

BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2022 - SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

1. In 2022, the Corporation (Board) commissioned the Education and Training Foundation/Institute of Directors to undertake a review of governance and board effectiveness. The review started in August 2022 and concluded in November 2022.
2. The review consisted of a survey completed by all governors; interviews with most governors, the senior leadership team, the College's internal and external auditors and other key stakeholders; and observations of Corporation and Committee meetings.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The review found that:

'The Board demonstrates a clear understanding of the College's vision, mission and values and it committed to governing within these principles. The governance structure is robust with defined delegated roles and responsibilities between committees and the Board. The relationship between the Chair, CEO and Governance Professional is seen as being strong, professional and effective, with the Board clearly working as a team to support and challenge proposals and papers put before it. Members appear to contribute effectively when present at meetings and demonstrate respect and confidence in the opinion of others....'

'Overall Leicester College is served by an effective and impactful Board. Through the research and observation undertaken as part of this study, it is clear that governors are committed to, and engaged with, the life of the college. The report recognises the good practice being used and highlights areas of improvement that could be considered.'

4. Areas of good practice included:
 - A clear understanding of the College's vision, mission and values.
 - Robust governance structures with defined delegated roles and responsibilities between committees and the Board.
 - Strong, professional and effective relationships between the Chair, CEO and Governance Professional.
 - The Board working as a team to support and challenge proposals and papers put before it.
 - A relatively diverse membership of the Board and recognition of need to go further in this area and to adhere to the College's EDI values in all deliberations.

- The Chair of the Corporation is widely seen as being effective in his management of the Board and in his wider relationship with the Senior Leadership Team.
 - The Governance Professional is highly knowledgeable of governance issues, very professional and provides high quality support for the Board.
5. Notwithstanding the overall positive performance of the Board, the review identified that there were areas that could benefit from improvement. In some cases, this meant reinstating or reinvigorating practices that had been curtailed during the pandemic. Recommended areas for improvement included:
- Governors should have the opportunity to explore the external evidence base upon which the Strategic Plan is based.
 - Governors should be encouraged to participate in learner walks and other activities to triangulate evidence provided on performance and student experience.
 - Undertaking a review of the committee size and membership to reduce the time commitment for governors.
 - Undertaking a review of the scheme of delegation to focus more activity at committee level and reduce pressure on the Corporation agenda.
 - The full Board should consider how it establishes and communicates its risk appetite.
 - Ongoing work to sharpen the agendas to allow the Board to focus on important issues.
 - Addressing shortcomings in both quality and scope of the College's IT meeting equipment if virtual and/or hybrid meetings are to continue.
 - Governors should be encouraged and enabled to participate in the reinvigorated stakeholder engagement programme.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

6. The recommendations will be considered, actioned and monitored by the Corporation and its committees during 2022/23.

December 2022