

**MINUTES OF A CORPORATION**  
**Meeting held on Tuesday 11 July 2023**  
**At 5.00 pm at Chippenham Campus**

<b>Present</b>	Martin Clark (Chair), Clive Barker (from Item 3), Carlton Brand, Paul Fox, Philippa Gray, Iain Hatt, Brian Humphreys, Ajay Nithyanathan (remote), Lily Raynor-Blundell, Justin Purkis, Lucy Townsend (from Item 3), Katie Walker (remote)
<b>In Attendance</b>	<i>Oliver Symons (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality), Steve Campion (Deputy Principal Corporate Resources ) and Heather Cross (Clerk to the Corporation). Jo Grenfell, Vice Principal Skills and Student Experience attended for item 6. Sara Goneos, Director of Finance, attended for item 5.</i>

	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>2022-23 6/1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
	Apologies were received from Jenny Davies, Mags Patten and Cath Giles.	
<b>2022-23 6/2</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b>	
	None	
<b>2022-23 6/3</b>	<b>Chair's opening remarks</b>	
	<p>Martin Clark welcomed everyone to the meeting. He remarked that he had been very fortunate to attend both the student awards event and the staff awards at Lackham recently. He was delighted to have been presented with a gift of some rambling roses from the national collection held at Lackham to mark his time as Chair.</p> <p>He congratulated the college on the recent news of Wave 5 T level capital funding, plus also mobilization money for future projects.</p> <p>He congratulated the Governance Adviser on her forthcoming appointment as the Chair of the AoC National Governance Professionals Group.</p>	
<b>2022-23 6/4</b>	<b>Celebrating Success</b>	
	<p>The Principal gave a presentation to the meeting highlighting recent college events, successes and student achievements. The presentation would be circulated to all governors subsequently. Governors who had recently attended staff long service lunches were thanked for doing so and all governors were commended to attend similar future events.</p> <p>The wide variety of successes and events and what this showed of the college's work was recognised.</p>	

2022-23 6/5	<b>Budget for 23-24 and 3 Year Plan</b>	
	<p>The report presenting the budget, 2 year and five year plans had been circulated previously. Sara Goneos, Head of Finance was welcomed to the meeting for this item and the opportunity was taken to congratulate her and her colleagues on winning the college annual team award.</p> <p>Steve Champion, Deputy Principal Corporate Resources, presented a brief summary to the meeting of the key changes and features, plus the extensive process in developing the budget with the involvement of key managers. The realistic starting point was noted as being the curriculum plan. This was a difficult year for many colleges, including as a result of significant utilities cost increases and therefore to present a positive budget was an achievement. Key features were noted as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £40m turnover for first time in this strategic planning cycle.</li> <li>• A refreshed focus on adult and apprenticeship delivery.</li> <li>• Pay costs – 3% increase has been accommodated in budget, with an increment for the lowest paid staff reflecting a higher percentage increase. Governors were informed that each percentage rise added c. £250K to the pay bill. Key communications to staff concerning pay were being planned.</li> <li>• 65.2% on pay costs as a proportion of income (recommended threshold = 65%, subject to other factors).</li> <li>• Pay budget included an incremental increase for Deputy Heads, the introduction of English and Maths engagement champions and adjustments to assessor pay.</li> <li>• Non-pay costs subject to inflationary pressures, but holding.</li> <li>• ‘Good’ financial health planned and noting that certain features were likely to take the final result to outstanding in the current year.</li> <li>• Healthy current cash balances as a result of capital budgets not able to be used until later in the year.</li> </ul> <p>Years 3, 4 and 5 budget projections were noted as identifying cashflow pressures, but this was inevitable without allocation increases and a level of prudence in the forecasting of student numbers.</p> <p>It was noted with regret that the Education and Skills Funding Agency, with encouragement from HM Treasury was actively considering a future year-end timing change which would not fit neatly with the college year. Lobbying was being undertaken to try to prevent a change.</p> <p>Governors were informed by the Principal concerning the current position with trades unions on pay discussions.</p> <p>After careful consideration and review the budget for the 23-24 year as circulated was APPROVED.</p> <p>Thanks were expressed to Sara and the wider team of colleagues for their work in assisting on the budget preparations.</p>	

<b>2022-23 6/6</b>	<b>Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report and proposed objectives for 23-24 year</b>	
	<p>A presentation was made to the meeting by the Vice Principal Skills and Student Experience on the aims and progress made with EDI objectives.</p> <p>Good progress was being made against reviewing student focussed policies and making sure policies were inclusive; tackling prejudiced behaviour by committing to a safe and respectful culture; EDI promotion; building EDI into management processes and integration into student experience; improving the opportunities and experiences of under-represented groups; developing good practice; being open to dialogue and challenge; on gathering and publishing data and on easy access for reporting concerns.</p> <p>Promoting an anti-racist curriculum was noted as the area representing most challenge and improvements concerning celebration of events was noted.</p> <p>The future intention was to frame objectives in terms of the public sector equality duty. It was proposed to bring back to governors a new set of objectives for the new year against student data once this was available. Governors asked that attention be given to what actions might be necessary in respect of protected groups. In response to a question it was commented that EDI work received good funding was well supported from a staff training perspective.</p> <p>Jo Grenfell was thanked for her report and the Chair personally thanked her for the support she had given to him concerning student issues during his time as Chair.</p>	
<b>2022-23 6/7</b>	<b>Principal's Report (including safeguarding update)</b>	
	<p>The Principal's report had been circulated previously. Key issues concerning curriculum and quality, capital funding success, finance and funding, Higher Education, People Strategy, Marketing, Admissions and Communications, Business Development and Sustainability were all noted. The letter circulated previously from the Education and Skills Funding Agency following the Annual Strategic Conversation held on 23 May 2023 was also noted.</p> <p>The Principal spoke to his report and flagged new management appointments made following a strong field of applications, which had been very pleasing.</p> <p>The uncertainty and issues with the Qualification reforms were discussed, with risks to some aspects of the college's provision as illustrated by the situation with motor sport engineering where this specialist course was being defunded. There were 140 applications for next year which potentially could not be fulfilled. Likewise the popular public services level 3 was being defunded with no equivalent replacement. Lobbying had had no impact, but governors agreed that further representations should be made to MPs and ministers and the Principal was asked to prepare a letter for the Chair to submit.</p> <p>The Local Skills Improvement Plan had yet to be given approval. It was noted that bidding for capital projects was required to very short deadlines, which could compromise the ability to make considered, well prepared proposals.</p> <p>Governors noted the positive progress being made against objectives for year 1 of the strategic plan.</p>	<b>SLT</b>

	<p>The Sustainability Group was progressing very well and the positives on digital strategy were welcomed.</p> <p>The very positive recent invitation visit of the FE Commissioner was noted. The Commissioner had offered some helpful perspectives on developments which the college was considering.</p> <p>Governors enquired about the strategic plan ambitions around people and culture. A recent staff survey had been carried out, with relatively high participation. Staff turnover was relatively high, not because of the college environment but because of the financial challenges related to pay. The conclusions of the staff survey would be analysed and reported to governors in the autumn term.</p> <p>A question was answered concerning the college's response to rising mental health issues for students. The Endsleigh support programme had been introduced and uptake had been positive and high.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that governors may benefit from a briefing about higher technical qualifications (HTQs). The Principal commented that a new HE strategy was currently being worked on and this would include HTQs and be brought to the Board next academic year.</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. It was noted that there were no high level cases currently and monitoring arrangements were in place over the summer break to support students.</p>	<p>SLT</p> <p>SLT</p>
<p><b>2022-23 6/8</b></p>	<p><b>Balanced Scorecard</b></p>	
	<p>The balanced scorecard for May 23 had been circulated previously. It was reported that the recently prepared June version showed that staff wellbeing had moved to green and progress on the climate road map has been strong. PDR completion was not to a required level, so this was to be a key area of focus over the coming year.</p> <p>There were a number of areas on student performance below requirements. Achievement was noted by all as a continued focus for attention.</p>	<p>SLT</p>
<p><b>2022-23 6/9</b></p>	<p><b>Subcontracting Policy &amp; Plan 2023-24</b></p>	
	<p>A report proposing subcontracting policy and planned delivery for 2023-24 had been circulated previously. It was noted that the report contents corresponded to the discussion at the recent awayday, with a proposal to reduce subcontractor value. The proposition was to reduce overall spend on subcontracting by £900K and £350K of this work would be put out to tender.</p> <p>Governors asked about the consequences on turnover and risk, noting that with the increased risk of direct delivery this was a reason for reducing overall numbers. ESFA had confirmed acceptance of the college's request for more than 25% of delivery being via subcontracting.</p> <p>Subcontracting Policy, with minimal changes was reviewed and APPROVED.</p> <p>The subcontracting plan for 23-24 was approved.</p>	

<b>2022-23 6/10</b>	<b>Quality of Education</b>	
	<p><u>Report from Quality &amp; Standards Committee 22 6 23</u></p> <p>The Committee Chair highlighted the circulated report of items discussed at the recent meeting. She welcomed the proactive move of new appointments being made to address student non-attendance. Recently identified issues in secondary schools of in-school truancy were discussed and this aspect was recognised as a potential aspect to be monitored in college, should learned behaviour from school be maintained. It was noted that national achievement benchmarks would apply again from summer 24.</p> <p><u>Quality Improvement Plan, FE &amp; Skills Post Inspection Plan and Care Standards Post Inspection Plan updates</u></p> <p>A current summary update to the Quality Improvement Plan had been circulated previously and was noted. Governors requested that the full Quality Improvement Plan be placed on Board Intelligence accessible to all governors.</p> <p>Good progress on the items in the Post Inspection Action Plan following the Residential Care Inspection were noted and all factors have been addressed to meet national minimum standards.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>2022-23 6/11</b>	<b>Finance &amp; Resources</b>	
	<p><u>Report from Finance and Resources Committee 13 6 23</u></p> <p>The Committee Chair highlighted the circulated report of items discussed at the recent meeting. It was noted that proposals concerning residential provision at Lackham would be brought to the next Board meeting, in time for any marketing of the college's 2024/25 curriculum offer, and therefore detailed proposals would be put to the September Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p><u>Management Accounts – for information</u></p> <p>The latest management accounts had been circulated previously for month 10. There were no key movements noted. The overall financial position was positive, with Outstanding financial health noted as the likely year-end position, with the effect of advance capital monies making a strong contribution to the cash position being recognised.</p>	<b>SLT</b>
<b>2023-22 6/12</b>	<b>Audit</b>	
	<p><u>Report from Audit Committee 4 7 23</u></p> <p>The Audit Committee Chair reported that at the recent meeting a different and useful stance had been taken in examining risk by looking in more detail at three top risks and questioning the position including what mitigation could genuinely be made. It was felt this was a more engaging and productive way to consider and question risk.</p>	

	<p>Recent internal audits had been reviewed at the committee, with minimal recommendations recognizing the good work of the finance team.</p> <p><u>Risk Register</u></p> <p>The recently updated risk register was noted. Two new risks – availability of capital funding for major projects and residential accommodation – had been added. In discussion it was suggested that future consideration could be given to ordering risks by level.</p> <p>Governors asked about the extent of risk concerning applications – these were similar currently year-on year overall, with Salisbury significantly increased as a result of the new building and an improved curriculum offer. It was hoped that the T level funding for Agri business at Lackham would assist recruitment, subject to the associated provision of transport. A new director of marketing and students had recently been appointed.</p> <p><u>Internal Audit Plan 23-24 – recommended for approval by the Committee</u></p> <p>APPROVED.</p> <p><u>External Audit Plan 22-23 – recommended for approval by the Committee</u></p> <p>APPROVED.</p> <p><u>Financial Regulations update – recommended for approval from Finance and Resources and Audit Committees</u></p> <p>APPROVED. The revised regulations reflected the requirements stipulated as a result of Reclassification.</p>	
<b>2022-23 6/13</b>	<b>Minutes of the meetings held 27 4 23 and 18/19 May 2023</b>	
	The minutes which had been circulated previously were agreed as a true record.	
<b>2022-23 6/14</b>	<b>Governance Action Plan following External Board Review – for approval</b>	
	A report proposing quick wins to be in the governance action plan following the recent external board review, together with the top priorities was considered and approved. A final report detailing the intended response to the other recommendations would be considered at the next Board meeting.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>2022-23 6/15</b>	<b>Governance Update including Policy Report</b>	
	<p>A governance update had been previously circulated including a number of items. It was noted that no nominations had been received for the second Vice-Chair position, and governors were invited to remember that this additional position remained available.</p> <p>The provision of the Policy schedule was welcomed and some further additions identified. The revised schedule would be used to inform the Board’s business plan for the coming year.</p> <p>A new Association of Colleges code of governance was to be shortly recommended to colleges.</p>	<b>Chair/ Clerk</b>

	A recommendation to amend the Articles of Government concerning the arrangements for the Student Alliance was considered. It was proposed that the position of Student Alliance President no longer be a paid sabbatical position – this was considered and agreed. The Clerk was requested to make the agreed amendment in the Articles.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>2022-23 6/16</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	<u>Proposals from the Chair Designate</u>  The Chair designate mentioned a number of developments that he wished to pursue in readiness for the new year. He intended to invite governors to annual governor/ chair one to ones as had previously operated and would be writing out to governors about dates for these. He proposed that there should be more delegation to committees and invited governors to make any suggestions they may have to the Principal/CEO and the Governance Adviser with any suggestions. Once national data sets are published he intended to review with SLT appropriate new targets and would discuss with Committee Chairs to bring back to the Board in future.	<b>ALL</b>
<b>2022-23 6/17</b>	<b>Contribution to Outstanding Governance</b>	
	The Chair commented on the meeting and recent arrangements. He noted that there had been six Board meetings in the new style and he considered the arrangements had worked well, but future further work on committee empowerment as indicated would be important.	
<b>2022-23 6/16</b>	<b>Date of Next Board meeting – 17 October 2023</b>	
	The next Board meeting was noted as 17 October 2023 at a campus to be decided.	
<b>2022-23 6/17</b>	<b>Vote of Thanks</b>	
	Governors, the current Vice-Chair and the Principal/ CEO joined together to thank Martin Clark for his considerable service as Chair of Governors since 2018 and he was presented with some token gifts as an expression of appreciation.  Martin responded by saying he had considered his time as Chair to have been a real privilege. He thanked the SLT, the Clerk and the governors for all their support. He had thoroughly enjoyed his time in the role and wished the Board and the College all the very best for the future.	