

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on
12th June 2024 at 6.30pm
Kettering room 168, Hybrid MS Teams**

Present: Cathy Barr Faheem Mir
Dennis Buckley Noor Nazir
John Butcher Raj Randhawa
Tom Dove Wallington Allan Schofield
Luke Ferebee Sheila Selwood
Yiannis Koursis (CEO) Cliff Wragg

In attendance: Caroline Biddle (Executive Director of Human Resources)
Karen Campbell (Principal – Bedford)
Pat Jones (Deputy CEO Finance)
Rachel Nicol (Group Director of Governance)
Natasha Stringer (Senior Governance Coordinator) (Minutes)

C/22/24 Apologies for absence and declarations

Apologies

Apologies were received from Luisa Vecchio, Richard Dimpleby Joe Gallacher and Yasmin Jones.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest relevant to matters on the agenda.

C/23/24 Matters arising; not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

C/24/24 Accountability Statement

24.1 The Chair of the Corporation introduced the meeting and explained the rationale behind the additional meeting. The meeting aims to review and approve the Accountability Statement, which reflects the Bedford College Group's (TBCG) agreed statement of purpose, aims, and objectives.

24.2 The CEO provided further insight into the Accountability Statement, stating that it outlines targets for the upcoming year aligned with the aims and objectives in TBCG's strategic plan. It is a key document for responding to skills and focusing on engaging with key stakeholders. The accountability statement is a requirement of the funding agreement, and Board approval is needed for its publication.



24.3 Karen Campbell (Principal, Bedford) is the Executive lead for the Accountability Statement and provided more context for the Board before opening up to questions and discussions. Highlighting the importance of the statement for how TBCG responds to the skills for job paper and the need to submit it to the Department of Education (DfE) by 31st June 2024 and to publish it by the end of 2024.

24.4 Key highlights from the statement:

- Pages 1-5 outline the strategic plan and discuss what the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) has identified as key priorities.
- Page 6 describes TBCG's approach and key stakeholders. TBCG is part of the Colleges of South East Midlands Group (CoSEM), and the CoSEM Group has worked together on the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF), securing funding to support the projects, all of which align with key priorities in the LSIP and are key themes for the TBCG when meeting local skills needs. TBCG will lead on the green skills and jobs for construction project. The other colleges within the CoSEM will lead projects on improving communication and understanding with employers and tackling digital skills gaps.
- Page 8 of the document summarises the achievements from the 2023-2024 accountability statement.
- Page 10 lists the key priorities and target outcomes relating to national, regional, and local priorities for the academic year 2024-25.
- Page 14 is a self-assessment, in which TBCG has self-assessed as 'makes a reasonable' contribution to local skills needs. Work is being done with staff to help them vocalise how we are meeting the skills needs and share best practices.

Questions and Discussions

24.5 The Corporation inquired about how the CoSEM approach works in competitive situations with other colleges. The Principal (Bedford) emphasised the importance of collaboration and mentioned that it is working really well. The CEO added further insights about the wider benefits of collaboration.

24.6 A Governor asked for clarification on a line within the statement about the employer partnership scheme. The CEO explained that the Board will see a Business Engagement Strategy in July but because the deadline for the Accountability Statement is before the next Board meeting; thus, this has come slightly out of order.

24.7 The Board enquired about how the Principal (Bedford) will work towards a 'strong' self-assessment for the following year. The Principal (Bedford) explained that ensuring consistency across all areas would help the TBCG demonstrate a "strong" contribution to local skills. She also mentioned that some areas within TBCG already have great examples of meeting the skills needs so sharing best practices and ensuring all staff understand that meeting local skill needs extends further out to the



community, not just employers. Finally, there was a brief discussion about the potential for employer-induced curriculum adjustments.

24.8 A governor emphasised the need and importance of consistency across the College group regarding strategy and how to address any consistency issues that arise.

24.9 The Board approved signing of the Accountability Statement on their behalf by the Chair of the Corporation and CEO.