

Minutes of Corporation Board – Part 1 (Ratified) 9 February 2023

Board Members:	B Kaczmarczyk (Chair) J Battye P Bond T Campbell E Cheshire (Student Governor) J Croot H Freeman J Hemper	E Pearson (Staff Governor - Support) 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 (VP – People & Culture)	H Taylor-Toone (Deputy Principal) G Varley (AP – Engineering & Construction)

Apologies: J Battye, E Cheshire, J Down, J Hemper, L Needham, L McKenzie, L Mycroft, E Pearson

CH = Challenge

40/2223 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.

41/223 Membership

On behalf of the Board, the Chair welcomed and introduced the new Apprentice Governor, Luke Warren. LW is employed by the College as the Finance Apprentice and is currently undertaking his AAT Level 3 Diploma in Accounting, following completion of Level 2 as a classroom-based student at Chesterfield College.

The Chair also welcomed the new Assistant Principal for Engineering & Construction and it was noted that apologies had been received from the new Assistant Principal for Student Experience & Wellbeing.

42/2223 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The non-confidential minutes (Part 1) of the previous Corporation Board meetings held 14 December 2022 and 31 January 2023 (Special) 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 – 9.2.23*)

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

43/2223 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 student data, teaching and learning, curriculum initiatives, educational landscape and workforce development, as well as the updated Quality Improvement Plan. It was noted that the Performance Report was scrutinised by the Standards and Performance Committee (SPC) on 7/2/23. The HoG informed the Board that LMY had recorded a brief video update in her role as Chair of SPC and Safeguarding Link Governor following the last committee meetings. The update will be shared with the Board via the governor portal for information once the file has been appropriately converted.

Ofsted Report

The final published Ofsted Report from the College's inspection in November 2022 was shared with the Board for information and any further comment. In comparison to the inspection reports for other colleges graded as 'Good' in the recent inspections, JR noted that the identified areas for improvement were quite minor and specific to a small cohort of students. The feedback received indicates that the College was judged at the higher end of the 'Good' spectrum and puts it in a strong position to work towards achieved an 'Outstanding' grade at the next inspection. It was also acknowledged that Chesterfield is currently the only 'Good' college locally to have received a 'Strong Contribution' grade for enhanced skills, which is

equivalent to 'Outstanding', with just one other College still pending their inspection. The Chair noted that the local authorities and stakeholders had provided strong, positive feedback regarding their relationship with the College as part of the skills aspect of the inspection.

The Board agreed that the report and feedback received was reassuring and it was noted that the actions required would be easy to implement and the importance of continuing the momentum for improvements was stressed. The Chair commended the College for its 'Good' result and expressed thanks to all staff, students, apprentices, employers, stakeholders and governors for their involvement with the inspection.

Performance KPIs

A full summary of in-year performance against the 22/23 Performance targets was provided within the report. JR reported that retention was above target across all curriculum areas, however, there were some challenges with attendance which was broken down into further detail as part of the data analysis section within the report. JR advised that the maths and English attendance data was impacted significantly by maths and English attendance. The key mitigations have been discussed with SPC, including a bi-weekly data deep-dive at SMT meetings alongside all the new Heads of Learning, to identify any trends or issues and share best practice amongst curriculum areas. An example of this is the new initiative to improve maths and English attendance by delivering within the curriculum classroom opposed to the designated maths and English space, especially for lower-level and vocational areas. Following a successful pilot in Construction which saw attendance improve by c.13%, each Head of Department has been tasked to pilot a similar strategy with their lower-level groups of students and to provide feedback on the impact next month. If it is believed that this delivery method would be beneficial to improve attendance, this can be built into the curriculum planning for the next academic year.

Key Risks - Performance

An overview of the Performance key risks across all curriculum areas, including maths and English, was provided within the report. As previously discussed with the Board as part of the Governance QIP for 22/23, JR advised that this would be reported on as standard moving forward. JR assured the Board that the key risks and mitigations were flagged and discussed with the SPC. The Board discussed the skills shortage within the industry and how this has impacted some curriculum delivery within vocational areas. The Chair informed the Board of an initiative adopted by other colleges whereby they have collaborated to share specialist staff. CA/GV provided some examples of the recruitment initiatives being taken by the College to attract new staff, in particular vocational teachers within Engineering and Construction.

CH: In relation to risk of delivery and retention issues reported under Access to HE, the Board asked whether this applied to the whole of the curriculum area. JR advised that it was specifically linked to the Nursing pathways which had some staffing issues, however, this area is now under new management with intensive support planned from the Quality Team.

Student Feedback

Results of the student satisfaction survey and apprentice survey were shared with the Board as part of the report.

CH: In relation to the student satisfaction survey, the Board noted that 2% of respondents (55 students) stated they would not recommend the College to a friend, and it was agreed that it would be beneficial if the reason for this was known. JR advised that a comment box would be added to future surveys to allow students to provide context to their response, to inform any action to be taken by the College to drive improvements.

Safeguarding & EDI Update

JR informed the Board that there had been some challenges in relation to staffing and dealing with the number of students requiring support, following the departure of some of the Early Help Co-ordinators. However, an alternative way of operating is currently being explored in terms of the counselling service and LEAP Mentors being trained to provide more early help within the curriculum services.

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

44/2223

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, Government Policy & Legislation and Strategic Relationships & Events.

External Environment

JR presented an overview of the current key external environment factors for the FE Sector, including the new Accountability Agreement, college oversight and intervention and the reclassification of colleges as public sector effective from 29/11/23. It was noted that as part of the Accountability Agreement, the College will have to provide a new accountability statement which will require Board approval and be published on the College website by the end of May 2023.

Gender Pay Gap Report

An executive summary of the Gender Pay Gap Report and its findings as at 31/3/22 was provided. The figures represent an encouraging reduction in the pay gap from a mean average of 9.5% to 7.5% and median average of 30.3% to 22.9%. However,

the Vice Principal for People & Culture (CA) advised that statistically the figures have not been compared like for like due to the College's flexible benefits scheme. The advice received regarding this issue was to use the salary spine point to bring in line with other colleges, which has caused the figures to be artificially inflated.

Action: CA to share the full report with the Board once finalised.

Key Performance Indicators

The overall KPI position was shared with the Board, including commentary against each target. As at 31/12/22, the KPI achievement was rag rated as 51.8% green, 13.7% amber and 34.5% red.

As part of the new reporting format, the Corporate KPIs were highlighted within the report. JR advised that all KPIs had been achieved against target, except for Performance & Development Review (PDR) completion which was currently at 80%, however, it was noted that the deadline for full completion is not until the end of the month.

Key Risks – Corporate

An overview of the key Corporate risks and mitigations was provided within the report.

CH: The Board raised that there was no differentiation between the high and low impact risks within the report. HTT advised that the scoring system for multiplying likelihood by impact is used within the overarching Strategic Risk Register which is currently being refreshed and will be presented at the next Audit Committee in March, and once finalised, will be shared with the Board for information. JR advised that it had been agreed as part of the Governance Quality Improvement Plan for 22/23 to provide the Board with an update on the current key risks and these may vary at each meeting.

CH: The Board asked if the middle management training programme was still proving to be useful and effective. CA advised that the 'Leading from the Middle' course was going very well and one of the six modules is dedicated to staff wellbeing which the College has a clear focus on for the benefit of individuals and the College as a whole.

Health & Safety

An update from the Health & Safety Committee was included within the report, including agreed actions, statutory audits and reports, and mandatory training.

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

45/2223

Governance Report

The Head of Governance (JS) presented the Governance Report which, in addition to the key items highlighted below, included an update on the Link Governor Scheme and a link to the latest ratified Committee minutes.

Governance Quality Improvement Plan

Following approval at the previous Board meeting, the Governance Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2022/23 has been reviewed by the lead governors/senior managers and updated against the actions and associated RAG ratings. The updated QIP was shared with the Board for review and it was noted that effective progress was being made against the identified improvements, with the vast majority due for completion by the end of the academic year.

Secretary of State Statutory Intervention Powers for FE

An executive summary was provided in relation to the DfE's new 'Secretary of State Statutory Intervention Powers for Further Education' guidance document for use by governors and senior leaders, which explains the circumstances in which the Secretary of State's statutory intervention powers may be exercised and the processes that the DfE will follow when deciding whether to use statutory intervention powers, outlining the type of action the Secretary of State may take. It was noted that this new guidance should be read alongside the existing 'College Oversight: Support and Intervention' guidance. In the latest December 2022 update, the College Oversight guidance sets out the principles of how the DfE will use active support with colleges following reclassification, how reclassification affects its intervention policy, and confirms the roll-out of Accountability Agreements.

The HoG stressed the importance of these documents and strongly encouraged that all governors should review the guidance in full to aid their understanding of the potential circumstances which could lead to intervention, in particular those relating to the actions of the governing body.

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

46/2223 Statutory Reporting – Link Governor Updates

The ratified minutes from the Safeguarding Committee were shared as part of the Governance Report.

JR advised that as part of the Teaching & Learning Festival on 26/1/23, all business support areas were asked to present their own sustainability projects. For example, the Business Development Team focused on reducing travel costs and the associated positive impact of travelling via train in terms of carbon footprint, financial, time management and staff wellbeing. Governors were reminded of their invitation to the College’s Sustainability Fair on 29/3/23.

There were no further updates for Health and Safety or Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Resolution: The Board **noted** the statutory updates.

47/2223 Confidential Items

Confidential items are minuted separately under Part 2.

48/223 Date of Next Meeting

30 March 2023

The meeting concluded.