

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held at 6pm on 3rd July 2024 in Room 3-22, Aylesbury Campus

Governors Present	Martin Tugwell (Chair)	Cathie Prest	Tomas Pukalski
	Jenny Craig (Principal & CEO)	Ian Harper	Ben Banks (Student Governor)
	Ian Gregg (Vice Chair)	Sarah Mason	
	Amir Khaki	Tim Marshall	
In Attendance	John McGrath (Chief Operating Officer (COO))		
	Hannah James (Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality (VPCQ))		
	Tracey Matthews (Vice Principal Commercial & Partnerships (VPCP))		
	Rachael Murray (Executive Director Digital Transformation & Planning (EDDTP))		
	Nicky Ellis (Assistant Principal Student Engagement & Support (APSES))		
	Anna Smith (Director of Governance (DG))		
	Karina Rovdanikaite (Student Governor 2024-25)		
	Jessica Nathanielsz (Student Governor 2024-25)		
Apologies	Chris Oakley	Adam Poland	Sana Larkin
	Charlie Young	Alex Reynolds	
	Martina Porter	Isobel Ellison	

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
24.24	As recommended by the Curriculum, Quality and Students (CQS) Committee, a video produced by the second year T Level Education and Childcare students was shown as governors arrived. This had been produced solely by the students, working collaboratively as a team, and evidenced project-based learning, work-readiness and digital skills.
25.24	<p>CHAIR'S WELCOME</p> <p>Apologies were noted and the Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Karina Rovdanikaite and Jessica Nathanielsz as the two recently appointed Student Governors for 2024-25.</p> <p>There were no new declarations of interest relating to items of discussion. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>The Chair thanked governors for their feedback on meetings via the evaluation surveys as a useful indicator for improvements. One to one meetings between the Chair and every governor would be scheduled for September as an opportunity for informal discussion on how things are going (Action: DG to schedule). The strategy day in October will be a chance to reflect on Board operation and dynamics, allowing informal time for getting better acquainted outside of formal meetings.</p>
26.24	<p>TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT SESSION: OFSTED INSPECTIONS</p> <p>The VPCQ led the session reminding governors of the key aspects of the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and summarising expectations. A copy of the presentation is available separately. The Principal informed the Board, following an AoC event earlier that day, that a change of government could mean a change in inspection framework although this was unlikely to be implemented prior to January 2025. There was unanimous agreement that the college should always be inspection-ready, not because of the potential for inspection but primarily for the benefit of our students and quality of education. The VPCQ informed governors that staff are committed to being Always Inspection Ready (AIR) and this is underpinned by the college values (integrity, ambition, innovation, respect).</p> <p><i>Ben Banks joined the meeting at 6.30pm.</i></p> <p>The following was noted throughout discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team of inspectors is likely to be around 14 across the three campuses and employer sites. • The VPCQ as lead nominee will have the opportunity to negotiate inspection areas chosen for deep dives, typically focussing on the 'biggest, best and worst' based on quality data. • Cathie Prest (former HMI Inspector) offered advice based on experience. Inspectors are likely to want to know how well governors know the college and how they know what students are saying. Governors were encouraged to attend the curriculum SAR meetings and invitations would be shared. The Student

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	<p>Governors asked if they could attend curriculum SAR meetings and it was agreed their input would be most welcomed. (Action: DG to circulate information).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Governors asked if they would be involved in inspection, and it was confirmed this would likely be the case in their role representing the student body. • Where it is not possible to skills match inspectors to some curriculum areas, managers are able to set the scene with confidence to ensure comprehensive understanding of the area. • If inspectors find a concern in an underlying theme (e.g. safeguarding) they are likely to move the focus of the team to scrutinise this more heavily. <p>The Chair thanked the VPCQ for the useful session and appreciation was echoed by the Board.</p>
27.24	<p>DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE REPORT</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify the written resolution email approval of the Accountability Agreement 2024-25 • Approve the recommendations of the Search & Governance Committee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Corporation Committee Memberships 2024-25 as recommended by the Search & Governance Committee. Tim Marshall left the meeting temporarily while his appointment as Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee with immediate effect was Approved. ○ The Link Governors for 2024-25 ○ The Parent Voice approach for 2024-25 ensuring parents' views are received at governance level ensuring triangulation of stakeholder feedback. • Approve each Committee's Terms of Reference for 2024-25 as recommended by each committee. • Note the progress update of the External Board Review (EBR) Action Plan. The DG reminded governors of the EBR completed in January 2024 noting positive progress against the action plan with improved student voice and even stronger Board membership. • Note the governor engagement record. Cathie Prest shared a verbal report of her link meeting with the SEND Faculty Director, noting various initiatives and activities progressing well in the department.
28.24	<p>MINUTES AND BOARD ASSURANCE REPORTS</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 27/3/24. • Note the updated rolling actions noting all actions had been completed or were planned with nothing additional to report. • Note the report and draft minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 1/5/24. The Committee Chair noted alternative methods of seeking assurances were being considered. • Note the report and draft minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 5/6/24. • Note the report and draft minutes of the Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 7/6/24. • Note the report and draft minutes of the Curriculum, Quality & Students Committee meeting held on 12/6/24.
29.24	<p>KPI Targets 2023-24 Monitoring</p> <p>Attendance and work experience remain a challenge for the College (as it does nationally) but evidence shows interventions that have been embedded in the latter of the current year are likely to ensure impact in September. The recent two-day staff development sessions allowed curriculum staff to reflect on the year, prepare area Self-Assessment Reports (SARs) and acknowledge the impact earlier interventions and initiatives have had on the year-end result.</p> <p>The following was noted during scrutiny of progress against the KPIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention: The variance in reporting improvement despite reducing since last reported was explained and the team is confident in the improved, above target position detailing how this is calculated. • Work experience: It was confirmed that not meeting the target will not affect conditions of funding. • Attendance: Karina Rovdanikaite (Student Governor) briefed the Board on the work students have been doing with the High Sheriff focussing on initiatives to improve attendance. They are looking at alternative enrichment activities such as raising mental health awareness and would welcome a review of the catering offer (increasing diversity) for students to give fellow students reasons to see college as a safe, more inclusive space and a 'stickier' environment. Jessica Nathanielsz (Student Governor) requested that students be more involved in aspects such as discussions on catering to

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	<p>increase inclusivity. This feedback was well received by the Board and Executive Team and it was agreed students would be welcome to be more involved in future planning.</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to Note the report.</p>
30.24	<p>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</p> <p>The Principal provided an overview of her report which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A note on the main party manifesto commitments in relation to post 16 education and skills provision. The AoC had confirmed a Labour government would likely be more supportive of the FE sector and technical excellence colleges could be a pilot for giving colleges more autonomy on how funding is spent although there was little detail in the manifesto. Observation was made that labour MPs could be more interested in FE colleges given their manifesto pledge to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote. The Chair added interest in the move to single place-based budgets under the framework for Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and the impact this would have on spending according to area needs. • An update on the Buckinghamshire Devolution Deal which had been paused due to the General Election and future uncertainty. • College context including welcoming the publication of the Outstanding Ofsted inspection grade for the college's Initial Teacher Training Education • An update on the positive progress of the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) projects. All LSIF projects are on track and the college was delighted with the recent launch of the energy skills hub. Query was raised and explanation provided on how key areas are identified and how connections with local employers are made. These are based on the Local Skills Improvement Partnership (LSIP) key priorities and key industry sectors. The VPCP added the college is focussed on ensuring vibrant employer boards and using connections to ensure more employers are engaged. There has been investment in the business development team to focus on supporting key employers. In terms of Health & Social Care, Amir Khaki offered welcomed support from the Bucks NHS Trust as he will be leading their people strategy and the Trust and college could work more closely on meeting needs (Action: Principal & VPCP to meet with AK to discuss further) • The latest health and safety update report. Query was raised regarding fire warden numbers and assurance was provided that in practice there is no concern. The role is being embedded into staff roles rather than as an additional voluntary responsibility. Ian Greggor suggested, and it was agreed, the Fire and Rescue service be invited in to conduct a site visit (Action: COO to arrange visit). <p>The Corporation Resolved to Note the report.</p>
31.24	<p>CURRICULUM, QUALITY AND STUDENTS REPORT</p> <p>The VPCQ summarised the key items of the report noting detailed discussion had been held at the CQS committee at its meeting on 12/6/24. Taking each aspect in turn:</p> <p><u>Curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Accountability Agreement 2024-25 has been submitted and the college is committed to its delivery. • The refreshed approach to curriculum planning is showing positive impact with employer boards informing curriculum development. • The refreshed study programme and apprenticeship programme designs are being presented to staff on 4/7/24 to ensure all are on board ready for September. • On apprenticeships, the VPCP noted the college is focussing on legacy provision and ensuring new starts and employers have a more rigorous support programme for higher quality delivery, in turn leading to increased retention and achievement. <p><u>Quality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) items rag rated as red will transfer to the new QIP. • Predicted achievement rates are improved on last year and governors were reassured interventions are continuing throughout June and July to ensure best case achievement for 2023-24. • Curriculum SAR grade predictions also indicate improvements with the majority of curriculum areas self-assessing as good or better by the end of 2023-24.

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On HE provision the Board was reassured that the OfS condition of registration had been removed and there were no complaints to be reported for the college’s Annual Statement for 2023. • The apprenticeship accountability framework was explained and is showing providers are broadly on track with provision. Retention and achievement need improvement and early indications show these will be on track in 2024-25. • On querying any trends in achievement, it was confirmed achievement and retention show a strong positive trend in Carpentry, with Health showing poor retention and well below average achievement rates due to variances in the relationships with employers. Amir Khaki again offered the increased support of Bucks NHS Trust going forward. • The Outstanding Teacher Training Ofsted inspection outcome will hopefully support teaching staff recruitment, supporting the ambition to become a centre of excellence for teacher training. • Subcontracted Provision: The Board was updated on the outcome of a recent inspection of one of its subcontractor’s sites (not involving sites the colleges learners attend). The VPCQ and VPCP have visited all sites our learners attend and provided assurance teaching and learning is good with clear curriculum intent. The subcontractor has contested the initial grade and has advised that the provision will be reinspected. There will be no financial consequences for the college should reinspection find the same outcome, only a risk to reputational damage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors noted the leadership and management aspect of the report will impact on the college, despite it not being our provision and it was confirmed governors (including student governors) would be invited to join the SAR meetings for subcontracted provision (Action: VPCQ/DG to invite when scheduled). ○ Assurance was sought of mitigations should the reinspection have the same outcome and it was confirmed the Board should be assured that the quality of college subcontracted provision is good and this will be evidenced for governors as part of the SAR moderation. ○ The college is commissioning work to consider a strategy moving forward with the aim of reducing reliance on subcontracting. The College Strategic risk register has been updated to reflect the increased risk. <p><u>Students</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The APSES opened the item handing over to the new Student Governors to report on activities. • Focussing on the top three safeguarding concerns (mental health, domestic abuse and sexual violence/abuse/behaviours), the students shared the work they have been doing on increasing awareness for all students. This includes training for student Mental Health First Aid Champions, work with the High Sheriff on projects such as reducing violence against women and girls and attending the Women Leaders’ Awards. • The Chair reflected on the recent Student Awards Ceremony and the powerful stories told by students. • Tomas Pukalski agreed noting Karina Rovdanikaite’s message had been the most powerful and congratulated her on her outstanding speech. • Amir Khaki asked for it to be formally recorded how well student governors throughout 2023-24 and at today’s meeting had presented themselves and commended the quality of reporting. This was endorsed by all present. • The Chair took the opportunity to thank Ben Banks on behalf of the Board for his work as Student Governor for 2023-24 and thanks were also noted to Sana Larkin for her support. <p>The Corporation Resolved to Note the report.</p>
32.24	<p>FINANCE AND RESOURCES REPORT</p> <p>The COO summarised the report noting the detail had been scrutinised with thorough discussion by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 5/6/24. Ian Greggor and Tim Marshall (both committee members) supported the message, commending the well-respected, high quality of the COO’s work and assuring the Board of the college’s positive, financially sustainable future.</p> <p>The Board discussed the proposed pay review strategy noting there may be further opportunity should there be funding to match the School Teachers’ Review Body pay recommendation as was the case last year. This is subject to the General Election outcome but is likely to be high on government agenda.</p> <p>In terms of subcontracting, as discussed earlier, the college is development a strategy to reduce its reliance on subcontractors including a partnership pilot trial for adult education and increasing internal</p>

Minute No.	AGENDA ITEM
	<p>delivery of SEN provision with new programmes working with Bucks Council. Assurance was provided that the college remains mindful of managing risks carefully.</p> <p>Regarding the proposed change in finance systems, Ian Greggor sought assurance of specialist support in migration and the COO confirmed both options have a full consultant led approach. Sarah Mason (Audit & Risk Committee Chair) added that external auditors would scrutinise this for reassurance.</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to Note the report and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the 2024-25 Budget • Approve the subcontracting and High Needs partner strategy for 2024-25 • Approve the change in finance systems.
33.24	<p>WORKFORCE UPDATE REPORT</p> <p>The Principal presented the report in the absence of the EDHR. The report was an executive summary of the full report received by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 5/6/24. Governors welcomed the positive movements on staff turnover and retention and confirmed momentum is improving as an impact of the recent foundations laid.</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to Note the report and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Post Holders • Approve the Capability Procedure for Senior Post Holders • Approve the amendments to the college Grievance Procedure in relation to Senior Post Holders.
34.24	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The Chair explained the next Corporation meeting would be held at the start of the strategy day on 16/10/24 and reiterated the focus of the day as mentioned at the start of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all for attending and the meeting ended at 8.15pm.</p>

Approved as an accurate record of discussion: 18th October 2024