

Minutes of Corporation Board – Part 1

6 July 2023

Board Members:	B Kaczmarczyk (Chair) J Battye N Beldham (Staff Governor – Support) T Campbell J Croot H Freeman J Hemper	S Martin-Standley L McKenzie L Mycroft L Needham (Staff Governor – Curriculum) J Richards (Principal and CEO) L Warren (Apprentice Governor)
Attendees:	J Shore (Head of Governance) C Acaster (AP People & Culture) J Down (AP Student Experience & Wellbeing)	H Taylor-Toone (Deputy Principal) G Varley (AP Engineering & Construction) C Godfrey (AP Academic and Professional Studies)
Apologies:	J Croot, H Freeman, J Hemper, L McKenzie	

CH = Challenge

83/2223 Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded of the need to disclose an interest in any item of business to be considered at the meeting. Nothing was declared for Part 1.

84/2223 Membership Update

The new Staff Governor – Support was introduced and welcomed to the Board. N Beldham, Inclusion Manager, was elected by College staff through the majority vote via an online voting system which closed 21/6/23. NB has joined both the Board and Standards & Performance Committee effective from 22/6/23.

The Head of Governance informed the Board that the former Student Governor, E Cheshire, had now left the College and had secured employment at the University of Sheffield. EC has still been invited to participate in the annual governor appraisal process with the Chair to provide feedback of her governor experience. An election for the new Student Union will be held in the first term of 23/24 and the Student President will become the new Student Governor.

85/2223 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The Part 1 minutes of the previous Corporation Board meetings held 25 May 2023 were reviewed and agreed as a true and accurate record. The review of confidential minutes is recorded under Part 2.

The action log was reviewed and there were no matters arising. Previous actions were updated and either marked as complete or carried forward as appropriate. (*Refer to Corporation Action Log – 6.7.23*)

Resolution: The Board **approved** the non-confidential minutes (Part 1) of the previous meetings.

86/2223 Student & Apprentice Governor Report

The Apprentice Governor (LW) provided an overview of the Student & Apprentice Governor Report. An update was provided in terms of preparations for the next Student Union (SU) President election campaign, SU promotional activities and SU findings and developments on behalf of the student and apprentice body.

The Board thanked LW for the report and governors offered their support to the Student Union/Council, if required.

Resolution: The Board **received** and **noted** the contents of the Student & Apprentice Governor Report.

87/2223 Performance Report

The Principal (JR) provided an overview of the Performance Report, which in addition to the key focus items below included an overview of teaching and learning, curriculum initiatives and workforce development.

Student Data Analysis - Predicted Outturn 2022/23

16-18 attendance is currently 87.1% and for ages 19+ is 84.3%. 16-18 attendance is in line with 21/22, however, there has

been a 1% decline in Adult attendance; mostly attributed to adult English, maths and ESOL. English and maths attendance across all ages continues to be of concern and the new delivery model that will launch in September 2023 is aimed to support higher attendance.

Overall retention in June is 91.4%, which is 2.1% above the same period last year and in line with the national average. For ages 16-18, the retention is 90.3%; 1.9% above this time last year and 0.3% above the national average. The Board were advised that little movement in the data was anticipated, as most students have now completed their studies. Whilst headline retention is good, it is not consistent across all directorates and there are concerns within the Kick Start provision and some Engineering and Construction programmes. Adult retention is 93.3%; 2.4 % above this time last year and 0.4% above the national average. Retention within the directorate of Adult Education (PFU & ESOL) is strong, however, these courses will run until the end of July so ongoing monitoring will take place to ensure this does not decline. Adults studying on some courses within Engineering, Construction and Vocational Studies are not retained as well as their 16-18 counterparts. JR flagged that retention on Adult English and maths is of concern and requires urgent action in the next academic year. The Assistant Principal for Engineering & Construction (GV) advised that the majority of the Adult cohort leavers was due to the cost of living crisis, with students making the decision to leave College to gain employment.

Overall achievement is predicted to be 80.7%, which if achieved, will be an increase from 21/22 of 2.1%. 16-18 achievement is predicted to be 81.1%, which is above the previous year and in line with the latest released national average. 19+ achievement is not predicted to be as strong at 80.1% and whilst this is an improvement on 21/22 (77.5%), it is behind the national average by 6.5%.

CH: The Board asked if there were any areas in particular which were having an adverse impact on the overall 19+ achievement rates. The Assistant Principal for Academic and Professional Studies (CG) advised that Adult achievement of English and maths is still of concern as previously discussed with the Board, and tighter performance monitoring will be implemented for 23/24. It is also difficult to predict the achievement of programmes within Programmes for the Unemployed (PFU) and ESOL due to the nature of the delivery and numerous enrolments, therefore a conservative and cautious 80%, which would be below the national average, was applied to these areas to enable an overall headline prediction for Adults. Whilst it is expected that PFU will overachieve and come in around 86%, there are some concerns with ESOL and exam pass rates, however, further work is being done to ensure that 80% is achievable and this would be 2% higher than the previous year. It has been acknowledged that the current delivery model needs revising for 23/24. However, retention is strong in these areas, particularly PFU, and as most students are now enrolled, a new prediction exercise will be undertaken.

CH: Regarding ESOL, the Board queried whether the achievement issue was linked to students being placed on the wrong level and asked whether the College offers non-accredited pre-entry levels for ESOL. CG advised that pre-entry is not currently offered, however, the Entry 1 and Entry 2 single activity matrix is being explored for students who are not yet ready for the full accredited course, and it was noted that these courses would also draw in more money for the College. CG is working with the MIS Team on the new delivery model and initial assessment for 'Right student. Right programme'.

For 2022/23, the Apprenticeship achievement rate for LU Derby is predicted to be outstanding at 73.4%; 20% above the latest released national average, and also high for Chesterfield at 59.9%, which is above the national average.

CH: The Board queried the reason for the significant difference in predicted Apprenticeship achievement rates between LU Derby and the College. JR advised that LU Derby's core provision was Apprenticeships and which was predominantly Engineering, which has very strong achievement rates. The main reason the College is much lower is due to the specific issues in Adult Social Care, which has now been ceased, on some issues within the Business Services sectors. The cohort numbers in LU Dery are also much lower which creates a skew in the numbers comparatively. Following the recent rebase of the Apprenticeship provision, it is hoped that LU Derby and College performance will be on a par moving forward.

JR noted that GSCE and A-Level results were pending and the Board expressed their confidence with the overall detail presented within the report.

Key Performance Indicators – Performance

A full summary of in-year performance against the 22/23 Performance targets was provided within the report.

Key Risks - Performance

An overview of the Performance key risks was provided within the report, including classroom-based attendance, retention and achievement, apprenticeship retention and achievement, application and offers, and Support to Improve measures within Engineering and maths and English.

Safeguarding Update

A safeguarding update, including key information around reported safeguarding concerns, resources and government guidance was provided within the report for governor information.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update

The Assistant Principal for Student Experience & Wellbeing (JD) presented the Annual EDI Statement for Board approval of publication on the College website. The statement has been updated and has received initial approval from the EDI Committee. The statement includes a detailed progress update against the two objectives set for 2022/23.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the Annual EDI Statement and its publication on the College website.

Resolution: The Board **received** and **noted** the contents of the Performance Report.

JB joined meeting.

88/2223

Corporate Report

The Principal (JR) presented the Corporate Report which, in addition to the key areas discussed below, included an update on the National Picture (including Government Policy & Legislation) and Strategic Relationships & Events.

DfE Annual Strategic Conversation

Following the Annual Strategic Conversation with the Department for Education (DfE) on 18/5/23, the College has now received a copy of the outcome letter which was shared with the Board for information.

Strategic Plan and Priorities 2023/24

A review of the College's 5 strategic commitments (5P's) has been undertaken, as the Strategic Plan reaches the end of Year 4 of its 5-year life cycle. An overview of the key successes and progress during 2022/23 was provided within the report and the 6 Strategic Implementation Plans, which have been updated in line with changes to the Education Policy, were shared with the Board for review. The key priorities for 2023/24 were outlined, as detailed within the report.

The Board discussed the progress made by the College and acknowledged the success of the Ofsted inspections for the College and LU Derby in 2022/23, which both received an overall Grade 2 'Good' outcome. JR advised that the criteria for 'Outstanding' will now start to be pushed over the next 2-3 years.

CH: The Board asked whether the College was likely to expect an inspection from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). JR advised that whilst this was a possibility with the last inspection being in 2018, it tends to be conducted on more of a risk-based approach and is a desktop exercise. Subject to a successful funding audit, which has recently been announced to the College, the QQA inspection is not expected for a while.

Proposed Key Performance Indicators - 2023/24

The draft Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2023/24 were presented to the Board for approval.

The overall employment satisfaction for both the College and LU Derby has been re-aligned to the online government survey for apprenticeships. The survey is available for completion by both employers and apprentices, and the results are published nationally.

New KPIs have been added for closing cash balance, one grade progress for maths and English, and students who achieve at or above their target grade. Whilst not new for 23/24, JR advised that the accountability agreement KPIs have also been added as appropriate for Apprenticeships and these will be reported on separately in the main report for enhanced monitoring purposes.

CH: The Board asked whether the overall student satisfaction was related to the student survey. JR confirmed that it was related to the specific section that gives overall satisfaction from the external student survey, which is managed by QDP on the College's behalf.

CH: The Board noted the KPIs for 100% completion of the mandatory Safeguarding & Prevent and Health & Safety training for staff JB, and asked whether EDI training was also mandatory. JR confirmed that it is and all staff have to complete EDI training as part of admin week. It was agreed to include this as a KPI, as part of the mandatory training suite. **Action: JR to include mandatory EDI training for staff as a new KPI for 23/24.**

CH: The Chair raised the FEC recommendation for Board's to have a greater focus on a smaller amount of KPIs and queried whether the measures could be reduced. HTT explained that a lot of the measures are reported externally and therefore it was prudent to report on them for effective monitoring purposes. It was also noted that many of the measures are also annual targets. The key KPIs are included within the individual Committee and Board reports for Finance, Performance and Corporate. In addition, the KPIs form the basis of target setting for staff Performance & Development Reviews and area KPIs. The data dashboard is now being well utilised and has proven to be useful in streamlining data for analysis.

CH: The Board noted the proposed target for staff sickness, which has been set to be under 5 but is currently at 4.7, and queried why a less ambitious target had been set. CA explained that this figure fluctuates and had previously been 4.9.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the KPIs for 2023/24.

Key Performance Indicators – In Year

The overall KPI position was shared with the Board, including commentary against each target. As at 31/5/23, the KPI achievement was rag rated as 48% green, 16% amber and 36% red. The Corporate KPIs were highlighted within the report.

Key Risks – Corporate

An overview of the key Corporate risks and mitigations was provided within the report. Key risks remain as staff workload and wellbeing, recruitment and retention of staff, volatility of the apprenticeship market, inadequate levels of core funding, and the bureaucracy and restrictions relating to reclassification and commercial borrowing not permitted.

Health & Safety

An update from the Health & Safety Committee was included within the report, including agreed actions, statutory audits and reports, and mandatory training. Further to the previous update to the Board, JR advised that 2 new security staff have been appointed and additional training has been provided to manage poor student behaviour.

Policies

The Assistant Principal for People & Culture (CA) presented the following policies for Board approval, as recommended by the Health & Safety Committee:

- GOV02 – Environment Policy
- GOV08 – Health and Safety Policy

CA advised that the updates were mostly housekeeping changes, with a full overview of the policy updates provided within the cover report. The full policies and respective Equality Impact Audit Assessments were shared with the Board for information.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the above policies, as recommended by the Health & Safety Committee.

Resolution: The Board **received** and **noted** the contents of the Corporate Report.

89/2223

Governance Report

The Head of Governance (JS) presented the Governance Report which, in addition to the key items highlighted below, included an update on membership, policies approved at Committee-level, ratified Committee minutes and the latest Data Protection Report presented to Audit Committee.

Governance Self-Assessment Evidence & Process 2022/23

As part of the governance self-assessment process for 2022/23, the ETF/AoC's Self-Assessment Review questionnaire and the AoC's Code of Good Governance Compliance Checklist, have been completed by the Head of Governance for 2022/23 and were shared with the Board for review and approval. Both documents were reviewed by the Governance & Search Committee at its meeting on 21/6/23 and Board approval was recommended for the scoring, evidence fields against the self-assessed criteria and required actions for improvement, which will form part of the Governance Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/24.

Following Board approval, the HoG and Chair will produce the Governance Self-Assessment Report (GSAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (GQIP) for the Board. Feedback from the individual governor self-assessment survey, annual governor appraisals and Char's appraisal will be incorporated into the report. Individual Committee Self-Assessment and Annual Reports will also be considered as part of the overall Governance self-assessment.

An overview of the timeline for the governance self-assessment process was provided within the report and outlined to the Board. Governors were reminded that the survey deadline for the annual Chair's Appraisal had now passed and those who had not yet completed were asked to complete as soon as possible. The draft GSAR and GQIP will be reviewed by the Governance & Search Committee and presented to the Board for approval at the first meetings in the Autumn Term.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the following evidence documents for the Governance SAR 22/23:

1. AoC/ETF Self-Assessment Review Questionnaire
2. AoC Code of Good Governance Compliance Checklist

Corporation & Committees Business Cycle & Meeting Schedule 2023/24

The annual business cycle and meeting schedule for the Corporation and Committees in 2023/24 has been drafted and will be finalised with SMT. The final document will be shared with the Board and circulated to all governors.

Chair's Action and Written Resolutions

JS confirmed that there had been no Chair's Action or Written Resolutions made by the Board since the previous meeting.

Resolution: The Board **received** and **noted** the contents of the Governance Report.

90/2223 Statutory Reporting & Link Governor Updates

- CEIAG - SMS has been working with JD and team to explore different ways of linking plans together to underpin the wider approach to careers. SMS advised that the sessions had been interesting and thought-provoking in terms of how the different aspects connect and the importance of collaboration between different teams and departments which is being encouraged, and how best to link with curriculum and the Aspire programme. SMS also advised that she will be joining other governors on the D2N2 Careers working group.
- Safeguarding – JD advised that the Safeguarding audit and Prevent Risk Assessment and audit had been signed off by the Safeguarding Link Governor and Chair.
- Equality Diversity & Inclusion - New EDI interactive training has been delivered to curriculum staff which sets a series of missions based on different scenarios. NB reported a positive response had been received so far and different version of the training will be delivered to different teams as appropriate. JS advised that EDI training will now also be an annual mandatory requirement for all governors, alongside Safeguarding and Prevent. LMy has sourced an experienced national trainer for the ETF, who is also a governor at Cornwall College. The training package options will be reviewed by the G&S Committee and implemented for 2023/24.

There were no additional updates to report for Sustainability, Health and Safety or additional link governor activity.

Resolution: The Board **noted** the Statutory Reporting and Link Governor updates.

91/2223 Financial Regulations

The Deputy Principal (HTT) presented an overview of the Financial Regulations (FIN01) for approval by the Board, as recommended by the Finance & Corporate Services Committee.

The policy has been reviewed and updated in line with the College's Policy and Procedure Framework. The policy has been aligned with the changes made in year, particularly in relation to approval thresholds and reclassification requirements. HTT advised that the new Finance Record will not be implemented until next summer and the DfE financial handbook will be published in August 2024, with a draft version available for review in the autumn term.

The key changes were detailed within the Policy Update cover report and the Equality Impact Audit Assessment was shared with the Board for information.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the updated Financial Regulations.

92/2223 Confidential Items

Confidential items are minuted separately under Part 2.

93/223 Date of Next Meeting

19 October 2023

The meeting concluded.