

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
London South East Colleges Corporation
held on Wednesday 9 December 2020 at 5.30-8.00pm
Online Meeting via Zoom**

Board

Stephen Howlett, CBE DL (SH)	Chair
Charles Yates (CY)	Vice Chair
Dr Sam Parrett, OBE (SP)	Group Principal & CEO
Max Bero (MB)	Governor
Jane Hobson, OBE (JHo)	Governor
Christopher Briggs (CB)	Governor
Mark Trinick (MT)	Governor
Louise Nadal (LN)	Governor
Olivia John (OJ)	Governor
David Eastgate (DE)	Governor
Allan Carey (AC)	Governor
Lucie Allen (LA)	Governor
Chinyama Okunuga (CO)	Governor
Barry Spencer (BS)	Staff Governor
Keat Senior	Student Governor

Clerk to the Board

Jennifer Pharo (JP)	Group Executive Director Governance
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Executive Officers in attendance

John Hunt (JHu)	Group CFO & Deputy CEO Trust
David Lambert (DL)	Deputy CEO & Principal

Officers in attendance for specific items

Andrew Cox (ACx)	Chair Staff Forum (Observer)
Louise Wolsey (LW)	Group Chief Transformation Officer (item 5.2 only)
Andy Simpson (AS)	Group Director Estates (Item 7 only)
Neil Coates	Vice Principals (Item 5.4 only)
Janet Curtis Broni (JCB)	Group Chief People Officer (Items 16.2)
Jo Southby (JSo)	Group Executive Director Education, Performance & Standards (Items 16.4 and 17.2)

1. **Welcome, introductions and apologies**

Apologies received from Stephen Howlett (Chair) and Governors Mark Trinick and Lucie Allen and Keat Senior (Student Governor)
Charles Yates (Vice Chair) took the Chair.

2. **Declarations of interest – None declared.**

3. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

Presenter: Jennifer Pharo	ACTION: TO APPROVE
<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>3.1 The Board was asked to APPROVE the minutes and Action Log of the LSEC Board Meeting on 21 October 2020.</p> <p>3.2 The Board was asked to CONSIDER and NOTE Black FE Leadership Group Membership, Open Letter and Proposals.</p>	
<p>3.1 The Minutes and Action Log were APPROVED.</p>	
<p>3.2 The Board was asked to consider the introductory letter (Appendix A) received from the Black Further Education Leadership Group and the open letter to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State of Education in relation to systemic racism in Further Education (Appendix B)</p> <p>The BFELG has also presented ten proposals for action as attached at Appendix C. The Board are requested to review the ten proposals outlined and APPROVE the adoption of these proposals within the principles of our governance code and developing Single Equality Scheme.</p>	
<p>Governors Challenge & Questions</p>	
<p>Group Principal & CEO-SP presented the item and requested the Board to CONSIDER and APPROVE the adoption of the ten point plan.</p> <p>Group Principal & CEO-SP advised that the BFELG was receiving support of the sector and were re-establishing networks and training to support black managers and are likely to become a member organisation operating alongside but separate to the Association of Colleges.</p> <p>Group Principal & CEO-SP reported that LSEC should support the work BFELG is undertaking which aligns to the EDI initiatives we have commenced this year in particular the EDI Grants Programme where there is real impetus to make change happen and linking to improving our staff profile and closing gaps in attainment.</p> <p>Group Principal & CEO-SP reported on a recent webinar where influencer Leroy Logan, a former senior met police officer, recounted his journey in the police and racial discrimination he faced. Important for our student population to feel represented at all levels of the organisation.</p> <p>Group Principal & CEO-SP advised that questions had been raised previous around the use of the descriptor BAME and future reports provided to the Board would aim to eliminate this terminology when describing a group of student or staff.</p> <p>Governor-CO advised that she would be prepared to talk to students about her own experiences of working in the NHS. Governor-CO also interested in reviewing the data and interrogating the data when available and understand where we can make the most impact.</p>	

Governor MBx advised that it was important to tell your story and combine this with the efforts we are taking. We have a good starting point already on a positive trajectory.

Governor -OJ advised that it was important to look at this agenda from a student perspective and be the role model for students. Curriculum should seek to empower students to consider careers in all areas.

Group Principal & CEO-SP confirmed that work with the Board on curriculum and employer could be arranged. Long term planning required.

Board APPROVED endorsement of the ten point plan to be integrated into the new EDI 3 year policy to be presented at next Board Meeting.

4. Chair's Summaries

Presenter: Committee Chairs/Jennifer Pharo	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
<p>Recommendations: The Board was asked to CONSIDER and NOTE the updates from the Group Committee Chairs</p> <p>4.1 Curriculum & Standards Committee: 4th November 2020 4.2 Finance Committee: 11 November 2020 4.3 Audit Committee: 25 November 2020</p>	
Governors Challenge & Questions	
Chair's summaries were CONSIDER and NOTED.	

5. Strategic, Policy and Operational Reports

Presenters: Dr Sam Parrett, OBE & David Lambert	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
<p>Recommendations: The Board is asked to CONSIDER and NOTE</p> <p>5.1 Group Principal & CEO Strategic & Policy Update (5 mins) 5.2 Presentation: Update on Group Strategy (Louise Wolsey) (10 mins) 5.3 Deputy CEO & Principal Update (2.5 mins) 5.4 2020/21 Enrolment & Recruitment Update (2.5 mins) 5.5 Presentation: Deep Dive: Work Experience in a Covid Climate and Career Advantage (Neil Coates). (10 mins)</p>	
<p>5.1 Group Principal & CEO-SP presented the detailed strategic and policy update that included the following key issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy update • Strategic Development • Funding and bids update • Collaboration with the NHS • Strategic Plan / TOMs update • College Collaboration Fund update • Digital Strategy update • EDI Grants programme 4.2 Marketing update • Employment and Skills Boards update • Festive FE Foodbank Friday • Safeguarding update • Covid-19 impact on our operations – December update 	

- Digital capacity and DfE funds
- HR Update
- Estates Update

Group Principal & CEO-SP advised the Board that the FE White Paper was due to be published imminently.

Group Principal & CEO-SP advised that of the three elements of the educational system, FE has represented itself very well during the pandemic being responsive and active in facilitating Government Policy.

Group Principal & CEO-SP reported on the success of the FE Festive Foodbank and the fantastic engagement of staff and students in supporting the cause.

5.2 Group Chief Transformation Officer-LW presented an update on the Group Strategy. This was RECEIVED and NOTED.

5.3 Deputy CEO & Principal-DL provided an update on the current operational challenges and advised that development of digital teaching and learning was accelerating. The student experience is being revamped and curriculum planning looking at a three year plan was underway.

Deputy CEO & Principal-DL advised the Board that the role of the Vice Principals had been adapted to take forward some of the larger scale projects to take advantage of change and opportunities.

Deputy CEO & Principal-DL reported that attendance remains challenging with close monitoring of engagement and participation with the new online delivery models. English and maths attendance reports low attendance but participation in the online platform Century 21 was positive.

Deputy CEO & Principal-DL advised the Board that the additional catch up funding is being used to support learners in English and maths through the Get Further programme and also support small group vocational sessions.

In response to questions from Governors, Deputy CEO & Principal-DL advised that learner voice captured through the Meet the Principal events were positive. Students were enjoying being back in College.

5.4 Deputy CEO & Principal-DL reported on recruitment which has continued later into Autumn term with additional enrolments still being completed especially for adult learners where the numbers remain under target.

Deputy CEO & Principal-DL advised that there was also January start courses currently being advertised and promoted targeting additional adult learners.

Deputy CEO & Principal-DL 16-18 enrolments remain above funded targets, with over 4000 enrolments against a funded target of 3,778. There are also additional in-year numbers within the original curriculum plan of circa 80 additional learners on ESOL and Traineeship programmes.

Deputy CEO & Principal-DL reported that there have been some early exploratory conversations with the ESFA, and a business case is being prepared for exceptional growth funding although this can not be guaranteed.

<p>Deputy CEO & Principal-DL reported that Adult AEB enrolment has been stretched out over a longer time period and enrolment still continues, but numbers against target at this point remain down.</p> <p>It was also reported that HE enrolment final position is down against target, whilst late enrolment continued to see numbers move up slowly, the final position is circa 143 down against target.</p> <p>It was reported that apprenticeship recruitment is currently progressing to profile, but with some indications of uncertainty with employers and their commitment in the current economic circumstances.</p> <p>Deputy CEO & Principal-DL reported that there are a number of developments and opportunities being pursued by the business development team, including the Kick Start programme where January starts are being advertised and recruited to and also work with the NHS on developing a training programme to sit behind the recruitment drive for people to roll out the Covid19 vaccine.</p> <p>Deputy CEO & Principal-DL advised that in terms of mitigating the income risks, staff utilisation is constantly being reviewed.</p>
<p>In response to questions from Governor LN, the Board were advised that a revised marketing strategy to support improved HE recruitment had been planned.</p>
<p>5.5 VP-NC presented a deep dive on Career Advantage and Work Experience.</p> <p>Governor-JH praised the presentation and asked if LSEC were sharing the best practice with other providers. Group Principal & CEO-SP advised that is a long standing USP of the LSEC and will be shared on a national platform.</p> <p>Governor-OJ questioned if large organisations were being used to support WEX and placements are we drawing and tapping into their CSR.</p> <p>VP-NC advised that all endeavours to connect with both large and medium sized employers not just SMEs to support WEX and placements.</p>
<p>The Board CONSIDERED and NOTED all items of the report.</p>

6. LSEC Financial Return – November 2020

Presenter: John Hunt/	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
<p>Recommendations: The Board is asked to: CONSIDER and NOTE the ESFA November Financial Return.</p>	
<p>It was reported that a new ESFA November financial return had been submitted which consists of a cash flow forecast and commentary to update on changes since the last return was submitted in July of this year.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the return shows that LSEC is currently expect full year income to be circa £1.5m lower than budgeted and will also face some additional Covid related costs.</p> <p>It was reported that despite this and including our increased central contingency for 2020/21, it was anticipated that the full year budget can still be achieved. However,</p>	

<p>it was reported that bank covenants are at risk if levels of current assets and current liabilities return to normal levels as we move out of the pandemic.</p> <p>The Board were advised that this matter will be discussed with the College bankers.</p> <p>It was reported that following the announcement that the London Borough of Croydon (LBC) had issued a Section 114 notice which effectively declares its bankruptcy, the College were in contact with LBC regarding payment of High Needs learners placed within the College and our Schools.</p> <p>The Board were advised that this matter had been documented as a risk in the commentary to the ESFA cash flow forecast.</p>
<p>Governors Challenge & Questions</p>
<p>In response to questions from Governor-AC, the Board were advised that £350k was due from Croydon relating to learners with EHCP plans currently on programme.</p> <p>In response to questions from Governor-LN, the Board were advised a new revolving credit facility was due to be negotiated and renewed for the next three years.</p> <p>In response to questions regarding breach of bank covenants, GCFO-JH advised that if a breach occurred it would be at the year but anticipate that changes in year with new enrolments would prevent this.</p> <p>In response to questions from Governor-CY, GCFO-JH advised that Bexley Council were also faced with some challenging financial issues.</p>
<p>The Board NOTED the report.</p>

7. Property Strategy Update

<p>Presenter: John Hunt/Andy Simpson</p>	<p>ACTION: TO APPROVE</p>
<p>Recommendations: The Board is asked to CONSIDER and COMMENT on the report and appendix and discuss the options for the disposal of the Orpington Campus and update on the Future Greenwich Project.</p>	
<p>7.1 Orpington Disposal CONSIDER and APPROVE the recommendation from Management to pursue option C for disposal by taking to market the scheme as currently developed for open market conditional offers.</p> <p>7.2 Future Greenwich (Addendum to main paper) CONSIDER and COMMENT on the report, and b) Consider and APPROVE the delayed final instalment for the part disposal of the Plumstead site by 4 months.</p>	
<p>The Board were advised that the paper presented reflected the wider property strategy updates for major projects.</p> <p>It was reported that the College has confidentially ceased activity in respect of the LATC project at Biggin Hill. At this time, no public communications are planned, until a forward strategy has been fully formed.</p> <p>It was also reported that informal discussions with the GLA had been held on the potential to reassign grant from LATC to a new Aerospace block at the Bromley campus. Initial responses had not been supportive, but the timing was directed by the GLA as conflicted, and the GLA had therefore suggested more formal discussions in January 2021.</p> <p>The Board were advised that L&Q continue to delay exchange of contracts for the Plumstead site with national planning policy changes from September now</p>	

addressed. The Board were advised that it was anticipated that exchange of contracts would be imminent, with the new building being completed and occupied early in 2025.

It was reported that the plans for the disposal of the Orpington site had progressed well and potential indicative land values had been previously shared. The Board were advised that a range of schemes had been developed to provide options for consideration.

The Board were advised that a pre-application meeting with planners had taken place which had proved broadly supportive but challenging in respect of policy around the perceived 'loss' of education land. The Board were advised that it was a pivotal time to make decisions on both the journey ahead and site scheme options presented. It was also reported that the professional team for the Holly Hill disposal had been instructed and were commencing surveys, investigations and concepts towards options for a part or full site disposal.

The Board were advised that two further potential alternate sites in the Bexley Borough were being explored for a new campus through high level conversations with landowners.

It was reported that procurement, design and delivery of a significant range of annual capital projects together FE Capital Condition projects were on track with no significant high risks flagged at this time.

Governors Challenge and Questions

In response to questions from the Board, it was confirmed that different contractors would be used by L&Q and LSEC on the Future Plumstead project. The Board noted that this added additional complexity to the project.

In response to questions regarding the shifting of the payment day by four months, the Board were advised that there was an increased risk. GCFO-JH advised that the financial risks had been raised on the Risk Register. GCFO-JH advised that having the revolving credit facility in place would alleviate some risk. The possible realisation of the Orpington property would also reduce the risk.

In response to questions regarding penalty clauses, the Board were advised of the requirement to keep strictly to the target dates.

In response to questions from Governor-AC, the Board were advised that cashflow data included the sale of Orpington.

The Board APPROVED the disposal of Orpington and to pursue Option C as presented.

To take to market the whole site (with options for splits) for a conditional land sale offer. This will attract conditional offers (and sliding scales of variation) with a c10% deposit being paid on exchange (but likely to be refundable in the current market if the planning consent is not successful).

It is unclear if Areli would bid but this approach would push them to a position to do so or lose the site. The successful bidder will then take their preferred scheme through planning with our support on the education policy aspect, but on their timeline.

The approval was based on the following recommendations presented by the Group Director Estates-AS

- That the best range of competitive offers from the market are received

- That the market tender includes offers from regional housing providers (Housing Associations), which often make enhanced offers over developers, given lower profit margins
- That we remain within our current budget cap of circa £350k for taking to market
- That the timing to market de-risks market fluctuation offers ahead of any risk of a sector 'downturn'
- That we pass the cost and risk of planning to a developer
- That we do not pay for the cost of planning nor a cost against the enhanced value of the land post planning.

8. 2019/20 Academic Performance Update

Presenter: David Lambert	ACTION: TO APPROVE
Recommendations: The Board was asked to APPROVE the	
8.1 2019/20 Self-Assessment Report	
8.2 Quality Improvement Action Plan	
8.1 It was reported at a draft version of the College self-assessment report (SAR) was discussed at the October LSEC Curriculum & Standards Board. The document was commended as an accurate reflection of the College with just two comments received.	
Deputy CEO & Principal-DL advised that additional equalities data had been added and reporting to identify the gaps in attainment.	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
8.2 It was reported that Quality improvement Action plan had been developed to align and reflect the actions from the self assessment report.	
The Board APPROVED the 2029/20 SAR and Quality Improvement Action Plan.	

9. LSEC KPI Scorecard 2020/21

Presenter: David Lambert	ACTION: TO APPROVE
Recommendations: The Board was asked to APPROVE the KPI Targets for 2020/21	
The Board were advised that the new scorecard was presented to report against six new Goals.	
It was reported that operational KPIs had been reordered to fit into these goals and in addition there are a number of new KPIs introduced to focus on the achievement of these new goals and provide a measurable indicator.	
It was reported that these items were easily identifiable on the scorecard being marked as (new) in the 2019/20 final position column.	
The Board were advised that targets had been set taking account of the 2019/20 position and the need to continue moving the College forward, but also taking account of some of the ongoing restrictions and impact of Covid19.	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
The Board APPROVED the KPI Targets for 2020/21.	

10.

LSEC Student Governor Update Presenter: Jennifer Pharo	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
<p>Recommendations: Board was asked to NOTE the verbal update from the Student Governor.</p>	
<p>In the absence of the Student Governor, Clerk-JP reported on recent activities of the Student Union that included the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supported FE Festive foodbank Friday events, by selling sweets and popcorn • sold Krispy Kreme doughnuts for FE Festive foodbank across Erith, Greenwich, and Bromley • supported surveys regarding Bromley Youth Justice. <p>The Board were advised that the Student Union planned to start different activities like debate groups, LGBT+ groups and in the new year a Festive Quiz has also been planned.</p> <p>Student Governor reported issues on the Student Disciplinary Procedures and the price of canteen food would be addressed outside of the meeting. It was agreed that the Student Governor would attend regular monthly meetings with the Deputy CEO & Principal-DL in the new year.</p>	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
The Board NOTED the verbal update.	

10.

LSEC Staff Governor Update	
Presenter: Barry Spencer/Andrew Cox	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
<p>Recommendations: Board are asked to NOTE the verbal update from the Staff Governor and Chair of the Staff Forum.</p>	
<p>It was reported that five staff forums had taken place. It was reported that from January, an email box would be launched to capture staff comments and views. Staff engagement events would continue.</p> <p>It was reported that social action had progressed and FE Festive Food Bank had received very good support.</p>	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
The Board NOTED the verbal update.	

11.

LSFG: Transfer to LSEC	
Presenter: John Hunt	ACTION: TO APPROVE
<p>Recommendations: The Corporation was asked NOTE the update on the merger of London Skills for Growth with the College APPROVE the endorsement of the transfer agreement and Board Resolutions to facilitate the transfer on 31 December 2020.</p>	
<p>The Board were reminded that at its meeting in October 2020, the Board had noted the continued challenges to the operating position of its charitable subsidiary, London Skills for Growth (LSfG), and that both margins and solvency had been adversely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>The Board were advised at this time that it has resolved to accept the merger of LSFG with the College and to transfer the operations of the charity together with the remaining assets to the College.</p>	

The Board were asked to note that the related Transfer Agreement and Board Resolutions were approved at the meeting and were now appended for endorsement.

The Board were advised that once merger was completed, any residual LSfG assets will be held as a restricted reserve to support the future operations of LSfG within the College, and to further its charitable aims.

The Board were advised that since the approval of the transfer, management have been taking steps to move the transfer forward in order to ensure its success.

It was reported that all staff have been informed and the TUPE consultation commenced on 13 November 2020, with individual one to one meetings completed during the week commencing 23 November 2020.

The Board were advised that there is a lot of work to complete in order to make the transfer a success and in this regard a project group has been formed to manage the merger.

It was reported that this group led by LSFG CEO would oversee matters such as line management handover, student record systems, software applications, IT connectivity, finance systems, banking, awarding body registrations, etc.

Th Board were advised that the work has progressed well and would be complete by the end of December to ensure and effect the transfer.

It was reported that once completed, the relevant accounting and related year end work and audits will be completed, and the company will then be made dormant.

Governors Challenge and Questions

Following brief discussion by the Board on the transfer risks, the Board RESOLVED to APPRVE the Transfer of LSFG into the College.

Corporation voted as follows: CY, JH, OJ, MBx, CO, LN, BS.
Governors AC and DE abstained from the vote due to conflicted interests in LSFG.

12. LSEEG Audit Committee Annual Report

Presenter: Jennifer Pharo	ACTION: TO APPROVE
<p>Recommendation: The Board was asked to NOTE the activities of the LSEEG Audit Committee as summarised in the 19/20 Audit Committee Annual Report and APPROVE and CONFIRM the opinion outlined that LSEC has adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage the achievement of its objectives.</p>	
<p>The Board was asked to RECEIVE the Audit Committee Annual Report, approved by the Audit Committee on 25th November 2020 and NOTE that the opinion of the Internal Auditors and the LSEEG Audit Committee is that the College has adequate and effective risk management, controls and governance processes to manage the achievement of the College's objectives.</p>	
<p>The Board was asked to CONFIRM that based on the advice of the Audit Committee and the Accounting Officer, the Board is of the opinion that the College has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control, and</p>	

<p>has fulfilled its statutory responsibility for “the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the body and the safeguarding of their assets”.</p> <p>It was reported that following the presentation of the Internal Auditors Annual Report (RSM Tenon), to the LSEEG Audit Committee on 25 November 2020, the LSEEG Audit Committee have approved the Audit Committee’s Annual Report which contains the opinion that ‘the College has adequate and effective risk management, controls and governance processes to manage the achievement of the College’s objectives’.</p> <p>The LSEEG Audit Committee Annual Report in relation to LSEC was appended to the papers and had been signed by the LSEEG Audit Committee Chair.</p> <p>It was reported that based on the advice of the Audit Committee and the Accounting Officer, the Corporation is asked to confirm that this opinion, which is also stated within the Annual Financial Statements, that the College has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control, and has such has fulfilled its statutory responsibility for “the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the body and the safeguarding of their assets”.</p>
Governors Challenge and Questions
The Board APPROVED and CONFIRMED the opinion.

13. Financial Statements 2019/20

Presenter: John Hunt	ACTION: TO APPROVE
<p>Recommendations: The Board was asked to</p> <p>14.1 CONSIDER and NOTE the content of the report and Financial Statements.</p> <p>14.2 APPROVE the 2019/20 Financial Statements</p> <p>14.3 APPROVE the letter of representations for signing</p> <p>14.4 APPROVE the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire for signing</p>	
<p>The Board were advised that that the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2020 report a deficit for the year of £2.19m. This is consistent with that reported to the Corporation in the Management Accounts and includes Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) & enhanced pension charges of £2.26m in accordance with the requirements of Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102.</p> <p>It was reported that the total comprehensive deficit for the Year of £19.78m is mainly attributable to the Actuarial loss of £17.59m in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). An analysis of the final forecast outturn for the year and the actual results for the year can be found in the report which follows.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the Financial Statements had been prepared in accordance with the 2015 FE/HE SORP and include comments made by the external auditors following completion of their audit fieldwork.</p> <p>They had been considered by the Audit Committee and were RECOMMENDED by that Committee to the Corporation for APPROVAL.</p> <p>The Board was also asked to approve the Audit Representations letter which was considered by the Audit Committee in November. This letter sets out the</p>	

<p>representations the Corporation is making to the Financial Statements auditors regarding a number of key issues relating to their audit work.</p> <p>It was reported that these representations include, but are not limited to, the responsibility to prepare Financial Statements which give a true and fair view, the going concern basis upon which the accounts are prepared, use of appropriate accounting policies, awareness of irregularity or fraud, and appropriate FRS102 pension assumptions.</p> <p>The Board were advised that it was asked to APPROVE the Regularity (use of Funds) Self-Assessment Questionnaire. This is required by the external auditors and was recommended by the Audit Committee to the Board for endorsement</p>
Governors Challenge and Questions
<p>Governor-AC extended thanks to the GCFO-JH for outstanding and exceptional outturn.</p> <p>Board was advised that £1.1m LATC project costs has been expensed.</p> <p>Board RESOLVED to APPROVE all items and endorse as appropriate.</p>

14. Audit Management Letter

Presenter: John Hunt	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
<p>Recommendation: The Board was asked to CONSIDER and NOTE the 19/20 Audit Management Letter</p>	
<p>The Corporation was asked to consider and note Post Audit Management Report prepared by Buzzacott as external auditors.</p> <p>It was reported that the Post Audit Management Report explained the findings of the external auditors following completion of the audit work for 2019/20, in respect of the consolidated Financial Statements.</p> <p>The Board were also advised that it set out some benchmarking data together with an update on recent developments in the sector. The report showed that clean audit opinions will be provided for both the Financial Statements and Regularity audits and that there are no adjusted or unadjusted errors to report.</p>	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
<p>The Board NOTED the report.</p>	

16. Regulatory Matters

16.1 Health & Safety Annual Report

Presenter: John Hunt	ACTION: TO APPROVE
<p>Recommendation: The Board was asked to receive the Health & Safety Annual Report and CONSIDER whether the organisation has suitably discharged its duties in this statutory area of its operations in 2019/20 and APPROVE the priorities for action are appropriate.</p>	
<p>The Board received the Annual Health and Safety Report cover both the College and LSfG prepared by the Group Head of Health and Safety for the year to 31 July 2020. The report set out a summary of the work during the year, together with the further improvements planned. It also provided details of the accident statistics for the year.</p>	

<p>The Board were advised that the report has been considered by the Group Health and Safety Committee and showed that the trends are broadly consistent with previous years.</p> <p>It was noted that once again, ill health related incidents dominated the statistics due to learner's medical needs. The report set out some of the H&S risks arising and how these are being addressed.</p> <p>With regards to staff training, it was reported that training levels would be higher by the end of the first term of 2020.</p> <p>The Board were advised that with the Coronavirus pandemic being the biggest safety issue for the year, the report explained some of the Covid related actions and controls adopted, and clearly the national lockdown had reduced accidents and incidents during the year. This is partly offset in some schools due to improved reporting following further staff training and manager intervention.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the report concluded that in respect of Health and Safety (H&S), the management of the pandemic had been a success with all curriculum plans delivered safely. Health and Safety is subject to continuous improvement in order to ensure the College environment remains safe for pupils, staff and visitors.</p> <p>The Board were further advised that during the preparation of the report, in October 2020, the internal auditors for the Group carried out a review of Health and Safety and have provided significant assurance over our controls.</p>
Governors Challenge and Questions
<p>The Board CONSIDERED and APPROVED the Annual Health and Safety Report.</p>

16.2 Equality & Diversity Annual Report

Presenter: Janet Curtis Broni	ACTION TO APPROVE
<p>Recommendation: The Board was asked to receive the EDI Annual Report and CONSIDER whether the organisation has suitably discharged its duties in this statutory area of its operations in 2019/20 and APPROVE the priorities for action are appropriate.</p>	
<p>The Board were advised that as a public body, London South East Colleges have a specific duty to report EDI information on an annual basis under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>It was reported that the details provided formed a transparent account of the progress that the College had made.</p> <p>The Board were reminded of their obligations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation • To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not • To foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not. <p>The Board were advised that the report summarised the approach and progress on the EDI agenda in relation to</p>	

- The EDI Grants programme
- Progress against our EDI objectives and beyond
- Student Achievement data
- Staff/Student engagement in EDI matters
- Gender pay gap
- Policy development
- Staff and Student EDI profile analysis

Governors Challenge and Questions

The Board NOTED and APPROVED the Annual EDI Report.

16.3 GDPR Annual Report

Presenter: Jennifer Pharo

ACTION: TO APPROVE

Recommendation: The Board was asked to **CONSIDER** whether the organisation has suitably discharged its duties in this statutory area of its operations in 2019/20 and **APPROVE** the priorities for action are appropriate.

The Board received the Annual GDPR Report for 2019/20 which provided a summary of activities in relation to data protection throughout the period.

The number of subject access and freedom of information requests had reduced from previous year, possibly due to the preoccupation of the pandemic.

The Board were asked to note that there had been three potential data breaches throughout the period details of which are included in the report.

Key issues remained the continued monitoring and staff training alongside revised processes and procedures to support reducing risk in this area of compliance.

Governors Challenge and Questions

The Board APPROVED the Annual GDPR Report.

16.4 Safeguarding Annual Report

Presenter: David Lambert/Jo Southby

ACTION: TO APPROVE

Recommendation: The Board was asked to **CONSIDER** whether the organisation has suitably discharged its duties in this statutory area of its operations in 2019/20 and **APPROVE** the priorities for action are appropriate.

The Board received the report.

The Board were advised of the considerations to use CPOMS as a whole college / Group method of safeguarding reporting.

The Board were advised that consideration should be given to whether a dedicated role in managing looked after children and young care leaver cases was required, particularly considering the data which shows the latter group have lower outcomes in terms of achievement.

The Board were advised that 676 students had been monitored in the period, of which 186 were classified as safeguarding concerns. Support had continued during lockdown with different challenges faced due to the new ways of working.

<p>It was reported that mental health has risen to the top position in terms of concerns during the last academic year with clear links being observed between the impact of COVID-19 and student mental health.</p> <p>The Board were advised that there was an increased demand on DSLs to provide intervention to students to prevent escalation but without additional resource. The Board were advised that access to funding for mental health services in the colleges would be explored.</p>
Governors Challenge and Questions
The Board CONSIDERED and APPROVED the Annual Safeguarding Report.

16.5 Annual Complaints Report

Presenter: Jennifer Pharo	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
Recommendation: The Board was asked to CONSIDER and NOTE the Report.	
<p>The Board were asked to receive the Annual Complaints Report for 2019/20 which provided a summary of formal complaints received during the period.</p> <p>The number of formal complaints received for the year has substantially reduced from previous year, possibly due to the preoccupation of the pandemic, but should not distract from the fact that circa 80 informal complaints were handled to a degree of satisfaction and that they were not escalated further to formal complaint status.</p> <p>The Board were advised that detailed statistics on informal complaints required some improvement and better understanding of the resolutions provided. This would better support understanding of the student experience.</p>	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
The Board CONSIDERED and NOTED the report.	

17. Policies

17.1 2021/22 Admissions Policy

Presenter: David Lambert	ACTION: TO APPROVE
Recommendation: The Board was asked to APPROVE the Admissions Policy.	
<p>It was reported that the Admission policy had been reviewed and some changes made.</p> <p>The intention of these changes was to enable quicker decisions to be communicated to applicants and for there to be a change in the balance of closed to open enrolments, giving both the College and applicant a greater degree of certainty.</p> <p>The Board were advised that there had been minor changes to wording, housekeeping and job titles throughout the document which are just tidying and do not impact the overall policy.</p> <p>It was reported that the policy allowed for greater curriculum level involvement at an earlier stage with the introduction of curriculum calls and interviews from curriculum tutors. This moved the process forward and allowed applicants to be dealt with</p>	

<p>quicker. It also helped to eliminate some of the bottlenecks that occurred in the main enrolment period. The policy wording was also changed to allow a greater use of unconditional offers where course placement was not dependant on grades, particularly GCSE, again allowing for earlier decisions and more certainty.</p> <p>The Board were advised that there was also a greater focus on the applicant accepting their offers. Wording around how applications were dealt with and chronological orders and categories had been strengthened.</p> <p>It was reported that whilst not explicitly covered in the admissions policy the other work being undertaken was around the keeping warm activities, again with the intention of impacting positively on the closed to open enrolment balance.</p>
Governors Challenge and Questions
The Board APPROVED the Policy.

17.2 2020/21 Safeguarding Policy

Presenter: Jo Southby	ACTION TO APPROVE
Recommendation: The Board was asked to APPROVE the Safeguarding Policy.	
The Board were advised that the policy was revised and updated in September 2020 to include the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) updates.	
The Board were reminded that it was agreed that this would be brought back to this meeting for approval again following amendments to shorten the document and remove duplication from other documents.	
The Policy was now presented as shortened version for approval.	
Governors Challenge and Questions	
The Board APPROVED the revised Safeguarding Policy	

18. Board Self-Evaluation

Presenter: Stephen Howlett/Jennifer Pharo	TO CONSIDER & NOTE
Recommendation: The Board is asked to CONSIDER and NOTE the report and to provide comments to the Clerk. The evaluation will be completed for approval at the next Board Meeting in March.	
This item was deferred to the next Board Meeting in March.	

19. Any other business

20. Date of next meeting: 24 March 2021

Signed: 

Chair

Date: 24th March 2021