

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 25TH MARCH 2024

Present:

Governors:

Angela Briggs	Tina Greaves
Ruth Brook (via MS Teams)	Sam Hewson
Rebecca Chamley (via MS Teams)	Spencer Hibbins
Greg Clarke	Karen Jackson (via MS Teams)
Sue Craggs	Emma Kirk (Until 6.23 pm)
Dan Fell (via MS Teams)	Philippa Poland
	John Rees

The quorum for the meeting was 40% of membership (9 Members). The meeting was quorate.

In attendance:

Sharon Harmon	Clerk to the Corporation
Barrie Shipley	Chief Operating Officer, Finance and Infrastructure
Rachel Maguire	Chief Operating Officer, People and Information
Danny Fenwick	Deputy Principal

The meeting took place at Doncaster College and via MS Teams and started at 5.30pm.

Item	Minutes	Action
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1 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Dolly Agoro, Lee Tillman, Mark Swales, Lee Walker, Preetha Kumar, Andrea Ward, Aaron Eagles and Peter Grant.

2 Declarations of Interest

Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 13th December 2023

The minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 13th December 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Item 9 - The COOFI confirmed that no further Board approval was required in relation to the Financial Statements following receipt of the final ESFA confirmation statements.

4 Feedback from Committee Meetings

Members received the Committee Chairs' feedback reports from the meetings of the Curriculum Quality & Performance Committee on 7th February 2024, the Search & Governance Committee on 7th February 2024, the Finance &

Resources Committee on 21st February 2024, the Audit and Risk Committee on 4th March 2024 and the People & Transformation Committee on 6th March 2024. The Chair of the HEPQ committee provide verbal feedback from the committee meeting on 13th March 2024.

5 CEO Report

The CEO presented an update report covering a range of whole College updates concerning College performance, partnership updates and key policy implications. Members noted that throughout the report cross-referencing to strategic plan pillars and projects is provided to illustrate the purpose of the activity in this context.

Members were assured that overall performance against most of the College's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) remains strong, with some notable in-year improvements in student progress and recruitment measures. The majority of student performance indicators at the whole-College level are positive and the proportion of students at risk of failing to achieve is reducing. Members recognised the work involved in achieving such a positive position and passed on their thanks to all college staff.

The CEO explained the new measure of destinations, which provides a first look at the impact of the curriculum on students' next steps on completion of their studies. Members noted that by the measure of destinations looking at 16-18 FE students 92.4% of leavers who had successfully completed progressed into positive destinations. Members had a full discussion about the tracking of leavers destinations and the various measures of positive destinations and how this can be a useful metric. Members also discussed the tracking of leavers without positive progression and using destination data to identify any potential areas to provide further support to students.

Members noted that further details and a full breakdown of destination data will be shared with the Curriculum, Performance and Quality Committee. The CEO confirmed that the survey will be undertaken annually to assess impact of strategic plan projects on positive destinations. Members agreed the destination data was a useful metric and welcomed the continued tracking of leaver destinations.

The CEO provided an update on the staff pay award negotiations. Members were advised that since the special Board meeting held on 28th February, the College has made a further pay offer to staff in line with the options discussed and approved by the Corporation at the meeting. The revised offer was put the trade unions at a meeting on 29th February and followed up with an all-staff webinar, drop-in sessions at both main campuses and a detailed frequently asked questions document, which addressed all the questions and queries raised by staff. Members were advised that the pay award offer had now been accepted and were provided with an implementation timeframe.

Note: Emma Kirk left the meeting.

The CEO updated members on key strategic partnership developments. Members had a full discussion around strategic partnership opportunities. Members were assured a wide range of partnership activity is progressing.

The CEO provided a detailed policy and funding Update covering Annual Accountability Statement and the Local Needs Duty. Members noted that guidance was recently updated on the process and timescales for the Annual Accountability Statement for 2024. The Accountability Statement for 2024 to 2025 incorporates and replaces the 'Review of education or training in relation to local needs' guidance published in July 2022. This removes the need for colleges to publish two separate documents, enabling colleges to now fulfil both requirements for annual Accountability Agreements and the Local Needs Duty in a single annual return. Members noted that providers must submit their next annual Accountability Statement by 30 June 2024. Members agreed to use the scheduled governor strategic planning session on 8th May, to complete the review and approve the key content of the statement to enable submission before the 30th June deadline.

The CEO and Chair reported that the College held its Annual Strategic Conversation (ASC) with Department for Education (DfE) representatives and a colleague from the FE Commissioner's team on the 23 February 2024. The CEO reported that the meeting was a positive opportunity to engage with the DfE team and it was felt that the meeting had gone well. Members were provided with a copy of the ASC confirmation letter from the DfE.

The CEO reported a significant change to the English and mathematics condition of funding policy, with the introduction of minimum teaching hours per subject. Members noted that the policy requires students who have not yet achieved a grade 4 or above in their GCSE English and Mathematics to continue to study these subjects up to the age of 18. The new minimum hours requirement will mean full-time students who are resitting will have to study a minimum of three hours per week for English and four hours for Maths. Members were advised that there is no additional funding for this increase in minimum hours requirement. Members recognised the additional challenge this presents in terms of staffing, programme delivery and resources. The CEO outlined the College's plan for addressing these challenges.

The CEO updated members on regional collaboration. Members were assured that the College is a full and active partner with other providers across each of the regions the Group serves. Members noted that the College have either led or supported a range of collaborative bids, projects and activities designed to attract investment and ensure greater coherence and effectiveness of the skills system. Members agreed that cross-college collaboration has taken a significant step forward with the creation of several joint working groups.

6 Strategic Plan Progress Report

The CEO presented a Strategic Plan progress update report outlining progress updates against each of the strategic plan projects and providing a snapshot of key actions and impact to date. Members noted that many of the updates provided at committee meetings have provided more detail around the actions and impacts of specific projects. The CEO explained the 'BRAG' ratings in more detail. Members reviewed the project summaries and noted that each project has been cross-referenced to the strategic risks which they address.

Members asked about key milestones and how and when they are presented. The CEO explained how milestones are set for each project and the process for reporting against milestones and KPIs progress. Members were supportive of the approach taken.

Members asked about staff and student feedback. The CEO explained how staff and student feedback is captured.

Members thanked the CEO for the update report.

7 Performance Update

The Deputy Principal presented a performance update report, covering attendance, retention, achievement and curriculum performance and quality reviews across all provision. Members noted the performance report had been presented and discussed in detail at both the CPQ committee and the HEPQ committee.

Members considered the contents of the report. Members noted that overall performance and retention was strong and were assured by the action plans in place to support continued improvement in retention, achievement and attendance. Members noted a reduction in the number of learner suspension of studies across HE provision and congratulated the team on the positive achievement. Members noted the updates on curriculum developments.

Members recorded their thanks for the significant work involved to reach this positive and improving position and agreed they felt assurance that change has been effectively implemented.

Members thanked the Deputy Principal for the update report.

8 Management Accounts ending 29 February 2024

The COOFI presented the Management Accounts update report providing an update on the Group's financial performance to 29 February 2024 and the current forecast outturn for the 2023-24 financial year.

Members noted the advised variations to income and expenditure and the current projections. Members noted an overall positive variance to the year-to-date performance tracking an operating surplus vs budget deficit.

Members were advised that business planning for 2024/25 is due to commence and were provided with an overview of the planning context and challenges for the coming year.

Members thanked the COOFI for the update report.

9 Pay Review All Staff

This item was covered under item 5 above.

10 Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2022/23

The COOPI presented the Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Report 2022/23. Members considered and discussed the contents of the reports. Members noted the report had been presented and discussed in detail at the People and Transformation Committee.

Members agreed it was a detailed and comprehensive report and recognised and supported the actions that the Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Report 2022/23 identifies.

Resolution: The Corporation Board approved the Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Report 2022/23 for publication.

11 Safeguarding Annual Report 2022/23

The COOFI presented the Annual Safeguarding Report 2022/23. Members considered the contents of the report which provides detailed information and outlines actions in relation to Safeguarding activity across the College in 2022/23. Members noted the report had been presented and discussed in detail at the People and Transformation Committee.

Members agreed the report provided a high level of assurance and acknowledged the strong safeguarding culture within the College and recognised and supported the actions that the Safeguarding Report 2022/23 identifies.

Resolution: The Corporation Board approved the Safeguarding Report 2022/23 for publication.

12 Whistleblowing Policy

The Clerk to the Corporation presented proposed updates to the Group's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure. Members noted that the Audit and Risk Committee had considered and discussed in detail the updated policy and procedures at its meeting on 4 March and recommend approval of the updated Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure to the Corporation Board.

Members considered the updates to the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure. Following discussion, the members agreed two minor amendments to the policy. The Board asked that under clause 3 'responsibilities' the Director of HR be added as a designated assessor. The Board asked that under clause 7 'relevant policies' this should cover all College policies.

Resolution: The Corporation Board approved the updated Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure pending agreed amendments.

13 Written Resolutions and Chair's Actions

Members noted the Chair's actions and Written Resolutions which had been approved since the last Corporation Board meeting.

14 Minutes of Committee Meetings:

Members noted the draft minutes of the meetings of the Curriculum Quality & Performance Committee on 7th February 2024, the Search & Governance Committee on 7th February 2024, the Finance & Resources Committee on 21st February 2024, the Audit and Risk Committee on 4th March 2024 and the People & Transformation Committee on 6th March 2024.

Note: Student Governors left the meeting 19.48

15 Any Other Business

Members were reminded about the invitation to join the Board's Professional Conversation which involved attendance at the CLEF meeting on 23 May 2024.

16 Confidential Minutes of the Special Corporation Board Meeting held on 28 February 2024

The confidential minutes of the Special Corporation Board meetings held on 28 February 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

17 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation Board is scheduled for Wednesday 10th July 2024, 5.30 pm, North Lindsey College.

The meeting closed at 7.53pm.

Sharon Harmon
Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: (Chair) **Date:**

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	Minute	Action	Responsibility	Date Due