

CORPORATION BOARD

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER, AT 4:00PM, HELD AT EASTON COLLEGE, ROOM JB031

Present:

Andrew Barnes	AB	Chair
Marcus Bailey	MB	Vice-Chair
Jerry White	JW	Principal
Jock Downie	JD	Governor
Joe McNeill	JMc	Governor
Lucy Sydney	LSy	Governor
Nikki Gray	NG	Governor (<i>remote, via Teams 4:03pm- 5:54pm</i>)
Noel Bartram	NB	Governor
Phil Gormley	PG	Governor
Philip Pearce	PP	Governor
Freddie Simpson	FS	Student Governor, SU President
Hazel Thomas	HT	Student Governor
Josie Fryer	JF	Student Governor
Shirley Barker	SB	Staff Governor

Attendees:

Jodie Mitchell	JM	Director of Governance and Legal
Martin Colbourne	MC	Deputy CEO
Seb Gasse	SG	Vice Principal
Claire Harber	CH	Governance and Legal Officer, Minutes

Apologies:

Helen Richardson-Hulme	HRH	Assistant Principal Student Services
Jen Eves	JE	Chief Operating Officer
Jo Kershaw	JK	Vice Principal
Karen McCullagh	KM	Governor
Laura Stewart	LS	Staff Governor
Sean Green	SG	Governor

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted as above.

2. Declaration of Conflicts

No declarations were made.

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 22 October 2024

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2024 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

4. Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 22 October 2024

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2024 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

NG joined the meeting at 4:03pm

5. Matters arising

Board 6 Action 6: JW / ER to present the ToR that supports to UEA MOU to the Board for review. JW will arrange for the ToR to be checked to ensure the MOU is appropriately

underpinned. The MOU and ToR will be made available on OnBoard. ACTION ONGOING
(Due: **October 2024**)

Board 7 Action 1: HRH to provide data on the number of students who did not attend exams due to stress / anxiety. *The College does not currently record the cause of a student's absence from an exam, but SG and team are attempting to extract data from other sources where possible and are looking at implementing an absence reason record. ACTION COMPLETE*

Board 7 Action 6: JM to liaise with Governors regarding suitable timings for meetings going forward. *Most Governors responded to say they preferred a 4:00pm start time. JM proposes to look at the calendar for 2025 and liaise with Committee Chairs to decide whether to reschedule meetings already arranged. It was agreed that the RemGov Committee would discuss further at the next Committee meeting. ACTION COMPLETE*

ACTION 1: Add meeting timings to next RemGov Committee agenda (JM/CH).

Board 1 Action 1: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 2: **ACTION ONGOING** (Due: June 2025)

Board 1 Action 3: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 4: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 5: Speak to Wellbeing Manager regarding Samaritan outreach services (HRH). *No update to report. ACTION ONGOING* (Due: **December 2024**)

Board 1 Action 6: Email Jo Kershaw with message to circulate to curriculum teams to raise awareness of the Student Union (LS). *JK/LS not present to provide update. ACTION ONGOING* (Due: **December 2024**)

Board 1 Action 7: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 8: Arrange Governor training on OfS Compliance. *Some tentative dates have been found and an email will be sent to Governors in due course. ACTION ONGOING* (Due: **December 2024**)

Board 1 Action 9: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 10: Remuneration and Governance Committee to make recommendations to the December 2024 Board regarding new Strategic Group themes after considering Ofsted recommendations. *There has been no RemGov meeting since the last Board meeting, so Strategic Groups are on the agenda for the January meeting. ACTION ONGOING* (Due: **December 2024**)

Board 1 Action 11: Prepare the remit for the Employer Engagement Group and allocate to a member of CLT to lead. *There has been no RemGov meeting since the last Board meeting, so this is on the agenda for the January meeting. ACTION ONGOING* (Due: **December 2024**)

Board 1 Action 12: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 13: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 14: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 15: Seek feedback from the ETF and AoC on EDI within the ETF framework. *This is on the agenda for the January RemGov meeting. ACTION ONGOING* (Due: **December 2024**)

Board 1 Action 16: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 17: ACTION COMPLETE

Board 1 Action 18: ACTION COMPLETE

6. Chairman's Remarks

The Board expressed considerable sadness on hearing of the passing of Josie Howl and send condolences to family and friends. It is recognised that this is having a huge impact on many colleagues.

The 'Good' result published from the recent Ofsted FE and Skills inspection was noted.

7. Governance Matters

The Governance paper was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Board **approved** the following appointments:

- Sean Green as Vice Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.
- Hazel Thomas to both the Business Committee and the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

Eligible Governors were reminded that Expressions of Interest for the Chair of the Corporation appointment should be submitted by the 31 December 2024 deadline.

8. Student Union Update

The Student Union Update was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. The following points were highlighted:

- The student induction survey showed an improvement in enrichment rating.
- Executive Officer roles are now filled but there has since been one resignation.
- Student forums are running half-termly, providing a space for students to raise issues.
- A Culture Day is taking place tomorrow, giving students an opportunity to celebrate their culture. There will be food, music and stalls from around the world. Countries represented include Syria, UK, Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Albania, Romania, Iran, Nigeria and Ukraine.

Positive feedback was given by Student Governors on the recent Student Governor Summit in Cambridge. The event included talks and workshops and provided an opportunity to network with Student Governors from other institutions.

The Student Forum Actions spreadsheet was presented as a record of issues extracted from student forums and actions being taken to address those issues.

The Board thanked FS, JF and HT for their feedback on the Student Governor Summit and thanked FS and Tom Denney for their work on the Student Forum Actions document which the Board found concise and informative.

9. Key Updates and Approvals from Committee Meetings

9.1 Audit & Risk

The Audit and Risk update was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Board went on to consider the Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023/24.

9.1.1 CONFIDENTIAL – Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023/24

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

- 9.1.1.1 CONFIDENTIAL – Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023/24**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.2 CONFIDENTIAL – Covenant Compliance Certificate**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.3 CONFIDENTIAL – Going Concern**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.4 CONFIDENTIAL – Regulatory Assessment**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.5 CONFIDENTIAL – Fraud Assessment**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.6 CONFIDENTIAL – Audit Memo (MHA)**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.7 CONFIDENTIAL – Audit Memo (MHA)**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.8 CONFIDENTIAL – IA Annual Report 2023/24 including Head of IA Opinion**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.9 CONFIDENTIAL – Audit & Risk Committee Report 2023/24**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.10 CONFIDENTIAL – Remuneration and Governance Committee Report**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.11 CONFIDENTIAL – EOC Enterprises Annual Report and Financial Statements and Letter of Representation**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.
- 9.1.1.12 CONFIDENTIAL – EOC SPV – Annual Report and Financial Statements**
The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

9.1.2 Risk Register Review

The Board were informed that following a decision made by the Audit and Risk Committee at their September 2024 meeting, there will be an overhaul of the College's risk management process. Further work is being undertaken and proposals for the new process will be presented at the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

9.1.2.1 Risk Management Policy

The Risk Management Policy was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Board **approved** the Risk Management Policy subject to the following revisions being made:

- Include narrative to explain that each risk will be allocated to a Committee and monitored as the Committee sees fit.
- At the beginning of the third paragraph on page 4 of the policy, remove the word 'general'.

9.2 Curriculum and Standards

The report was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

9.2.1 College Self-Assessment Report

The College Self-Assessment Report was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. The Board were informed of the following:

- The College Self-Assessment Report has been submitted to Ofsted.
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee have reviewed the College Self-Assessment Report and recommend that it is approved by the Board.

The Board **approved** the College Self-Assessment Report as recommended by the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

9.2.2 Curriculum Strategy

The Curriculum Strategy 2024/25 was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. The Board were informed of the following:

- There have been minor changes to terminology in the strategy to ensure it aligns with the new Strategic Plan.
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee have scrutinised the Curriculum Strategy for 2024/25 and recommend that it is approved by the Board.

The Board **approved** the Curriculum Strategy 2024/25 as recommended by the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

9.2.3 Market Intelligence Data Exchange Service (MIDES) English and Maths Summary Report

The Board were informed that the data presented is an extract from the report generated from the College's R14 Return and that this has not been presented to the Curriculum and Standards Committee due to the data only recently becoming available.

The Board **noted** the huge improvement in pass rates for 2023/24 compared to 2022/23.

9.3 Business

9.3.1 CONFIDENTIAL - Finance Update

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

9.3.2 Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Board were informed that the Business Committee requested one change to the draft presented to them and that this change has been made.

The Board **approved** the Financial Regulations as recommended by the Business Committee.

9.3.3 Staff Satisfaction Survey

The Board were informed that progress is being made on the People Strategy and there will be a more comprehensive report under the Strategic Targets item at the next meeting.

Debate ensued as to whether the current Committee structure is sufficiently nuanced to give staff issues the scrutiny required. The following points were made:

- Workforce issues are presented to and considered by the Business Committee.
- The main barrier to effective scrutiny is insufficient data.
- It was noted that work is being done to improve data availability.
- Absenteeism is very high, and this is a tricky area to tackle.
- Are there HR skills among Governors that can be drawn upon?
- The remit of the Staff Culture Strategic Governor Group could be made specific to tackle staff issues.

9.3.4 Insurance Tender and Renewal

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

9.3.5 Modern Slavery Statement

The Modern Slavery Statement was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Board **approved** the Modern Slavery Statement as recommended by the Business Committee.

10. CONFIDENTIAL – Strategic Target Monitoring

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

11. CONFIDENTIAL – Corporation Sealing Register

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

12. Other Urgent Business

Governors were invited on a brief tour of the recently refurbished sports centre after the meeting.

13. CONFIDENTIAL – Meeting Review and Summary

The discussion was confidential and is recorded within the confidential minutes.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next Corporation Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on 11 February 2025 at 4:00pm

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 6:36pm.

Signed Date
(Chair)