

Draft Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held at 6pm on 12th October 2023 in Room 3-22, Aylesbury Campus

Governors Present: Martin Tugwell (Chair), Jenny Craig (Principal & CEO), David Bainton (Vice Chair), Adam Poland, Alex Reynolds, Amir Khaki, Ben Banks, Cathie Prest, Chris Oakley, Eddie Weiss, Ian Greggor, Ian Harper, Nick Bevan, Sana Larkin, Tim Marshall

In Attendance: John McGrath (Vice Principal, Corporate Services (VPCS)), Hannah James (Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality (VPCQ)) (via Teams), Rachael Murray (Executive Director Digital Transformation & Planning (EDDTP)), Isobel Ellison (Executive Director, Human Resources (EDHR)), Nicky Ellis (Assistant Principal Student Engagement & Support (APSES)), Anna Smith (Director of Governance (DG))

Apologies: Bethan Waters, Kish Sidhu, Martina Porter, Tracey Matthews (Vice Principal, Commercial & Partnerships)

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25.23	<p>CHAIR'S WELCOME</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Cathie Prest to her first meeting as an Independent Governor and Sana Larkin and Ben Banks to their first meeting as Student Governors. Following introductions from governors and the executive team, apologies were noted. Declarations of interest in agenda item 3.2.1 were noted from Amir Khaki in respect of his proposed reappointment.</p>
26.23	<p>SAFEGUARDING UPDATE TRAINING</p> <p>The APSES facilitated an interactive session and presentation providing governor training on the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) statutory guidance. Members' attention was drawn to recent changes to the statutory guidance and all were fully informed of the Board's responsibilities and assured of the measures the college has in place to safeguard students.</p>
27.23	<p>DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE REPORT</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify the appointment of Ben Banks and Sana Larkin as Student Governors for 2023-24 and of Ben Banks as a Member of the Curriculum, Quality and Students Committee and of Sana Larkin as a Member of the Search and Governance Committee. • Ratify the approval of the Financial Regulations 2022-24. • Ratify the approval of the Reserves Policy 2022-24. • Ratify the approval of the Treasury Management Policy 2022-24. <p><i>Amir Khaki left the meeting shortly while his reappointment was considered.</i></p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to Approve the reappointment of Amir Khaki for a second term of office from 12/2/2024 to 11/2/2028 as recommended by the Search and Governance Committee.</p> <p><i>Amir Khaki re-joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the following as recommended by the Search and Governance Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The revised Governor Link Scheme (noting the amended 'Apprenticeship and Skills Link Governor' as agreed) ○ The Governor Induction, Training and Development Plan. ○ The Policy for Obtaining Independent Professional Advice for Corporation Members. ○ The Conflicts of Interest Policy for Corporation Members.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Procedure for Complaints against the Corporation. ● Approve the change in role for Kish Sidhu from Independent Governor to Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee with immediate effect until 31/12/2023. ● Note the Freedom of Information Annual Requests Record 2022-23. ● Note the Governor Succession Planning Request. The DG and Chair of the Search and Governance Committee both highlighted the requests for (i) governors to consider any internal interest in the roles of Vice Chair of the Corporation or Chair of the Audit Committee, and (ii) governors and executive team members to consider any network contacts they may have with an interest in a governance role. All were asked to contact the DG by 1/12/23 (Action: All). The Committee Chair noted that the committee had considered in depth the diversity of the Board's membership. Given the high percentage of students declaring a disability the Committee had agreed it should aim to increase representation and set itself a target to recruit a governor with a disability this academic year. The Committee Chair also informed the Corporation that the Committee had discussed and welcomed representation from Buckinghamshire Council.
28.23	<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 26/6/23. ● Note the updated rolling actions log (all non-confidential actions completed). ● Note the report and draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 24/7/23. ● Note the report and draft minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 27/9/23. ● Note the report and draft minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 7/6/23. <p>The Chair invited the Chairs of each of these committees to comment but no further note was deemed necessary given earlier discussion.</p>
29.23	<p>STUDENT GOVERNORS' REPORT</p> <p>The Chair invited the Student Governors to introduce themselves and were warmly welcomed to the Corporation. Members welcomed the update on the work of the Student Engagement Team (SET). Mentoring support for the Student Governors had been made available from the previous Student President of Buckinghamshire New University and thanks was noted for this. The Board welcomed the representation of the student voice at governance level and the report was Noted.</p>
30.23	<p>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</p> <p>Given recent news in the Middle East, the Principal provided reassurance of the college's practices in place to ensure respectful behaviours and also to ensure staff and students have access to any support that may be needed.</p> <p>The following was noted throughout discussion of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Latest 16-18 enrolments are anticipated to be in-line with/slightly above expectations. ● Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) application submission. ● Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2022-23 will be closed off at the December Corporation meeting. The Executive Team have been mindful to set the KPIs for 2023-24 to be challenging but achievable. ● National picture: T levels are likely to be part of any new British standard but the college is working with current defunding assumptions until there is more certainty following the Prime Minister's recent announcement. ● Enrolments: In querying any particular areas of low enrolments it was confirmed these have been in T Levels and Performing Arts. At Wycombe campus enrolments in Health & Life Sciences have dropped but these are higher at Aylesbury which counterbalances this. Business and Law have both over-recruited. Query was raised as to whether the estates strategy had impacted on applications at Amersham campus and it was confirmed there is no concern at this stage. The lower enrolments in

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	<p>Performing Arts follows a declining trend and has been impacted by competition from a local school now delivering provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Values: It is important to ensure the college values are embedded throughout at all levels and the Principal reminded governors that the number of values had been consciously reduced to help staff remember and act upon them. The values are now embedded in professional development plans for all staff and are supported with the ready, respectful, safe behaviour expectations on how staff interact with each other with everyone welcome to challenge each other. It was agreed it is important to show examples of sharing values and setting expectations and the college does this with a role modelling approach and positive reinforcement. The EDHR added that a whole college development day 'DEWI-Fest' is scheduled for 20/10/23 and the programme has been designed around the college values. Ultimately it was agreed meaningful behaviours could be articulated to show clarity of expectations. • KPIs: Governors would welcome progress reporting on the KPIs. It was noted this is received at every Corporation meeting and there will be annual benchmarking throughout the five-year journey. Query was raised on the apprenticeship target and it was confirmed the minimum standards percentage is below the college target. • Work Experience: The Chair queried the significant difference between the 2022-23 actual percentage and 2023-24 target for students completing work experience and industry placements and it was noted that historically few students had participated in external work experience. This is now fully embedded in the study programme. Amir Khaki confirmed Bucks NHS Trust has put all measures in place to support and enable student work experience. Discussion took place regarding the challenges in finding industry work experience and the Principal confirmed the changed approach in some areas making work experience more skills based with for example, a broader focus on work readiness skills. The student governor noted that most students are in paid employment alongside their studies and so time can be challenging to include work experience. The Principal provided reassurance that work experience could take place alongside paid employment where this meets funding requirements. Peer mentoring is treated as enrichment activity and is equally valuable and staff and students are encouraged to think more creatively about work experience. • Opportunity Bucks: Governors praised the college's achievement of securing funding for two Personal Career and Apprenticeship Mentors (PCAMs) through Buckinghamshire Council's Opportunity Bucks Board and welcomed an evaluation of its success at the end of the year with a view to considering expansion. <p>The Corporation Resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the KPIs 2023-24 and welcomed formal review as a standalone agenda item at each Board meeting to enable progress tracking (Action: DG agenda planning). • Approve the Complaints Policy 2023-25. • Note the Complaints Summary 2022-23. • Note the Health and Safety Update Report. <p>The Chair thanked the Principal for her report and informed the Board that he had offered to attend leadership meetings where appropriate to listen to leaders directly.</p>
31.23	<p>CURRICULUM, QUALITY AND STUDENTS REPORT</p> <p>The VPCQ thanked Cathie Prest for her support in preparing the report from a governors' perspective. Thanks were returned to the VPCQ for the opportunity with praise for the report.</p> <p>In considering the report and latest position update, the following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontracted provision achievements have improved compared with last year and this is likely to be due to the increased monitoring in place. • English and Maths resits: A governor who had attended a recent network session noted the high increase of resit enrolments reflects the national picture with the DfE sharing similar messages.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Engagement Team (SET): The APSES noted how proud she was of the SET and the increase in student engagement and student initiatives across the campuses. • SEND provision: The college is sharing best practices with Weston College (as a provider who is Ofsted Outstanding in this area) and has put itself forward for a SEND review so will feedback to governors in due course on this (Action: APSES). • The importance of future-proofing the curriculum offer was discussed including supporting skills training for employers, changes of approach to work placements and working in partnership with employers to encourage student work placements. Query was raised over sufficiency of resources to support such improvements and assurance was provided that good resources are in place. The VPCQ informed governors of the curriculum planning launch day on 27/11/23 to which all governors are invited to join and participate (Action: VPCQ/DG governor invitation). <p>The Corporation considered the new Student Performance Management Procedures and following discussion regarding the subjectivity of behaviours agreed explicit reference to the fair access panel would be included in the document. Assurance was provided that the college takes into account all students' backgrounds and needs in applying policy.</p> <p>The Corporation Resolved to Approve the Student Performance Management Procedures 2023-24 subject to the inclusion of reference to the fair access panel (Action: VPCQ).</p>
32.23	<p>FINANCE AND RESOURCES REPORT</p> <p>In considering the report and latest position update, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY2022-23 update: The improved position was primarily a result of the high needs provision funding process, which was uncertain until close to the year end. The college will look to invest the additional income received into supporting certain areas such as work experience to ensure improvements as discussed earlier in the meeting. • FY2023-24 update: It looks like there has been some growth in enrolments at Aylesbury, with Amersham and Wycombe steady. The college won't know the final outcome until the end of October. • Subcontractor and High Needs Delivery Partner Costs 23-24: query was raised and assurance provided that the two main subcontractors remain keen to work with the college and are grateful for the support which both the College and the subcontractors provide to each other. • IT Update: Thanks were recorded to the EDDTP for the support in leading the area and it was noted significant IT investment will be needed for the college's growth in digital improvement. • Governors queried and the EDDTP confirmed the ESFA funding audit was looking positive with the audit reviewing a sample of 30 of each funding stream so a significant amount of work was involved in gathering information. Results would be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in due course. <p>The Corporation Resolved to Approve the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontracting and High Needs delivery costs 2023-24 • Health and Safety Policy 2023-25
33.23	<p>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HUMAN RESOURCES WORKFORCE REPORT</p> <p>The EDHR took the Board through her report and was pleased to note that job applications were now 183% higher than last year. The college now has two management degree apprentices working in different departments. All English department posts have now been filled, maths and construction remain challenging to recruit to but the Industry Sector Payments (ISPs) were helping. An increased number of staff have now submitted diversity statistics so the system is allowing for more in-depth analysis.</p> <p>Query was raised on the diversity of the current workforce and whether there were any messages in terms of diversity for promotions, salary differences, staff leaving, sickness etc. The Principal confirmed data is starting to be used more strategically to pull out key themes and inform management decisions. Query was also raised in terms of wellbeing initiatives to mitigate absences and the EDHR informed the Board of initiatives in place to support staff wellbeing.</p>

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34.23	ANY OTHER BUSINESS None
35.23	DATE OF NEXT MEETING 13 th December 2023
36.23	The Chair thanked the Staff Governors and Student Governors who left at 8.05pm and the meeting moved to the Confidential Agenda.

Approved as an accurate record of discussion 13th December 2023

Signed by Chair of Corporation:

