

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting**

**Wednesday 29 March 2023 at 16:00  
Boardroom - Coventry College**

Present: Anthony Gribben-Lisle (AGL) (Vice-Chair, Chaired meeting)  
 Jas Atwal (JA)  
 Rachel Barr (RB)  
 John Barrett (JB)  
 Thomas Crane (TC) (Attending virtually)  
 Amber Jennings-Hobbs (AJH)  
 Rebecca Keeves (RK)  
 Donna Kendall (DK) (Attending virtually)  
 Sarfraz Nawaz (SN) (Attending virtually)  
 Evan Reason (ER)  
 Carol Thomas (CT)  
 Tina Thorpe (TT)

In Attendance: Rob Moore (RM) Chief Financial & Operations Officer  
 Gemma Knott (GK) Vice Principal Business Growth, Engagement & Partnerships  
 Patrick Geary (PG) Vice Principal Curriculum Innovation, Quality & Performance  
 Kay Kavanagh (KK) Head of Governance (Attending virtually)  
 Ron Hill Stone King  
 Sarah Johnson Stone King

<b>Agenda No:</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action owner:</b>
1	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b> Apologies received from Adam Boddison, Kamal Bodhanker and Jemma McKenzie.	
2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Members were asked to declare any Interests, financial or otherwise, which they may have in any Agenda Item, there were no declarations made.	
3	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> Governors <b>approved</b> the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022, noting one spelling error, to be corrected.	
4	<b>Matters Arising</b> Governors monitored action taken and remaining to be taken in respect of Matters Arising from the Minutes of previous meetings.	
5	<b>Determination of any Other Urgent Business</b> It was noted that there was one item of other business, for the Confidential agenda.	

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6	<p><b>Chair's Report</b></p> <p>The Chair provided a verbal update, confirming the intention for AB to stand down at the end of July 2023. Governors expressed their disappointment but noted that AB would be happy to be a consultant to the board should he be required (on a volunteer basis).</p>	
7	<p><b>CEO &amp; Principal Report</b></p> <p>CT explained that the two most contentious issues in the sector are funding for colleges, hence the 'Mind the Skills Gap' campaign championed by the Association of Colleges (AoC), and the impending removal of all BTEC and Applied General Qualifications to make way for T Levels which currently have many challenges.</p> <p>CT attended the parliamentary discussion and debate in Westminster on the 1st March, then met with local MPs to engage their support.</p> <p>CT explained that trials and phases are ideally needed for T-Levels, with the College introducing further T-Levels for the 2023/24 academic year.</p> <p>CT provided some insight of activities taking place at the College, including 'Robot Day', Overseas trips, Visits and Competitions.</p> <p>Work continues to work through our Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP), with support from London Southeast Colleges Group/Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>The College continues to drive the recruitment campaign for 16 – 18 cohort with school liaison and school taster events.</p> <p>An event is taking place at the College to celebrate the Kings Coronation, with a piece of art being displayed, with 5 schools contributing to its design.</p> <p>The top 3 priorities currently are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exam outcomes for 2022/23</li> <li>2. Learner numbers and lagged learner funding – impact on 2023/24 finances</li> <li>3. Staff recruitment to Construction and Engineering for 2023/24 delivery</li> </ol> <p>Governors agreed to explore how they can liaise with their local MPs to lobby or increased funding for Colleges.</p>	
8	<p><b>KPI Update</b></p> <p>CT provided the KPI update and invited questions.</p> <p>Governors <b>asked</b> the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention is currently high, is CT confident that it will remain high? CT confirmed that retention is monitored monthly. PG added that he is confident that levels will remain positive. Attendance continues to be a concern. The dashboard for curriculum is being developed, which will enable us to be more proactive and less reactive.</li> </ul>	

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- Is attendance likely to reduce further? CT explained that the 'snow day' and strike days have had an impact on attendance, however, where students have completed work online, their attendance will be re-credited.
- Staff Sickness absence remains above target, what measures are being put in place to reduce this? RM explained that the staff sickness rate is high, and the Sickness & Absence policy is under review, in order that management can have greater impact and an improvement should be seen.

9 **Financial Report**

- RM provided an overview of the Financial Report (including Management Accounts), highlighting:
- Cash balance at the end of January 23 was c.£5.8m
- Educational EBITDA is ahead of budget by £973k
- Circa £250k is to be spent on capital projects over the next few weeks, with the hope of boosting student morale
- The loan repayment is due by 01/08/2024. The sale of the Henley Campus can be used for this, or re-invested into the estate

A governor **asked** if the circa £250k capital spend was being spent where the students would see an impact. RM explained that the spend has been fed for the curriculum need and students will see feel the benefit.

A governor **asked** if students had been included in the curriculum development? RM confirmed that they had, with improvements around laptops, music room, motor vehicle and embroidery machines all being requested. Social spaces are being considered, along with Adult Social Space.

Governors thanked RM for the report.

**Committee Items**

10 **Education & Standards**

TT gave an overview of the minutes from the meeting held on 9 March 2023, explaining that each meeting has an area of focus at the beginning, and careers was the focus of this meeting session.

The Learner data report was received, with governors noting the high retention rates and the predicted achievement is good.

Safeguarding and Work Experience will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

Issues remain around Engineering and Construction, due to staffing, but improvements are being seen.

'SOLA' (Scheduled Online Learning Activities) is being utilised by students to encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning.

Modelling is taking place to look at the projected contribution rates for HE, and a minimum learner group of 16 is being set.

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11	<p>Governors <b>noted</b> the Post Inspection Action Plan progress, with assurance that all actions will move to green by the end of the academic year.</p> <p><b>Search &amp; Governance</b> Governors <b>received</b> the minutes from the meeting held on 9 February 2023.</p> <p>AGL explained that recruitment of new members was underway based on the skills required. Governors were encouraged to share the vacancy details with their networks.</p> <p>Governors were reminded to complete any outstanding training.</p> <p>Governors <b>approved</b> the Governance Calendar 2023-24 and <b>noted</b> the process for appointment of Chair / Vice-Chair.</p>	
12	<p><b>Finance &amp; Resources</b> AGL explained that as the committee had only recently met, minutes will be made available in due course.</p> <p>The meeting covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Accounts</li> <li>• Delivery plan</li> <li>• Business Growth &amp; Strategic Partnerships</li> <li>• Sub-contracting update</li> <li>• Policy approvals</li> </ul> <p>AGL confirmed that governors were assured of a continued focus of income generation and on controls and quality of sub-contracting partners.</p>	
13	<p><b>Audit</b> TC provided an update following the recent Audit Committee meeting.</p> <p>Concerns were raised from governors around the volume of internal audits yet to be completed, but TIAA were confident that they would be complete by the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Value for Money/Procurement was discussed with assurance given.</p> <p>A tender process will commence for both Internal and External Auditors for the next academic year. Audit Committee members will be advised of the dates shortly.</p> <p>A governor <b>questioned</b> if there was an audit for students' cyber security. RM explained that there is a cyber security audit for staff and systems. The students receive a tutorial program and partake in a 'Safer Internet' day.</p>	
14	<p><b>Student Board Feedback</b> TT advised that the Student Board had met and covered 3 key themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching, learning and Assessment</li> </ol>	

<b>Agenda No:</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action owner:</b>
	2. Progression 3. Advice & Support	
	<p>Governors noted the need to broaden the Student Board in order to gain a wider student voice.</p> <p>Key points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is inconsistent</li> <li>• Negative impact of staff absence on students</li> <li>• Variable teaching styles, not always meeting the needs of students</li> </ul> <p>Positives raised by students included: Friendships, Opportunities, Safe environment, Support of staff and free Car parking.</p> <p>Some improvements requested by students include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Skills</li> <li>• Enhanced Enrichment program</li> <li>• Learning Support</li> <li>• Work Experience</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed Artificial Intelligence and the impacts on both staff and students. It was agreed to await further guidance from the DfE.</p>	
15	<p><b>Governance Items</b></p> <p><b>External Review of Governance</b></p> <p>KK explained that the External Review of Governance is underway (and the meeting is being observed by Stone King). The output of the review will be presented at the Away Day in May and an action plan agreed.</p>	
16	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>Governors approved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Freedom of Speech and Expression Policy</li> <li>b) Data Protection Policy (Recommended by F&amp;R Committee)</li> <li>c) Redundancy Policy (SPH)</li> </ol>	
17	<p><b>Any Other Urgent Business</b></p> <p>See confidential minutes.</p> <p><i>Staff and Student Governors left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
18-19	<p><b>Confidential Agenda Items</b></p> <p>See Confidential Minutes</p>	
20	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>5 July 2023 at 4pm, Boardroom, Coventry College</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 18:35</p>	