

BOARD MINUTES
COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL

Date: 28 September 2022

Present: Christine Hodgson (Chair)
Steve Holliday (SH) (via video link)
Dame Julia Cleverdon (JC)
Brian Lightman (BL)
Baroness Nicky Morgan (NM)
David Baldwin (DB) by video link
Lizzie Beale (EB)
Oli de Botton (OdB)
John Yarham (JY)

Apologies: Mo Isap

In attendance: Paul Lewis (PL), Chief of Strategy & Communications
Elizabeth Kingsley (EK), Director of Operations
Nicola Hall (NH), Director of Education
Kerry Senatore (KS), Regional Lead, for item 3.1
Rachel Green (RG), Education Engagement and Development Manager, for item 3.2
Samira Chowdhury (SC), Youth Advisory Group Member, for item 3.2
Eva Jeffries (EJ), Youth Advisory Group Member, for item 3.2
Anna Frazer (AF), Head of Business Partnerships, for item 4.4
James Moon (JM), Head of Network, for item 4.5

Notes

1. Matters Arising

1.1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the group. Apologies for absence were received from Mo Isap.

1.2. Minutes from last meeting

The minutes from the last Board (29 June 2022) were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Company Update

2.1. CEO/DCEO Update

The Board was provided with an update covering strategy, performance and people. OdB gave details of a variation to the Grant Funding Agreement, following an additional £1.7m awarded to CEC by the DfE to extend coverage to independent special schools, apprenticeship providers and home educated young people.

There was confirmation that the Gatsby Benchmark data from the 2021/22 academic year had showed an overall increase in performance for all institutions, with those in Careers Hubs showing a higher performance. JC asked if it was possible to break down the figures to show the numbers of individuals involved in this system – particularly employers and volunteers.

JY shared further information about performance with the Board, extending the review to other notable metrics including take up of digital systems and Careers Leader training. The combination of these results means the majority of Grant Funding Agreement targets for 2021/22 have been exceeded.

JY shared information about the recent internal reorganisation of the team structures that took place during the summer, resulting in Directorates being streamlined. The process has gone well and the new structure, with fewer Directors in place and more integrated ways of working, is now operational.

2.2. Corporate risk register

The Board reviewed the Risk Register. OdB confirmed that the register deliberately focused on the areas of risk that the company had a direct locus over, rather than including the broader risks to economy etc.

3. Strategy

3.1. Teacher Development

NH introduced the Teacher Development Strategy as a five-year, aspirational vision, aiming to embed careers in the curriculum and lead to careers as a 'golden thread' running through education. The strategy was developed to support delivery of White Paper commitments and incorporates a five-phase, non-linear training, learning and experience model - created with scalability in mind.

The Board questioned appetite amongst teachers. NH explained it was too early to tell, but momentum will gather with take up and encourage others to get involved. It was emphasised that the ability to signpost effectively in the careers space was necessary for all adults that work with young people.

The development of Teacher Encounters in industry is one more immediate aspect of the strategy and KS joined the meeting to explain further. Teachers have a key role in advising young people on careers, however many found it hard to keep up to date with changes in the world of work. The plan for teacher encounters of the workplace, through a variety of models and methods, will aim to increase teachers' confidence, help them relate the curriculum to work and have better careers conversations with students. There is also a benefit to employers in the opportunities this will bring to ready young people more effectively.

DB said the challenge was to ensure that teachers were prepared well for the experience and how they can utilise what they learn. NM added that advocates for the programme would be important, starting with teachers and then branching out to, for instance, youth workers. NH added it was important to reach those students who have not returned to school post-lockdown.

3.2 Youth Advisory Group impact update

Samira Chowdhury and Eva Jefferies from the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) joined the meeting along with Rachel Green, from the CEC. There was a presentation to the Board on the work and impact of the Youth Advisory Group and a discussion on how the relationship between the YAG and Board might develop. The Board suggested that it would be useful for members to join YAG meetings occasionally and for YAG members to join the Board more frequently. The Board asked the YAG to advise them on areas of importance amongst their members, for instance the use of social media, and provide a 'sense check' for the Board.

Action Point: NH/RG agreed to bring back recommendations for a structure for the Board to consider.

SC, EJ and RG left the meeting and there was a discussion about EB's term of office as chair of the YAG and therefore as a Board Member of the company. It was agreed Board membership would be extended to cover the summer period of 2023, to secure the induction of the new Youth Board member. NH will commence the recruitment process for this.

Action Point: EK to ensure current Youth Board member contract is extended.

Action Point: NH to commence work on recruiting a new YAG Board member(s)

4. Workstream Scrutiny Updates

4.1 Strategic Comms and Govt Relations

PL updated the Board on the activity in the last quarter in Government and Parliamentary Relations and Policy Engagement; Strategic Communications; External Funding and the team changes after the recent reorganisation.

4.2 Data & Digital

JY updated the Board on the team's performance and upcoming projects. The forthcoming Data and Digital Committee will explore in greater depth the potential for the new digital platform for employers, enabling them to complete their Employer Standards self-assessment and to access resources.

4.3 Education Development

NH updated the Board and highlighted the upcoming work on development of a strategy to support the prevention of NEET.

4.4 Business Partnerships

AF joined the meeting and explained to the Board that the team was at a transition point as the organisational changes were implemented. JC asked about the extent of engagement with public sector employers. AF said there was strong engagement with NHS Trusts and that the Civil Service were an integral part of the Cornerstone community.

4.5 Network

JM joined the meeting and updated the Board on the progress of devolution implementation and ongoing relationships with Mayoral Combined Authorities. It was agreed that JC and JY would meet to discuss place-based approaches further.

5. Operations

5.1 July 2022 Management Accounts

The accounts, showing alignment between budget and expenditure, were reviewed by the Board.

5.2 Contract update and approvals

The Board approved the appointment of a new supplier to develop the Employer Portal and were notified that another major contract will be forthcoming later in the year regarding the renewal of the CEC's IT support.

5.3 Annual Accounts year ended March 2022

The Board were updated on the positive Audit report received from Crowe and authorised the Chair to sign the accounts and Letter of Representation.

5.4 Nominations Committee Approval

The Board approved the recruitment process outlined in the paper. It was agreed NM would Chair the Nominations Committee and the process could commence.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 29 March 2023 – 10am – 1pm