

Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Thursday 17th October 2024 at 17:00

GOVERNORS

PRESENT:

Neil McDonald, Meeting Chair
Nick Butler (left at 17:50 and rejoined at 18:10)
Andrew Cropley, Principal and Chief Executive Officer
David Gillies (from 17:10)
Charles Heaton (from 17:50)
Kudzai Muzangaza
Jane Peacock
Kit Salt (from 17:10)
Rob Simcox
Scott Smith, Staff Governor: Academic
Andrew Spencer, Staff Governor: Business Support
Paul Wheeler

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE:

Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience
Diane Booth, Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality
Jon Fearon, Finance Director
Gavin Peake, Director: IT, Estates & Learning Resources
Sian Geeson, Director: Human Resources & Organisational Development
Eloise Hopkinson, Clerk to the Corporation

1

REAPPOINTMENTS AND NEW APPOINTMENTS

The clerk informed the Corporation Board that Andrew Spencer had been reappointed as business support staff governor.

Governors were asked to approve the reappointment of David Gillies for a two-year term only. It was explained that he will also step away from the Standards Committee and retain membership of the Workforce Development Committee.

Governors were asked to approve the reappointment of Keith Spiers for a four-year term. He will also join the Standards Committee, which will be covered under item 9 of the meeting agenda.

David Gillies and Kit Salt joined the meeting at 17:10.

ACTION by whom	DATE by when
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Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

The clerk informed governors that three students had been interviewed by a panel consisting of the Audit Committee chair, the principal, and the clerk. All three students performed well in their interviews, but the recommendation of the panel was ultimately to appoint Flynn Bainbridge and Arina Borscakova as student governors for the 2024/25 academic year. The panel would also like to invite Brandon Stevens to attend Standards Committee meetings as an observer. Governors were happy to agree to these proposals.

AGREED:

- to note the reappointment of Andrew Spencer as business support staff governor
- to approve the reappointment of David Gillies for a two-year term until 15th October 2026
- to approve the reappointment of Keith Spiers for a four-year term until 15th October 2028
- to approve the appointment of Flynn Bainbridge and Arina Borscakova for the 2024/25 academic year (until 31st July 2025)
- to approve that Brandon Stevens be invited to attend Standards Committee meetings as an observer during 2024/25.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The meeting chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.

3 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Alison Griffiths, Theresa Hodgkinson, Ben Owen, Edward Rawson, Keith Spiers and Kate Truscott.

Kit Salt, Kudzai Muzangaza, Nick Butler and Rob Simcox were welcomed to their first Corporation Board meeting as members and were asked to briefly introduce themselves.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY 2024

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2024.

There were no matters arising.

5 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The board was happy to note the content of the update provided.

The clerk was tasked to ensure the dates within the APR are accurate and that any date changes are discussed with the appropriate chair in advance of them being updated, rather than unachievable dates being set and missed.

Signed: Kate Truscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

6 **SCENE SETTING**

The meeting chair briefly set the scene, indicating that the agenda is long and in-depth and will provide a good introduction to the Corporation Board for its newest members.

7 **BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS – 2023/24 YEAREND**

The principal informed the board that this remains an important and heavily scrutinised document, and he welcomed governors to contact if they do wish to discuss how targets are set and how judgements are made.

Governors were reminded that the red RAG-rated items have been challenging throughout the year. The principal advised governors that the various key performance indicators are covered in more detail within the attachments to the chairs' reports, but he particularly drew attention to the following:

- The measure relating to adult enrolments was impacted by subcontractors not delivering the outcomes the college had hoped for. The ambition to offer more adult delivery locally is on track, however, and performance is good.
- The EBITDA did not quite hit the target set, but it is still quite a positive figure.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

8 **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS PROPOSED FOR 2024/25**

The principal reminded governors of the strategy day held in June 2024, at which suggestions were made as to the objectives for 2024/25. He gave thanks to those colleagues who had provided support with this item, and the board members were informed that these objectives and KPIS have been taken through the appropriate committees and were subsequently recommended for approval. Governors were invited to question and discuss the proposals presented.

One governor raised a question about the objective for 100% of staff to take up an upskilling opportunity. He asked whether this objective attempted to combine a number of former objectives to indicate that, as long as staff complete one piece of upskilling, this contributes to the 100%. The HR director indicated that every staff member should be doing some sort of upskilling action, no matter their job role or whether they are support or teaching staff. It was agreed that 100% may be an ambitious target, but the Organisational Development puts a lot of effort into getting opportunities in place, and it is important to drive upskilling opportunities for all staff. Governors were content with this response.

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

One governor commented on how there might be more of an explicit link between the objectives and how they fit into the balanced scorecard. It was agreed that a way of indicating this more clearly would be devised and included when this item is next presented to the board.

Exec

Dec 2024

The meeting chair questioned the fact that some targets appear to be conservative and, particularly in the case of maths and English outcomes, are lower than in previous years. He asked what assurance governors can have that these targets are achievable this year. He also challenged the fact that the measures within the scorecard do not match those within the objectives. The principal informed governors that the available outcomes data pertains to 2023/24, and this is what has been included within the balanced scorecard. He indicated that the outcomes will not change again until August, so the measures can either be left blank throughout the year or can show the previous year's data. The meeting chair challenged that the balanced scorecard should show the 2024/25 target and, when available, the corresponding data, not that for 2023/24. The measures should reflect what the Executive team is being held accountable for; therefore, governors requested that the balanced scorecard should only ever show the data for the current academic year, and that this should be applied consistently.

Exec

Dec 2024

The principal informed the board that the English and maths targets have actually been set higher within the scorecard than within the objectives, as the vice principal: curriculum and quality is eager to be aspirational. Governors supported this approach.

AGREED:

- to approve the proposed strategic objectives for 2024/25 as presented
- to approve the balanced scorecard and annual KPIs for 2024/25 as presented, subject to the data displayed within the scorecard always being that pertaining to the current academic year.

9

QUALITY AND STANDARDS

The committee chair's report was delivered by a member of the committee:

- The meeting took place the week prior to the board meeting, so the information presented was still very up to date.
- A new governor was welcomed to the committee, and one member stepped down but retained membership of the board and one other committee.
- The committee had a detailed discussion and received very in-depth reports – thanks were given to the Executive report writers and their teams for the information provided.
- The governor attended the Association of Colleges network meeting this week, and this provided her with broad assurance that the work seen via the college's Standards Committee is very good practice. Some of the questions emerging from the

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

committee meeting were ahead of the game in many respects. She indicated that, while it is important not to be complacent, the college's work is of good quality and governors are receiving good information from the Executive.

- One focus of the Quality Improvement Action Plan was the apprenticeships accountability framework. The governor explained that the college's data for achievement, retention and employer feedback is classified by the ESFA as needing improvement. These areas are regularly discussed by governors during board and committee meetings, and it is acknowledged that, in some cases, these issues will take several years to work through. However, the college has a good plan in place to address these issues, and senior leaders are in quarterly dialogue with the ESFA to provide updates. Apprenticeships improvements have been written into the strategic objectives to drive improvements against the accountability framework.
- The committee received an in-depth report about A Levels. This update showed governors that, while being inclusive is the right thing for the college, it sometimes impacts the data. Very creative approaches are being put in place to address this. This links to the inclusion agenda, and Ofsted was agreed to currently be in 'listening mode' in terms of how this might be reflected in reporting.
- The self-assessment report showed that the college is generally moving in the right direction. Two areas are currently self-assessing as 'outstanding', which is very positive. Both areas have been 'outstanding' for at least two years. Several other areas currently self-assessed as a strong 'good' are working towards 'outstanding'.
- It was reiterated that the validation meetings are scheduled to take place in early November, and governors were reminded to inform the clerk if they are able to attend any of these meetings.
- The committee agreed that it was good to see in terms that the college is working with Lincoln and Loughborough Colleges, with peers acting as critical friends during the self-assessment process. Both colleges had good results from recent Ofsted inspections; therefore, they have some similarities to WNC but also have different strengths.
- The committee members had an interesting discussion in relation to KPIs, resulting from the safeguarding, EDI and priority groups items. Several of last year's targets were not met because they were very stretching. The committee is aware that the teams do some very good work, and there was a conversation about whether the targets are too stretching and need to be reconsidered. However, senior leaders assured governors that the teams want their targets to be aspirational.
- The Employer Engagement Strategy was recommended to the board for approval, but this will be handled separately later on the board's agenda.

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented the Community Engagement Strategy for approval.

- This was last approved in 2021 and is now due for review.
- The vice principal has not carried out an extensive rewrite, but she has stepped up the actions previously identified.
- The main objectives remain the same, focusing on becoming an anchor institution within local communities; and living up to the vision of becoming a force for raising aspiration through social inclusion and social mobility. The vice principal explained that, beneath these, the intention is to ensure a continuation of the place-shaping work already carried out across the community. The college has been working with the hospital and other public sector employers in relation to being an exemplar of inclusive employment practice; developing the adult offer and accessing to the harder-to-reach community; and there are already plans in place relating to family learning.
- The meeting chair questioned whether it has also been debated and discussed whether private and third sector employers could also be included to help them be more inclusive employers. The vice principal agreed that companies such as Capita Mansfield could certainly be included. She suggested that she update the relevant sub-objective to refer to public sector and identified private sector businesses, rather than only public sector. Governors were happy with this suggestion.

VP: CESE

Oct 2024

The committee was also happy to recommend the Terms of Reference 2024/25 for approval by the Corporation Board, as well as the appointment of Keith Spiers to the Standards Committee in place of David Gillies.

(Charles Heaton joined the meeting.)

(Nick Butler left the meeting.)

Governors then watched a 'Talking Heads' video, the theme of which was the first few weeks in college (classroom-based). In general discussion, governors agreed that it was positive to see students' thoughts presented in this way, and their answers seemed genuine and unrehearsed. The students were positive about their experiences so far, and governors were pleased to see how the opportunities offered by the college have helped students. They also agreed that it was good to see that induction was varied by course, rather than a one size fits all approach applied.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

- to note the content of the QIAP report and the SAR report and timetable
- to note the content of the safeguarding/Prevent, EDI, and priority groups reports
- to approve the Community Engagement Strategy as presented, with the tweak agreed above
- to approve the committee Terms of Reference 2024/25
- to approve the appointment of Keith Spiers to the Standards Committee.

10 **KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION – 2024 UPDATE**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented this update to governors, informing the board that this would constitute governors' annual mandatory safeguarding training. This part of the meeting was recorded to enable those governors who were unable to be present to still access the training.

Governors were invited to consider whether they are equipped with the skills needed to challenge, and whether the reports they receive give the level of assurance required to enable them to fulfil their obligations under KCSiE. The vice principal invited governors to consider this and provide feedback.

An email will be sent to those governors who were not present in the meeting to request that they watch this video and confirm to the clerk once done. This will be recorded within the annual training log.

Governors agreed that this approach to the annual update is better for the board than attending the staff sessions.

One governor raised a question and challenge linked to the completion rate of the mandatory safeguarding and Prevent refresher training having been reported as being only 92%. She asked for comment on this from the vice principal and HR director. In response, governors were informed that annual training completion is often a challenge, and two issues had been identified:

- a) How the annual refresher is collected and reported. The 92% reported included new starters who will not have completed their training at the point the data is pulled. Managers are now considering a different way of dealing with new starter data.
- b) Once the data had been drilled down, there were around 10 staff members with no excuse for not having attended an update session. A hard line was taken with line managers, stating that the college would consider further action against these individuals. These staff did then complete the training via a video.

The vice principal indicated that the aim is for existing staff to have completed their mandatory annual update by Christmas, and everything

Clerk

Oct 2024

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair Date: 19/12/2024

possible is being done to get the completion rate to 100%. Governors expressed particular concern around what would happen if there were a safeguarding issue and it transpired that the staff member involved had not completed the training but no decisive action had been taken by the college. The Standards Committee chair specifically asked that these ten staff members be triangulated to ensure they have undertaken at least one piece of safeguarding training (i.e. new starter training or the pre-commencement safeguarding video), and the vice principal was able to confirm that all of the staff members had at least completed some element of safeguarding training. The vice principal has also carried out an audit to identify which staff members have never logged into CPOMs. Where student-facing staff have never logged in, line managers have been informed and asked to ensure their team members set up their accounts urgently to ensure they are using the system.

The meeting chair agreed that it was positive to see this triangulation from different sources. Governors agreed that this is a definite 'red line' within the organisation, and a tough approach is needed in relation to those individuals who do not adhere.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the annual safeguarding update for governors
- to note the additional information provided.

(Nick Butler re-joined the meeting.)

11 EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented a yearend update and 2024/25 milestones, as well as the 2024/25 strategy for approval. The Standards Committee members, during their meeting in October, were happy to recommend this slightly tweaked version of the latter to the board.

Key points particularly brought to the board's attention were:

- The report includes progress against the 2023/24 employer engagement milestones. The college moved quite a distance in-year in relation to this activity.
- The college purchased the Skills Builder Framework, which is now being rolled out across the college.
- The college took on the Mansfield and Ashfield Business Network (MABN – formerly Mansfield & Ashfield 2020) in-year. There was a really successful launch event week commencing 7th October, with over 100 people in attendance. This is now gaining traction in relation to bringing in smaller employers.
- The college continues to work with the hospital and other public sector employers to ensure it has good strategic links.

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair Date: 19/12/2024

- Work with Nottingham Trent University has started to move forward and NTU staff are now very keen to get this moving. A number of meetings have taken place and the vice principal and NTU colleagues are working on a sector-based approach to employer engagement. They have identified four sectors and will start to have joint conversations with both small and larger employers about what the partnership can offer.
- The key milestones for 2024/25 were also presented, and the vice principal confirmed that governors will be updated on performance against these.
- The work from the strategy day in June has been woven into the Employer Engagement Strategy presented.

The vice principal also informed the board that she recently attended a workshop in relation to the Freeport. This is outside the college's location, but there are some real links to be made with initiatives like the Gene Haas centre and the Automated Distribution and Manufacturing Centre. She indicated that the workshop was very interesting and there will be more information, updates and developments to come.

Governors agreed that this was a positive piece of work and it was really good to see the results coming through. The progress on the work with NTU was also welcomed by the board, and governors agreed that the milestones set were appropriate.

AGREED:

- to note the updates in respect of the 2023/24 yearend and the 2024/25 milestones
- to approve the Employer Engagement Strategy 2024/25 as presented.

12

AUDIT AND RISK

The committee chair presented his report, highlighting the following key points:

- The internal audit programme was completed with significant assurance on all audits except one, which still had positive assurance. This was agreed to be an exceptional outcome for the year.
- The plan for 2024/25 was approved, as were the scopes for the first set of audits.
- One minor change was requested to years two and three of the three-year plan: to swap employer engagement to year two and environmental reporting to year 3. The committee felt that this was appropriate, particularly considering the focus on employer engagement and the new strategy.
- External audit is on target to be completed for reporting at the joint committee meeting in November.

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

AGREED:

- to note the content of this summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to note the 2024/25 risk register
- to note the internal auditor's annual report 2023/24
- to note the draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2023/24, which will be presented for final approval in December 2024.

13

FINANCE AND ESTATES

The committee chair's report was presented by a member of the committee, highlighting key points as follows:

- A new governor was welcomed to the committee.
- The management accounts were presented. The outturn for the year shows a 1.75m EBITDA; although below target, this is still a sportive result
- The committee discussed the latest situation in relation to the budget risk relating to in-year growth funding. This seems extremely likely, so the risk has reduced slightly.
- The committee signed off on the suggested remarks for the accounts, but members suggested that the attitude should be more positive and not focus on performance being below the expectation. The version presented to the board is the same as was given to the committee, but the finance director confirmed that the final version will be updated as suggested.
- The committee discussed a paused relationship with subcontractor following an issue with performance. However, members were able to recommend an increase to Qualitrain's funded rate and a new relationship with Nottingham Forest in the Community.
- A positive update was provided in relation to capital works, particularly the Old Brewery, including the movement of staff and students, and the development of classrooms at Derby Road.
- The committee considered the frustrations in relation to the purchase of the former Wilko's store (Outram Street) and the potential for this to now miss its targeted opening date due to legal holdups.
- The finance director also presented a request in relation to the procurement of a new finance system. The committee was happy to recommend this to the board on the basis that the project will have a separate risk register to ensure it is well managed. The timing will be critical as the proposal is for the new system to go live at the start of the next financial year.

Fin. Dir.

Nov 2024

The finance director indicated that the ATTFE provision funded by the college last year will not be funded in future; however, moving forward, there will be a conversation about what the college can fund. He feels that would be beneficial to maintain this relationship, but the college has approached this situation in the right way by applying the

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appropriate rules and regulations. The Audit Committee chair agreed that he strongly supports the actions taken but equally strongly advocates a continuation of this relationship, as long as it is correctly managed.

The director: IT, estates and learning resources was able to provide a positive update on the purchase of the Outram Street site. He confirmed that the buildings inspector has given permission for the college to complete work inside the building first. The buildings inspector will then be happy to sign the site off as habitable, which will enable students to be moved into the site and the external works to be completed with them in situ. In summary, this project is now back on track. Governors welcomed this update and agreed that it is a good result. It was also agreed that the students will bring footfall and vibrancy to Sutton-in-Ashfield's town centre.

One governor asked for clarity in relation to the subcontractor schedule, which still reflects the allocation of £110k for the subcontractor whose allocation has been reduced to 25% of the original plan. The finance director provided clarity that a conversation is required with the subcontractor as to how to move forward. This funding has not been contracted yet because of the concerns discussed, and the college has not yet issued the contract. Governors were happy with this explanation.

The finance director provided an update that Moore Insight, the provider of the new finance system, will develop and maintain the requested risk register. This task will be completed early on in the process. The meeting chair asked what level of training will be required to ensure staff are ready to use this system in time for its launch date. The finance director explained that the supplier offers 50% more training and support than any alternative supplier. There is also a suite of online videos for all elements of the system, so staff members will be able to look anything up if they are unsure. The finance director indicated that there is headroom within the budget for this, and he informed governors that the upgrade required to keep the current system within its support contract would also come at a cost if the college chose not to adopt a new system.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to note the July 2024 Management Accounts and the key messages in respect of the 2023/24 yearend accounts
- to note the capital projects and estates update
- to approve an allocation of £125,000 to Nottingham Forest in the Community

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

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- to approve revising the funded rate for Qualitrain to 82.5%, and for this to come into effect for any enrolments that occurred after approval at October's Corporation Board meeting.
- to approve the procurement of the new finance system in place of EBIS, on the condition that a standalone project risk register is put in place and key risks are also captured appropriately within the college's risk register.

14 **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The committee chair presented his report and particularly brought the board's attention to the following matters:

- The committee received a presentation from a head of department in relation to mentoring – this was an excellent presentation, and Executive team members were asked to take this project forward so that staff could benefit from this support.
- The people-related strategic objectives were approved with the addition of an appraisal metric, which the Executive team has agreed to implement as a subjective measure.
- Feedback from July's 'wellbeing day' was positive. However, a number of staff could not attend any of the sessions, some because of their work responsibilities, and consideration is to be given to ensuring they can also benefit from these events in future. A task was also allocated to the HR director and organisational development manager to look into why some staff chose not to attend for reasons other than workload.
- The staff survey was well received and showed some good results and feedback, albeit there is still concern from staff in relation to confidentiality. The senior team and governors are not sure how this can be addressed, and it was agreed that it may just be a case of continuing to push the fact that the survey is confidential. Senior leaders were asked to find a way to cascade survey results to managers to enable them to drive improvements but, again, this comes with a confidentiality concern.
- The committee received good assurance and had no concerns emerging from the reports presented.
- Overall, the college is in a good position in terms of its workforce.

AGREED:

- to note the content of this summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting

15 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The principal presented his in-depth report, and key matters particularly highlighted within the meeting were:

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair Date: 19/12/2024

- The first half term has been very positive. The sites are very busy and staff are buying in to the growth.
- The Secretary of State did say that there would be a growth guarantee, but the exact details are not yet known. The government is still maintaining the caveat that this will be subject to affordability, and this is creating difficulty in relation to decision-making for the college. The principal is pushing for certainty.
- Pearson increased its GCSE English grade boundary by eleven marks, despite Ofqual stating that the grading should remain as it was last year. This affected 199 of the college's students who would have achieved a grade 4 had they achieved the same marks last year. Luminare led a group of colleges to initiate some legal work in relation to this. This has resulted in an exchange of letters but will stop short of judicial review. Advice from lawyers the cost of this would be high even if the case were won. The principal indicated that a positive outcome is that the profile of the issue has been increased and the ante has been raised on why the condition of funding situation is unhealthy.
- The principal appeared on the television last week in relation to the Future Tech Centre, and the link to this appearance has been shared with governors.
- The college is trying to identify a long-term solution to the community offer in the town centre. The director: IT, estates and learning resources is working hard to secure the team an alternative space, perhaps in the town hall. The principal indicated that it may be necessary to get some rapid governance approval for this, and he asked that the board delegate this matter to the Finance and Estates Committee as this might enable agreement to be expedited.
- The principal particularly highlighted the college's positive partnership with Sherwood Forest Hospitals.
- The principal explained that the HR director challenged him in relation to culture, and this resulted in a conversation about the college's vision and values. These were developed six years ago, and the principal indicated that the vision does not feel as challenging now as it did then. He invited governors to consider whether it might be timely to carry out a new exercise around the vision. This would be done in a consultative way with stakeholders such as employers, partners, staff and students, as well as with the board.
- The principal drew attention to the dates of interest in the report, stating that attending these events would provide governors with a very good picture and understanding of the college and what it offers. They also provide opportunities to speak to staff. He particularly advised that some particularly striking speakers will be attending the Create Expo this year.

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair Date: 19/12/2024

	It was agreed that the clerk would ensure that there is no issue in delegating a decision in relation to accommodation for the Adult and Community team to the Finance and Estates Committee. Provided this is not an issue, authority would be delegated to the committee. If the matter does need to be handled by the board, the meeting chair indicated that this could be handled by way of a written resolution, and he indicated that governors should react to any such request quickly to enable the college to move forward.	Clerk	Oct 2024
	In relation to the board discussing a review of the vision and values at its meeting in December, the meeting chair indicated that this was a good idea, and he asked that the agenda be structured in a way which enables sufficient focus on this issue. It was thought to be likely that other reports within the agenda would need to be shortened.	Clerk	Dec 2024
	AGREED: • to note the content of the update provided and the attachments • provided that there no issue can be identified in doing so, to delegate authority to the Finance and Estates Committee to pass a decision in relation to accommodation for the Adult and Community team.		
16	<u>GOVERNANCE: INSTRUMENT AND ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT</u> The clerk presented this detailed report and its appendices, informing the board that this was the outcome of discussions with the working group of three governors. Preliminary work had been undertaken to pull in legal advice and other colleges' practice to provide some suggestions on which these discussions could be based. Governors were asked to discuss some specific points, as follows: <u>The appointment of parent governors</u> The working group requested that the board specifically consider whether it may wish to appoint a parent member. Governors discussed this suggestion and agreed that the college should not consider appointing parent members. It was discussed that the college has, in the past, had external governors who happened to be parents of students, but this was never deliberate. Governors agreed that it would be a challenge to recruit parent members. One staff governor suggested that, if the board did ever wish to explore the parent voice, there could be scope for to set up working group for parents. From this, it was agreed that one option would be to advertise board vacancies to the whole college community, thus potentially attracting the attention of parents who may wish to apply to be external governors. However, in short, it was agreed that reference to parent governors can be removed from the Instrument and Articles. <u>Board membership and quorum</u>	Clerk	Nov 2024

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair Date: 19/12/2024

The board was invited to consider whether a) sixteen board members is sufficient and b) whether the quorum should be kept at 40%.

In relation to the latter point, the clerk indicated that increasing quorum from 40% would make achieving quoracy more challenging and increase the likelihood of having to rearrange board meetings. The clerk suggested that, should the board wish to make a change in this respect, the options would be as follows:

- a) Keep the quorum as it is
- b) Increase the percentage but on the understanding that this will bring its own challenges
- c) In either of the above cases, add a caveat – e.g. that, where a confidential item requires any members to withdraw, a minimum of five members must be entitled to remain for there to be a quorum, and/or stipulating that there is only a quorum if the external members in attendance outnumber the internal members (i.e. the principal and staff/student governors).

One governor suggested a fourth option: for the quorum to remain at 40% but with the caveat that there must be representation from each committee. This was agreed and will be implemented into the document. The board did not express any desire to increase the number of members beyond sixteen.

Clerk

Nov 2024

Senior postholder roles

The working group had questioned whether senior postholders would always be advertised nationally. It was confirmed that this would always be the case, but an exception could be if it were known that the college had internal talent suitable for a role. The options in relation to this clause of the Instrument and Articles of Government are:

- a) to leave this as it is and ensure that all senior posts are advertised nationally regardless of internal potential
- b) amend clause 10(1)(a) to: “determine the arrangements for the advertisement, selection and appointment of a successor, in line with current employment legislation, the college’s equality policy, and best practice.”

Governors discussed this and agreed that the college should always advertise roles in a way which ensures it gets the best candidates possible. There may well be a suitable internal candidate, but this person would need to apply and follow a transparent process. The college has evidenced a good balance of internal and external applicants in the past, and open competition gives the postholder much more credibility. Therefore, this clause will remain as it is.

Clerk

Nov 2024

Other changes

The board’s attention was also drawn to certain changes highlighted in pink within the draft document, and governors were invited to raise any points which they disagreed with or found concerning.

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024

The board was informed that all other changes had been agreed by the working group, but these could be found highlighted in yellow within the document presented and via the track changes applied to the original version. Again, governors were invited to raise any points which they disagreed with or found concerning.

The clerk agreed that the working group would meet again to pull together a second version of the document, taking into account these discussions and any feedback received after the meeting. This second draft would then be presented to the board for approval in December.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the report and the appendices
- to note the invitation for feedback to be provided to the clerk outside of the meeting
- that the working group will meet again to agree a second draft, which will be presented to the board for approval in December 2024.

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of additional business.

18 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 19th December 2024 at 17:00. It will be preceded by a student panel at 16:00 and followed by the board's Christmas meal in Refined.

Staff governors left the meeting at 19:00.

The meeting closed at 19:10.

Clerk

Nov 2024

Signed: Kate Tiscott Meeting Chair

Date: 19/12/2024