meeting. • There were no questions. 	
5.6	FINANCE COMMITTEE	16:38
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted that the minutes of the meeting on 24th March 2022 had been delayed due to the relative close proximity to the Board meeting. • There were no questions. • Action 5.6.1 – Issue request to Governors to approve the change in status of the subsidiary company, Plaza Trading Hastings Ltd. 	BH

#	Item	Action
5.7	JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE & ARAC COMMITTEE 16:40 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted that the minutes of the meeting on 24th March 2022 had been delayed due to the relative close proximity to the Board meeting. • There were no questions. 	
5.8	AUDIT, RISK & COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE 16:41 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted that the minutes of the meeting on 24th March 2022 had been delayed due to the close proximity to the Board meeting. • There were no questions. • Action 5.8.1 – Request Governor approval by electronic resolution for the following recommended auditors for 2022-23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal Auditor – Macintyre Hudson ○ External Auditor – RSM 	BH
5.9	LOCAL COLLEGE BOARDS 16:43 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted the minutes of the following meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lewes – 2nd March 2022 ○ Eastbourne – 3rd March 2022 ○ Hastings – 3rd March 2022 • GS noted that the Lewes LCB included a presentation from Peter Sharp (Lewes & Eastbourne District Council) regarding planned regeneration projects in Newhaven, which potentially created a range of opportunities for ESCG. The meeting also included an update from Sue Dare (Specialist Advisor) on curriculum development. • GC advised that discussion at the Eastbourne LCB focussed on the Decarbonisation Academy Project and an update from Sue Dare (Specialist Advisor) on curriculum development. • IM advised that the Hastings LCB included a presentation on cultural regeneration, which would likely result in a range of opportunities for ESCG. The meeting also included an update from Sue Dare (Specialist Advisor) on curriculum development and a student voice update. 	
OTHER MATTERS		
6.1	ANY URGENT MATTERS 16:49 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors expressed heartfelt thanks to DS for his service as Chair of the Board, noting his resignation effective 29th March 2022. 	
6.2	DATE OF NEXT MEETING 16:50 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 5th July 2022 at 14:00. 	

#	Item	Action
6.3	LIVE MEETING EVALUATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Did the agenda and papers arrive seven days in advance? Y</i> • <i>Were the agenda and papers written with clarity? Y</i> • <i>Were the issues considered at the meeting appropriate? Y</i> • <i>Did you have all the information you needed to fully participate in the discussion and decision? Partially.</i> • <i>Was sufficient time available for thorough debate? Y</i> • <i>Were you satisfied that the decisions were arrived at in a proper manner? Y</i> • <i>Were you able to express your views? Y</i> • <i>Was the meeting chaired effectively? Y</i> 	16:51
6.4	CLOSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first part of the meeting closed at 16:52. • All non-Independent Governors left the meeting, with RC and BH also remaining. 	16:52
CONFIDENTIAL: CLOSED SESSION FOR INDEPENDENT GOVERNORS		
7.1 to 7.3	CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION ITEMS <p>A confidential discussion occurred, which focussed on the following agenda items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and approval of the confidential ESCG Board meeting minutes of 15th December 2021, 31st January 2022 and 21st February 2022. • Consideration and associated discussion on the confidential Search, Performance & Remuneration Committee meeting minutes of 13th January 2022 and 9th March 2022. • Consideration of the confidential Chairs Meeting minutes of 10th March 2022. 	16:53
7.4	ANY URGENT MATTERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no urgent discussion items. • DS expressed thanks to Governors for their support and partnership. RC also thanked Governors for their recent support. 	17:13
7.5	LIVE MEETING EVALUATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Did the agenda and papers arrive seven days in advance? Y</i> • <i>Were the agenda and papers written with clarity? Y</i> • <i>Were the issues considered at the meeting appropriate? Y</i> • <i>Did you have all the information you needed to fully participate in the discussion and decision? Y</i> • <i>Was sufficient time available for thorough debate? Y</i> • <i>Were you satisfied that the decisions were arrived at in a proper manner? Y</i> • <i>Were you able to express your views? Y</i> • <i>Was the meeting chaired effectively? Y</i> 	17:14
7.6	CLOSE <p>The meeting closed at 16:23.</p>	

Action Summary

Item	Owner	Action	Due Date
2.1.1	MF/AS/ GS/PK/ BC/GC	Committee/LCB Chairs to feedback any corrections to the 'Committee Composition' paper to BH.	5 th July 2022
2.2.1	IM/BH	Redesign the Governance Improvement Plan as output of the internal assessment process, with a view to simplify the format and align this more closely to priorities in the Strategic Plan.	5 th July 2022
2.3.1	BH	Facilitate the renewal of Tom Sanderson's term of office as Co-opted Governor.	5 th July 2022
2.3.2	BH	In the light of now enhanced capacity on the Board, explore the need for further Governor recruitment.	5 th July 2022
2.3.3	BH	Explore options for a streamlined application process to transition the existing Co-opted Governors into Independent Governor roles.	5 th July 2022
2.5.1	BH	Liaise with LC, Director of People to initiate the Staff Governor recruitment process.	5 th July 2022
4.1.1	MP	Update the Health, Safety & Welfare Policy to remove/replace any discontinued role titles.	5 th July 2022
4.1.2	BH	Issue Gifts, Hospitality & Declaration of Interests Policy to Governors for approval via electronic resolution.	Complete
5.6.1	BH	Issue request to Governors to approve the change in status of the subsidiary company, Plaza Trading Hastings Ltd.	Complete
5.8.1	BH	Request Governor approval by electronic resolution for the following recommended auditors for 2022-23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Auditor – Macintyre Hudson • External Auditor – RSM 	Complete