

Minutes of Corporation Board – Part 1 28 March 2024

Board Members:	B Kaczmarczyk (Chair) L Mycroft (Joint Vice Chair) H Freeman J Evans S Martin-Standley P Dewhurst C Brown N Beldham (Staff Governor – Support)	J Richards (Principal and CEO) L McKenzie J Croot K Cashmore J Hemper B Turner (Student Governor) K Hoggins (Apprentice Governor) L Needham (Staff Governor – Curriculum)
Attendees:	C Godfrey (Deputy Principal) T Kidsley (AP Finance, IT and Estates) C Acaster (AP People & Culture) J Down (AP Student Experience & Wellbeing)	S Cox (Head of Governance) G Varley (AP Advanced Manufacturing & Building Technologies) M Greaves (AP Teaching, Learning & Quality Improvement)
Apologies:	Agenda Item 1 – T Brickles (Head of School Construction), M Malkin and students (Staveley Construction Hub) J Evans, S Martin-Standley, J Hemper, L McKenzie, K Hoggins, J Croot, M Greaves	

CH = Challenge

42/2324 Student Showcase
 M Malkin (Staveley Construction Skills Hub Manager), along with four students attended the meeting to provide the Board with an update on progress and activity at the Hub. The site provides an onsite training facility within a compound of an existing development site. In partnership with the Borough Council and the Devonshire Group, the facility has received Towns Deal funding and will deliver training to 900 students and careers engagement to 4000 over 10 years. The objective is to enhance existing construction training provision, increase engagement with the sector and provide a hub from which to channel training, employment and supply chain outputs. The students provided inspirational accounts of their learning, new skills and progress made toward their chosen career. Governors thanked the students for their professional presentation and for sharing their journey so far.

43/2324 Attendance
 The HoG noted apologies received. The Chair emphasised that attendance was key at meetings for discussion and decision making and requested that all governors attend meetings as circulated in the annual meeting schedule. In extenuating circumstances, any governors unable to attend meetings should notify the HoG as far as possible in advance so that quoracy can be assured for decision making.

44/2324 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.

45/2324 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising
 Part 1 minutes of the previous Corporation Board meeting held 15 February 2024 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)*

Matters Arising:

In response to the request from the Board on the impact of learning support on retention, following discussion the Board agreed that the EDI Committee review this, due to the complexities of reporting the detail. **CH:** In response to the query from PD in relation the students with EHCPs, the Deputy Principal (DP) confirmed that students with High Needs were not necessarily included and that the 3% difference from 96% to 93% was based on 120 students with an EHCP.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the non-confidential minutes (Part 1) of the previous meeting and noted matters arising.

46/2324

Finance & Corporate Services Report

The AP Finance, IT and Estates (APFIE) presented the Board with the Finance Report and Management Accounts Period 6.

FY 23/24 income, risks and opportunities – Risks were noted as the drop in income from HE and Advanced Learner Loans, with opportunities of grant income and apprenticeships. **CH:** The Chair commented on the downward trend for HE and asked what plans were in place to mitigate this. TK explained that it was expected that this would continue and the group will be looking at increasing margins. The HE offer will move away from the traditional offer and focus on local skills needs and HND/HNCs. Governor, PD will join the HE Transformation Project working group on Adult Skills. The Board agreed that changing the HE offer to technical and professional was an appropriate move. **CH:** Governors questioned what actions were being taken to address the drop in income from Advanced Learner Loans. The DP explained that the Access offer was being changed to a hybrid model, using an online learning platform and some face-to-face delivery. The Group is working with two online learning platforms to develop online learning for adults and looking at delivering Higher Technical and technical adult programmes.

FY 23/24 Pay Costs with funded and self-funded cost increases – there was an anticipated overspend in paycosts, in particular in relation to the National Living Wage (NLW) increase to 9.8%. **CH:** PD asked if this had had a ripple effect on those on grades above. The AP People and Culture explained that a number of roles had been reviewed. The increase in the National Living Wage (NLW) has been unprecedented and follows the government wage strategy to become 1/3 of the UK national average salary. **CH:** In response to a question from PD about pressure in coming years and if modelling had been done, the APFIE confirmed that this had been done and was being monitored as part of the budgeting process and will be reviewed if there are external pressures. Investment in a new website and CRM system is underway, which will support engagement with new and existing students and stakeholders as part of the drive to increase income and market share which would impact positively of our ability to award pay increases moving forward. Discussion took place on the current political climate and the possible impact of the forthcoming elections.

The APFIE presented an overview of FY 23/24 Agency Costs - the main areas where agency staff had been recruited and actions to address were outlined; FY 23/24 Pay to Income Ratio and adjustments; FY 23/24 Educational EBITDA, contingencies and opportunities; Cash – restricted and unrestricted cash balances, forecast to end-of-year with unrestricted cash and current cash days and FY 23/24 Financial Health including a forecast of 'Good' and an improvement on FY 22/23.

The APFIE presented the Construction Apprenticeships Actuals v. Budget following a request from the Board at the last meeting. It is anticipated that The Staveley Construction Hub will bring in opportunities with larger companies.

Action: GV to consult with partners to see if there are any employers who have not used their apprenticeship funding allocation.

Transformation Fund – APFIE provided an update on the tender process and noted that all contractors had come in over budget. The Transformation Fund Sub-Committee identified a preferred contractor, the project team is now working with the contractor on a value engineering exercise, ensuring that the plan will not go back to planning. BK, Chair of the Transformation Fund Sub-Committee gave an overview of the scrutiny carried out by the Committee and the tight timelines required by the DfE for funding. It was noted that progress on the project was time critical.

Resolution: The Corporation Board agreed to use their delegated powers to allow the Transformation Fund Sub-Committee to approve the appointment of the contractor following a successful value engineering exercise.

Resolution: The Board received the Finance & Corporate Services Report and **approved** the Period 6 Management Accounts.

Risk Appetite Statement

The APFIE and Chair of Audit Committee talked through the recently developed Risk Appetite Statement which has been scrutinised and recommended for Board approval by Audit Committee on 12 March 2024. The Group has a zero-risk approach towards regulatory, health and safety and safeguarding whilst trying to minimise its exposure towards excessive financial, reputational and compliance risk. The Risk Appetite Statement provides clarity on which areas of the business are more open to risk. Following discussion, the Board agreed they were happy to approve the risk appetite levels and categories.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the Risk Appetite Statement

Risk Management Policy

The APFIE presented the updated Risk Management Policy and Framework which had been reviewed at the last Audit Committee meeting. Risks are assessed against the risk appetite, any that fall outside the risk tolerance will be added to the risk register and require further action to reduce the net score. Going forward, the Risk Management Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Resolution: The Board **approved** the Risk Management Policy and Framework.

47/2324

Performance Report

The DP presented the Performance Report, which included details on KPIs, performance data, teaching learning and assessment, student and employer feedback, an update on safeguarding and prevent and key risks. She noted that the performance data had been scrutinised in detail at the Standards and Performance Committee on 13 February 2024.

Key points from the report included:

KPIs for 16-18 Study Programmes, Adult learning and Apprenticeships and actions being taken to mitigate risks. She noted that study programmes were ahead of target on student numbers, and that attendance was in line with KPI and up on previous years in English and Maths. **CH:** Governors queried what actions were being taken to improve retention in 16-18 which had declined in a small number of areas. DP explained that this was being addressed by a review of the induction plan for late starters and an investment in staff and equipment. **CH:** The Chair asked what specific areas were of concern for retention. The DP noted several curriculum areas and levels of study which were of concern, mainly relating to staffing and lack of capacity. Areas where retention is of concern will be reported at Standards and Performance Committee. In relation to Adults, she noted that progress had been made and that plans for a hybrid model of delivery were being considered. The Board noted the proposal and accepted that there would be cost implications. Discussion took place on the positive impact on apprenticeship retention following the unification of LU Derby and college provision. Reporting is being developed to reflect when apprentices are in Gateway waiting for end-point-assessment as these currently show as out-of-funding. **CH:** PD asked about college participation in World Skills. The Assistant Principal, Advanced Manufacturing and Building Technologies (APAMBT) informed the Board plans were being put in place to ensure that students and staff were supported to participate in such events.

The curriculum planning process is ongoing and all first stage moderations have now taken place. The plan will be agreed by SMT and presented to the next Board meeting. She noted that changes as a result of the updated English and maths funding regulations are being implemented on a phased approach. **CH:** The Chair asked what was planned to engage students with the additional hours of face-to-face delivery in English and maths. DP explained that key would be making the lessons interesting, practical and enjoyable. **CH:** CB asked how staff had responded to the increase in teaching hours. The DP responded that once the plan was finalised, feedback from staff would be taken into account.

LN left the meeting.

Resolution: The Board **noted** the Performance Report.

48/2324

Statutory Reporting & Link Governor Updates

The Board received a verbal update from LMy, Link Governor for Green Skills and Safeguarding, following the recent ETF event where The Assistant Principal, Teaching, Learning and Quality Improvement (APTLQA), APFIE and the Safeguarding Team hosted sessions. The Assistant Principal, Student Experience and Wellbeing (APSEW) updated the Board on the AoC Mental Health Charter which had recently been updated. There were no updates to report on Health and Safety, or additional link governor activity.

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

49/2324

Corporate Report

The Principal/CEO provided an overview of the Corporate Report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, the report covered the national picture including Government Policy and Legislation, Strategic Relationships/events, Strategic Planning, People and Culture, KPIs, Health and Safety and Key Risks.

New Branding – The Principal presented the new brand proposal which aims to capture the ambition for the group, students and staff, creates a visual identify, is versatile and includes a pathway and steps to FE, HE or a new career. In response to a query from KC, the Principal confirmed that the brand had been checked and met inclusivity guidelines. The Board discussed in the detail the logo, narrative and visual identify. The Board were happy for the college to continue developing the brand and looked forward to hearing student feedback.

Action: Principal to check that the logo proposal is unique and does not resemble that of any other organisations.

Strategic Plan Update - Consultation has taken place with staff on the Aspiring Leaders course and with employers. A cross college event is planned for the 23 April 2024 where students and staff will have the opportunity to feedback and contribute to the development of the plan.

The new branding company were asked for their suggestion in for the vision. They have proposed “Empowering people through education, where individuals grow and communities thrive”. Board members were asked to provide feedback to the HoG on the vision statement.

KPIs - Currently all KPIs are green and on-track. The key focus is on commercial, adult and ALS income.

LMy left the meeting.

Resolution: The Board **noted** the contents of the Corporate Report

50/2324

Student Governor Report

BT talked through the key points of the Student Governor report, which included the new centrally located area for the Student Union (SU) and the Clothes Swap organised for the Sustainability Fair on 28 March 2024. The SU are working with Brand and Marketing to develop signage to increase SU visibility and supporting strategic planning including organising and hosting the consultation with students on the 23 April 2024. The SU is working with the curriculum area LEAPs to recruit more members from across the college. Future plans include a promotion event to raise the profile of the SU on 14 May, an end-of-year celebration and resurrecting the Student Cinema.

Resolution: The Board noted the contents of the Student Governor Report

51/2324

Governance Report

The Head of Governance (HoG) presented the Governance Report which, in addition to the key items highlighted below, included an update on membership, External Board Review, progress on the Quality Improvement Plan, an update on the future Governor Training and Development plan, business calendar, policies approved at Committee-level and ratified Committee minutes.

The Board received an update on attendance by Committee, attendance at Corporation is 84.3% against the KPI of 80%.

Updated terms of reference for the following committees were approved:

- Audit Committee
- Finance & Corporate Services
- Governance & Search
- Standards & Performance

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan is being introduced to support engagement with all stakeholders, both internal and external. This will be reviewed by Governance & Search Committee prior to approval at Board level.

Stakeholder event dates were shared, where governors will have the opportunity to join students and staff at events. Going forward dates will also be communicated through the new newsletter.

Resolution: The Board **noted** the Governance Report and **approved** the updated terms of reference

52/2324

Date of Next Meeting

13 June 2024

8.30 – 9.15 Accountability Statement – for Corporation Board review and approval (Teams and/or in person)

9.30 – 12.30 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Training (in person)

4 July 2024 – Corporation Board

Part 1 of The meeting concluded. Staff and Student Governors left the meeting

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Confidential Items

Confidential items are minuted separately under Part 2.