

MINUTES OF A CORPORATION meeting
held on Thursday 17 October 2023
At 5.00 pm at Salisbury campus

Present	Dr Carlton Brand (Chair), Clive Barker, Philippa Gray, Cathryn Giles (remote), Iain Hatt, Brian Humphreys, Ajay Nithyananthan, Justin Purkis, Lily Raynor-Blundell, Mags Patten, Lucy Townsend (remote), Katie Walker
In Attendance	<i>Oliver Symons (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality), Steve Campion (Deputy Principal Corporate Resources) and Heather Cross (Director of Governance)</i>

	Minute	Action
2023-24 2/1	<p>Apologies for absence and opening remarks</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Jenny Davies, Daisy Agathine-Louise and Harry Adam.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed governors to the first full meeting of the year, and his first full meeting as the Chair. He thanked governors for meeting with him during the summer to discuss their views about being a governor and the operation of the Board. He congratulated the college management team on a good start to the term with positive recruitment and productive work in the summer to undertake a substantial programme of capital works. He commented on the forthcoming graduation ceremony at Salisbury cathedral at the end of the week and encouraged any governors who had yet to confirm their attendance that they would still be very welcome to do so.</p> <p>He referred to activities that he had been engaged with recently and mentioned that he intended to give a short verbal report at the start of each meeting on his activities since the last one. He had held regular 1-2-1s with the Vice-Chair, was meeting with the CEO and Director of Governance every 2 weeks and together every four weeks. He had had conversations with Justin Purkis who was doing some work with the Deputy Principal Corporate Resources on the development of the risk system in college, he had conducted the CEO's performance review together with the Vice-Chair and had conducted meetings with the two Deputy Principals similarly. He commented that all the performance objectives proposed were based around the college strategic plan. He had attended the Finance & Resources and Quality and Standards Committees.</p>	
2023-24 2/2	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>None</p>	
2023-24 2/3	<p>Minutes of the last meetings and matters arising</p> <p><u>Minutes of the meeting held 11 July 2023</u> The minutes of the meeting held 11 July 2023 which had been circulated previously were approved as a true record.</p>	

	<p><u>Minutes of the special meeting held 13 September 2023</u> The minutes of the special meeting held 13 September 2023 which had been circulated previously were approved as a true record.</p> <p><u>Matters arising other than on the agenda</u> None</p>	
<p>2023-24 2/4</p>	<p>Safeguarding Policy, Annual Report and training</p>	
	<p>Jo Kelly, Director of Student Services and Safeguarding joined the meeting to provide updating training to the Board concerning safeguarding developments and key new features in Keeping Children Safe in Education and to introduce the annual safeguarding report which had been circulated previously. Governors congratulated Jo on hearing the news of her recent promotion.</p> <p>A detailed presentation had been circulated in advance as part of the meeting papers, setting out the key processes the college used to manage safeguarding and Prevent, a summary of the key changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education including the college's responses to these especially the major change required concerning filtering and monitoring and noting changes to terminology which had been introduced and adjustments where required had been made to the policy.</p> <p>Governors asked questions concerning the arrangements for the use of college premises by outside bodies, which was answered to explain that lettings to organisations involving those under 18 had always been minimal, but the safeguarding guidelines would be adhered to in all circumstances.</p> <p>Governors asked questions concerning whether any college students might be vulnerable as a result of the developing Israeli/Palestinian crisis. The Principal/CEO reported that advice had been received that afternoon from the Department for Education and this would be followed. It was understood that there were some issues which had been developing in a nearby locality and the college would take all necessary action to assist and protect students and staff.</p> <p>The revisions to the Safeguarding policy which had been circulated previously were APPROVED.</p> <p>Governors asked questions on the safeguarding annual report. It was commented that the college had self-assessed as 'outstanding' which may have been too ambitious in retrospect given the issues which had emerged in the residential care inspection. The actions taken as a result of this inspection were discussed and it was noted that the inspectors had commented on the college's robust processes.</p> <p>An update concerning progress on filling Student Alliance roles and consequently the Student President role was given, with the process expected to be concluded shortly after half term.</p> <p>A governor commented on a direct experience she had had from Wiltshire Council whereby the college had worked well jointly with the Council to make a safe environment for a person to be accessing education.</p>	

	<p>It was noted that the safeguarding governor, newly appointed to this role, had recently completed recommended training. Jo Kelly was thanked for her helpful and informative report.</p>	
2023-24 2/5	Board development proposals, Values and Key developments	
	<p><u>Proposals from the Chair</u> The Chair referred to the presentation he had prepared which had been circulated previously, which detailed approaches he had discussed with governors, the alignment of Board values with those for the college set out in the strategic plan and a statement of how he would like to see the Board operated for the future, enabling all governors to have a voice, be enabled to challenge appropriately with their skills well used. The item also proposed the introduction of a new Code of Governance and the full recommendations from the External Board Review.</p> <p>Governors asked a number of clarifying questions. It was confirmed that in seeking to use governor skills where appropriate, the role was definitely that of governance and not management.</p> <p>The intention to raise the profile of risk management in the Board further, with more meaningful discussion, was welcomed. It was <i>agreed</i> to approve Board values as those which were in place for the college as a whole.</p> <p>The strategic themes proposed were discussed and it was suggested that the year be included, that quality and achievement should be placed at the top and environmental sustainability should be added. It was suggested that further work would be useful to map the themes to SLT activity and that some prioritisation be included as there were too many of them currently to be reasonably achieved.</p> <p>Bearing in mind two current and one other vacancy on the Board about to arise in the Spring, recruitment for up to three new governors would take place starting after Christmas.</p> <p>In considering Board business it was agreed that a routine item at the Board would be for governors to report on their activities with the college since the last meeting, that where feasible a forward plan of decisions for the year be added to the business schedule and a rolling review of policies be incorporated as required, meetings should rotate around the campuses and that activities for Board members where appropriate be available on the afternoon of a meeting. Board discussions should have a greater focus on the external environment, to be reflected in the Principal's report unless significant standalone items.</p> <p><u>AoC Code of Good Governance – to consider for adoption</u></p> <p>The revised Code of Good Governance for FE Colleges as proposed by the Association of Colleges had been circulated previously and was considered for adoption. The focus of the Code around principles and its brevity were considered welcome improvements, whilst the framework suggested for considering how the Board was meeting the Code was also welcome.</p> <p>The Code of Good Governance was <i>approved</i>, for implementation from 23/24 year.</p>	<p>Chair/ Dir Gov</p> <p>Dir Gov</p> <p>P/CEO</p>

	<p><u>External Board Review – further implementation of actions</u> A report giving priorities for all the actions recommended in the recent external board review had been circulated previously and was discussed.</p> <p>It was decided that actions should be SMART and specific dates should be included in actions where appropriate and that where activities were proposed these should be designed into the college calendar. In addition, an appropriate interval for regular progress review by the Board should be added.</p> <p><u>Committee terms of reference and delegations</u></p> <p>There was discussion about amendments to the delegations to the Finance and Resources and Quality and Standards Committees. After discussion it was agreed that responsibility for People matters should remain with the Board as a whole as this aspect spanned across both resources and curriculum and quality but recognising that micro aspects would be helpfully discussed at committee level.</p> <p>The other proposals for delegation to the main committees as identified in the circulated report were AGREED.</p> <p><u>Indicative schedule of business for Board and Committees for 23-24 year</u></p> <p>A document had been circulated previously for information and this was reviewed. This was not intended to be exhaustive. Governors suggested that where planned and known in advance, the decisions to be taken should be added to the document.</p> <p>Governors commented that the items proposed for the awayday were mostly finance and resources focussed and it was agreed that the Quality and Standards Committee should consider items it considered should be included so that these could be added to the schedule.</p>	Dir Gov
2023-24 2/6	Principal’s Report (including safeguarding)	
	<p>The Principal’s report had been circulated previously. Key issues concerning the start of the year, student enrolment, marketing, admissions and communications, curriculum strategy, safeguarding, student services, business development, people strategy and estates strategy items were all noted.</p> <p>The Principal spoke to his report and flagged the subcontracting tender which had been circulated which was proposed for approval. It was noted that the tender process had been agreed with the Funding Agency as part of the Strategic Conversation in early summer. The tender process was also noted and the tender results as put forward in the report were <i>approved</i>.</p> <p>He spoke about the successful enrolment and how students had settled well. However, higher than planned numbers had put pressure on resources and particularly on English and maths tuition. Discussions with the Funding Agency had suggested that additional funding would be provided as numbers were more than 100 above target, but how and when these additional resources would be provided had not yet been indicated. HE enrolment was slightly down and two courses had been closed.</p> <p>Marketing events this year had been really successful with record numbers attending and the introduction of immediate interview booking had been a</p>	

	<p>successful new innovation. A staff governor commented on how she had seen the positive effect this had had on her own son. Governors were invited to attend any future events. Governors welcomed the news that the college had been reaccredited by Matrix for its advice and guidance.</p> <p>The safeguarding appendix report was noted. The safeguarding governor reported on his regular meetings with the safeguarding team and his satisfaction with the arrangements and operation.</p> <p>The meeting discussed various matters relating to the People Strategy and in particular the recent staff survey which had received a smaller number of respondents than hoped and it had been decided that it be run again and various measures used to establish more clearly why a number of colleagues had not engaged with it. It was suggested that focus groups were a preferable means to gaining views and in particular getting a clear sense of staff motivators. Visual information and 'storytelling' were recognised as useful ways of communicating when mass messages were sent to staff. It was intended that an update on the People Strategy would be discussed at the Board meeting in February and the HR Director would attend to update on all the activity during its first year of operation. The pay award was to be communicated formally to staff shortly, although knowledge of the award was already widely known.</p> <p>A decision on the future of residential accommodation was proposed to be made at the Awayday in Spring 24, noting the comments in the Principal's report concerning the current usage, improvements at Lackham and take-up levels.</p> <p>The College's Accountability Statement had been approved by the Funding Agency and had been attached as an appendix to the Funding Agreement recently received.</p> <p>The health and safety policy statement for the current year had been circulated previously. This was reviewed and was APPROVED.</p> <p>The Principal/CEO was thanked for his report.</p>	<p>SLT/ Dir HR</p> <p>SLT</p>
<p>2023-24 2/7</p>	<p>Reports and any recommendations from committees</p>	
	<p><u>Report from Quality and Standards Committee</u></p> <p>A summary report from the Quality and Standards Committee Chair of the meeting held on 28 September 2023 had been circulated previously. The Chair drew attention to the specific focus on Student Voice and Careers education by this committee as part of its business, with the former to be reflected in the quality cycle. She commented that at the recent meeting the process of intensive care had been reviewed in detail as well as the operation of observations. The Student governor commented that meetings with students on each campus were being planned.</p> <p><u>Report from Finance & Resources Committee</u></p> <p>A summary report from the Finance and Resources Committee Chair of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 had been circulated previously. This had been his first meeting as Committee Chair. A number of estates matters had</p>	

	been discussed and the revised budget had been agreed for recommendation. The annual plan of items for the committee had been reviewed.	
2023-24 2/8	Balanced Scorecard	
	<p>The latest balanced scorecard and that showing the full picture in 22/23 both of which had been circulated previously were reviewed. Explanations for key red items in 22/23 had been flagged in the covering report.</p> <p>Governors focussed their discussion on those aspects where targets had not been met in the previous year and asked about the adjustments made currently. The Principal/ CEO commented that it was considered important to have both realistic and aspirational targets and there was a value in having both. The next update of the scorecard would show this. Governors supported the intention that an 'amber' item should only be accepted for a short time and then a fully resourced plan to address the issue to 'Green' status should be put in place.</p> <p>Governors suggested that there were too many targets and also suggested that only those where the college had agency to make a difference should be included. It was agreed that a smaller number which could make a real difference and were genuinely capable of control or influence be proposed.</p> <p>Revisions to the Balanced Scorecard would be presented to the next meeting.</p>	SLT
2023-24 2/9	Risk Register Review	
	<p>The current risk register had been circulated. The Chair thanked Justin Purkis for the work he had been engaged in with the college to assist in the development of the risk register and risk analysis. A revised format and the concept of risk velocity had been proposed (the speed at which a risk could impact, regardless of good control), along with a change to the risk scoring system which gave inherent and residual risks separately.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Audit Committee should review the system, the opportunity for which would be the next committee meeting at the end of November. Future reporting to the Board would be the top ten corporate risks. Risks would also be allocated to each committee where ownership resides.</p>	Audit Cttee
2023-24 2/10	Quality Improvement Plan	
	<p>A quality improvement plan for 23/24 had been circulated previously – this was developing. It was acknowledged that further work was still required concerning those aspects of quality improvement which were going to have the most significant impact, such as professional development, intensive care processes and course review. A number of aspects were recorded as amber, due to staffing difficulties in some areas.</p> <p>It had been agreed that further work was to be carried out on the presentation of the quality improvement plan and this would be discussed further with the Quality and Standards Committee.</p>	DPCQ

2023-24 2/11	Revised Budget for approval	
	<p>The proposed revised budget for the 23/24 year had been circulated previously, having been discussed and recommended by the Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p>The meeting was reminded that the key amendments to the budget had been agreed at a special meeting of the Board held on 13 September to discuss staff pay offer. The revised budget was to address two other minor budgetary adjustments as a result of the additional funds provided by the DfE. £100k was proposed as a contingency to be used for investment or additional salary and £130K for a capital budget for the farm at Lackham to enable concentration of activity to be moved from Notton to Home Farm, which would assist operations including Lambing.</p> <p>The revised budget was considered and was APPROVED.</p>	
2023-24 2/12	Management Accounts – for information	
	The management accounts for period 12 which had been circulated previously for information were received.	
2023-24 2/13	Any Other Business	
	None	
2023-24 2/14	Contribution to outstanding governance – meeting evaluation	
	Governors thanked the Chair for his work on his presentation in setting the Board priorities and framework for the year.	
2023-24 2/16	Date of Next Board meeting	
	The next Board meeting was noted as 14 December at Trowbridge campus.	