

Kirklees College Corporation

# **CORPORATION**

# Minutes of a meeting held at 15.00 on 15 July 2022 at the College's Pioneer Centre

Present: Mr G Hetherington Independent Governor (Chair)

Dr W Bailey Independent Governor (from Item 3)

Ms M Carabine Independent Governor
Dr A Conn Independent Governor
Mrs C George Independent Governor
Mr A Greaves Staff Governor (to Item 20)

Mr D Harding Independent Governor (from Item 3)
Ms F Hussain-Butt Independent Governor (videoconference)
Mr F Parvez Independent Governor (videoconference)

Mr C Robinson Independent Governor
Mr P Singh Principal & Chief Executive

Mr M Varyani Independent Governor (from 15.30)

Mrs J Walters Independent Governor Dr A Williams Independent Governor

14/16 = 88% KPI 80% Quorum: 7 (40%)

In Attendance: Ms J Arechiga Vice Principal Curriculum & Innovation

Dr W Bailey Observer (to Item 2)

Mr M Bennington Vice Principal Corporate Operations

Ms A Clegg Head of Financial Operations (Items 10 and 11 only)

Ms J Green Clerk to the Corporation Mr D Harding Observer (to Item 2)

Mr A Oldham Head of Financial Performance (Items 10 and 11 only)
Mr D Rayneau Executive Director of Business Systems (videoconference)

Item Action/
Synopsis Item

	•	•	
PREL	PRELIMINARY ITEMS		
0	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, NOTICE AND QUORUM		
i	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Mr D Harding and Dr W Bailey, who were both recommended for appointment to the Corporation by the Search & Governance Committee. Introductions were made.		
ii	The Chair shared some end-of-year reflections, focusing on the recent external review of governance and the growth and development it had already stimulated. He encouraged Governors to provide feedback, particularly on chairing and clerking, to support continuous improvement in line with the Corporation's value of 'excellence'.		
iii	The Clerk confirmed that due notice of the meeting had been given, the requirement for all persons participating to be able to communicate with one another was satisfied and the meeting was quorate.		
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
i	Apologies were received from Independent Governor Mr I Wainwright and Staff Governor Ms C Catmull. Executive Finance Director Mrs R Meara had sent apologies due to a long-standing commitment.		
ii	All confirmed that, except as previously disclosed, they had no direct or indirect interest in any way in the business to be transacted at the meeting which should be disclosed.		

terated eason.
n term:
nnd Clerk, PH, Govs
ality quacy the o be
d. Clerk, Govs
ture,
ents to cerned ence at as that een as
genda;
Ith &
g

Item Action/
Synopsis Item

- > Approval/Note the use of the Corporation Seal;
- > Receipt of nil report on the Written Resolution Procedure;
- Corporation Appointments approved:
  - (i) Mr Dave Harding for a four-year term of office with immediate effect terminating 14 July 2026;
  - (ii) Dr W Bailey for a four-year term of office with immediate effect terminating 14 July 2026.
- Approval of proposed changes to the:
  - (i) Instrument & Articles:
  - (ii) Standing Orders;
  - (iii) Code of Conduct;
  - (iv) Scheme of Delegation;
- New Terms of Reference approved for:
  - (i) Audit Committee:
  - (ii) Finance Committee;
  - (iii) Quality, Performance & Standards Committee; and
  - (iv) Safeguarding Committee.
- Approval of Committee and Link Governor appointments 2022-23;
- > Date of the next meeting: Friday 21 Oct 2022 at 3pm.

15.20 Dr W Bailey and Mr D Harding rejoined the meeting.

Governors welcomed Dr Bailey and Mr Harding to the Corporation and the Chair confirmed their dates of appointment.

# **QUALITY AND CURRICULUM**

i

iii

### 4 FURTHER EDUCATION QUALITY PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS

# Further Education ("FE") Quality Improvement Plan ("QIP") Update

Synopsis Item 4

Vice Principal Curriculum and Innovation Ms J Arechiga ("JA") reported on progress on the QIP. She said, of the seven Areas of Focus:

- Two were recent additions and there had not yet been time to see an impact:
  - Respond to the 'Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (2021)' findings;
    - Further develop Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance to ensure all students are on the right course, right level and have clear career pathways.
- Good progress had been made in three of the other Areas:
  - Increase Adult retention and pass rates;
  - Apprentices to complete in a timely manner and by their planned end date;
  - No inconsistencies in the quality of education with no gaps between different groups of students and all curriculum areas 'Good' or better.
- Two were sustaining their previous performance position:
  - Attendance, particularly in English and maths;
  - Quality of education and student experience in English and maths:

The QIP progress measures had been monitored at the Quality, Performance and Standards ("QPS") Committee meeting. The Committee's advice and findings (as set out in the minutes) were noted.

Governors were keenly interested in the effectiveness of the processes for the collection of destinations and progression data and its application in curriculum planning; they emphasised the importance of the data for measuring and evidencing impact, improving the offer and strengthening reputation and welcomed the priority it was receiving in the QIP. There was discussion about some inherent challenges.

Corporation 150722

Item 2

Synopsis

Synopsis Item 1

Synopsis Item 3

Item Action/
Synopsis Item

		nopsis item
	Predicted Achievement	Synopsis Item 5
iv	JA said the 2018-19 (pre-pandemic) year had been used as the benchmark; it was felt to be the most appropriate comparator despite the differences in terms of lost learning, adaptability and mental health, and the change of assessment approach (curriculum reforms had led to an increase in exam-based qualifications). Despite a sense that staff had been cautious in predictions, achievement for all provision was indicating to be in line with, or above, 2018-19. 16-18 retention was showing an improved position.	item 5
V	The Chair of the QPS Committee Dr A Williams ("AW") said while he understood the rationale for using 2018-19 as a comparator, in his view, the best measure of provider effectiveness was distance travelled, i.e. learner progress from starting points.	
vi	There was discussion about the accuracy of staff predictions. Governors recalled that some of the previous year's predictions had been substantially off the mark. AW said the Quality Team had worked hard over the past two years to move away from looking back after the event to in-year risk assessment. He said their efforts looked set to pay off but there were still some legacy issues from the pandemic and the Corporation should bear this in mind when comparing the 2021-22 results with the predictions.	
vii	JA said close-down was going well; almost all achievements were in, with the exception of outstanding exam results. The few outstanding achievements were mainly in Adults and there was high confidence that those would further strengthen the position. English and maths remained the main area of concern, however exam attendance was up by +1.4% overall which was a positive indicator.	
15.30	Mr M Varyani joined the meeting.	
viii	Governors were pleased to hear that several curriculum areas had shown marked improvements during the year, in particular Business and Computing, Motor Vehicle, and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). ESOL had improved substantially, pushing up overall predictions for 19+ (as ESOL was such a big proportion of the 19+ provision). It was expected to hit target and outperform 2018-19.	
ix	JA said, at the QPS Committee meeting, there had been a lengthy discussion about the fate of learners who, despite being identified as 'at risk' at an early stage and the efforts of staff, were not expected to achieve in year but would need more time to complete their programmes. The College was working closely with such students and managing expectations.	
X	A Governor commented that, while Covid had been a great disrupter, it had also been a litmus test for how robust the business was. The Governor asked if it was possible to compare the College's post-Covid versus pre-Covid performance with that of other colleges with similar characteristics. JA said this had already been done through informal networks; data from across the UK showed most providers' performance had dropped; the College had outperformed many comparators.	
	Timetable for reporting the 2021-22 outcomes	
xi	JA said, for information, reporting would be through the QPS Committee meeting in early November and the outcomes would be confirmed by the Self-Assessment Report Validation Panel at the end of November.	
5	QPS COMMITTEE REPORT	
i	AW presented the minutes of the meeting and the items of report were noted. The Committee had discussed a new strategy for Higher Skills and Education, which was not considered to impact on the educational character of the College.	

THE S	TRATEGIC CONVERSATION	
6	PRINCIPAL'S REPORT	
i	The Principal Mr P Singh ("PS") said the tumult in British politics was creating uncertainty. Civil servants had assured him that pursuing the skills agenda remained a high priority, although a leadership contest would press pause on things.	
ii	It was noted that the Office for National Statistics was undertaking a review of the status of further education colleges with a view to reclassifying them as public sector organisations. Governors discussed the possible implications of this for the College.	
iii	A Year 10 Taster Day for local feeder schools had been a great success. Governors were pleased to hear that follow-up events were already scheduled. One Governor remarked that the financial crisis must surely be informing decisions about post-16 education; the university route was a high-risk commitment and colleges could benefit from an increase in demand. Another Governor agreed, saying some professional services firms were preferring college students over graduates; if this became a trend, it would drive up demand for college courses. The national conversation about skills and further education was welcomed.	
iv	The latest edition of KC Chronicle (providing an update on activities, events and achievements of staff and students) accompanied the report.	
7	REVIEW OF DRAFT STRATEGY AND NEXT STEPS	
i	The contents of the draft Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (the "Plan") had been explored in detail at previous meetings and Governors were pleased to hear that the Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Goals had been well received by staff. There was discussion about how the Plan would be communicated to stakeholders; how it would translate into operational plans; and how progress would be monitored and impact measured (both quantitative and qualitative measures would be needed).	
ii	It was agreed that the Corporation must have a comprehensive analysis of risks associated with the Plan, and effective oversight of it. Previous concerns about the adequacy of the sub-committee structure resurfaced and it was agreed that the People Culture & Governance Committee would keep this under review. PS's recommendation to establish Strategic Priority Link Governor posts was approved in principle.	
iii	<b>Action:</b> Governors interested in volunteering to be Link Governors for the strategic priorities to identify themselves to PS by email.	Govs
iv	A Governor remarked on the strapline on page 5 of the Plan and suggested some alternative wording. It was agreed that this should be looked at again in light of the Governor's comments. Subject thereto, there was universal approval of the Plan.	
V	RESOLVED:	
	1. To approve the Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Goals as set out in the draft Strategic Plan 2022-2025.	Synopsis Item 6
8	There was no Item 8.	
STUD	ENT VOICE	
9	LEADERS UNLOCKED: STUDENT COMMISSION ON RACIAL JUSTICE	
i	Unfortunately, the students involved in the project had not attended. Their short video was shown and Governors discussed the project and the video in their absence.	

Item Action/ Synopsis Item

#### 10 2022/23 BUDGET AND 3 YEAR COLLEGE FINANCIAL FORECASTING RETURN

16.25 Head of Financial Operations Ms A Clegg and Head of Financial Performance Mr A Oldham joined the meeting.

- The Head of Financial Performance Mr A Oldham ("AO") presented the proposed budget for 2022/23 and the three-year financial plan, explaining how they had been transferred onto the ESFA's College Financial Forecasting Return ("CFFR") tool (the Excel workbook at Appendix 10.2). He said given the substantial increase in energy costs and the loss of income from 16-18 recruitment shortfalls in the current year, assembling a budget that would generate sufficient EBITDA<sup>1</sup> (6.5%) to cover both capital investment and debt repayments had been somewhat challenging.
- ii Despite the pressures on operating performance, solvency remained strong and financial health was forecast to reach 'good' in 2021/22 and remain so in 2022/23. Even so, Governors agreed that the increasing energy costs and the projected weakening of the EBITDA position over the next two years were cause for concern and emphasised the need for a robust response.
- iii The 2022/23 assumptions were discussed. AO shared a completed template from the business planning process to show how the student number projections had been arrived at and validated. He said the management team was trialling a new approach, with more rigour and challenge than in previous years. At every stage in the process, conversations had been had about intent and alignment with the proposed strategic plan. Governors agreed that AO's explanations provided a good level of assurance.
- iν The Chair of the Finance Committee Mr C Robinson ("CR") said the Committee had spent time looking at the business planning spreadsheet and discussing the new approach and had sought assurance that College management would be monitoring recruitment avidly in the early part of the Autumn Term to ensure resourcing was reduced if there was any shortfall against the curriculum plan. He said the Committee was happy with the proposed budget; it considered that management's confidence in the deliverability of the numbers appeared well placed, and it was comfortable with the risk analysis.
- ٧ A Governor asked AO to comment on the lagged funding model and the difficulty of resourcing any over-recruitment in year. AO reminded the meeting of how FE funding worked. He agreed that it could be difficult to cover the cost of additional learners in years where there was significant over-recruitment. He said a recently announced 8.4% increase in the national base rate for full time students aged 16 and 17 was very welcome but most of it would be absorbed by a mandatory increase in teaching hours.
- νi Referring to the CFFR, the Head of Financial Operations Ms A Clegg said an error in the Education & Skills Funding Agency's spreadsheet was affecting financial health scores. She said the Corporation was required to approve the CFFR for submission to the funding body along with the narrative budget paper (Appendix 10.1). She said the spreadsheet was a complicated document but the information in it was the same as in the narrative budget paper. Attention was drawn to the Executive Finance Director's cover paper, which explained how the two documents mapped to one another.

### νii **RESOLVED:**

- (i) To approve the proposed budget for the year ending 31 July 2023 as presented. Synopsis
- (ii) To approve the CFFR, being satisfied that it supports the strategic objectives.

Item 7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) is a measure of a business's operating performance which is used by the College in its financial planning and reporting.

11	PROPOSED REVISION TO 2021/22 BUDGET	nopsis item
	I NOI OOLD REVISION TO 2021/22 BUDGET	
i	A paper written by the Executive Finance Director proposed a revision to the 2021-22 budget. PS spoke to the proposal.	
	The matter is considered confidential at this stage therefore the discussion is recorded in a confidential annex at the end of this document and marked Annex 1, 15.07.22.	
viii	<b>Action:</b> To contact the External Auditor for advice on appropriate wording for a written resolution; then to prepare and circulate the necessary resolution to give effect to the proposed revision to the 2021-22 budget.	JG
17.25	। Ms A Clegg and Mr A Oldham left the meeting.	
	A 20 min break was taken. When the meeting resumed all re-joined the meeting.	
12.1	VICE PRINCIPAL CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT	
i	Vice Principal Corporate Services Mr M Bennington ("MB") presented his report.	
	Covid-19	
ii	The national Covid rate was increasing again. The College had retained an ample stock of protective equipment, sanitisers, etc.	
	Park Road Batley	
iii	A building and some land in Batley (Park Road, Batley) had been identified as belonging to the College. A valuation had been obtained as well as an estimate for works to bring it to a saleable condition. The plan was to dispose of it, hopefully before winter and approval was needed to proceed to market.	
iv	RESOLVED:	
	(i) To authorise management to move forward with the process to market the property known as Park Road Batley for disposal.	Synopsis Item 8
	Solar PV Survey	
V	A survey had been carried out to assess four College sites for the installation of solar electricity panels (also known as photovoltaics (PV)). This would reduce carbon dioxide emissions annually and could provide an approximate annual saving of £83k, with a return on investment in under 4 years. The College was moving to tender and hopeful of achieving installation by the end of October.	
	Brunel Expansion Project	
vi	Works had completed with a marginal overspend.	
	February Data Breach	
vii	The Information Commissioner had closed their file, being satisfied by the assurances provided and action taken. No regulatory action had been taken.	
	Delivery Partner(s) for Adult Education Budget	
viii	A tender had been launched to procure a delivery partner(s) for Adult Budget employability programmes for 2022/23.	
12.2	BUSINESS CRITICAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ("BCPIs")	
i	The status of the BCPIs was noted.	Synopsis Item 9

Item Action/
Synopsis Item

13	FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT		
_			
i	The Finance Committee Chair presented the minutes of the Committee's 1 July 2022 meeting and the items of report were noted.		
18.00	Independent Governor Mr F Parvez left the meeting.		
RISK	AND AUDIT		
14	STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT	Synopsis	
i	MB presented the Strategic Risk Register, referring to the Executive Finance Director's paper which identified the key risk movements and the status of the particularly high risks. He said the overall average risk score had increased from 9.9 to 10.3.	Item 10	
ii	Governors agreed that the risk scores and movements reflected their expectations in light of information they had recently received. In particular, Risk #11 "Failure to identify resources necessary to meet curriculum reforms and industry standards" was being heavily impacted by the staffing issues discussed earlier in the meeting.		
iii	There was discussion about Risk #16 "Failure to meet obligations to government and awarding bodies". An internal audit on funding compliance had raise some concerns and the Chair of the Audit Committee JW said she was planning to speak to this as part of her report. Staff retention was also a factor here; with the audit team staff and the Executive Finance Director all leaving the business, there was an increased risk of not having the skills to deliver audits.		
iv	The College's level of exposure to Risk #25 "Failure to meet business plan" had increased. The pressures on cost of living was a factor; prospective students may be less willing or able to commit financially to a programme of study.		
V	The new external auditor RSM, having recently carried out an analysis of FE provider risk registers nationally, had published a report; this was included in the meeting pack. Governors agreed that it was an interesting read.		
15	AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT		
i	The minutes of the 4 June Committee meeting were received and the items of report were noted. The Committee Chair JW said the key item to discuss with Corporation was the Student Records Funding Audit report prepared by an outfit called Hartley Consulting. She said there was initially some scepticism about the provenance of the report but the Committee's concerns in this regard had been allayed following investigation by PS and it was legitimate to take the findings of the report seriously.	Synopsis Item 11	
ii	Although Hartley had provided a 'reasonable assurance' opinion, the Committee had felt that 'limited assurance' might more appropriate, given the audit findings and the potential implications for the College. Governors agreed that a plan was required and there must be ownership of the issues identified. They emphasised that the risk of clawback of funding must be minimised.		
iii	<b>Action:</b> In light of the findings of the Hartley report on student records, the Executive Director of Business Systems shall circulate an assurance update before October.	DR	
SAFE	SAFEGUARDING		
16	SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE REPORT	Synopsis	
i	The minutes of the 4 July Committee meeting were received and the items of report were noted. The Committee Chair Mrs C George said the Safeguarding Team was about to undergo a restructure in response to the ever-increasing caseload.	Item 12	

	CH AND GOVERNANCE	
17	SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT	
	Minutes of 24 June 2022	
i	The minutes were not yet available. The Committee Chair Mr G Hetherington ("GH") said the meeting had considered proposed changes to the constitutional documents, designed to accommodate innovations planned for the sub-committee structure.	
	Proposal to seek Charity Commission approval for the payment of Student Governors	
ii	The Clerk had prepared a paper setting out the rationale for the proposal and this was well supported by Governors, who recognised the challenges the Clerk had described.	
iii	<b>Action:</b> To prepare an application to the Charity Commission for consent to amend the Instrument to permit payments to Student Governors for acting as trustees.	JG Synopsis
	Governance Toolkit	Item 13
iv	The Search & Governance Committee had received a paper which discussed the reporting requirements for key risk events and whether there were adequate controls in place to mitigate the risk of failure to report. It had also looked at a draft compliance matrix, and had given the go ahead for this to be further developed as a tool to manage the risks around the oversight of Corporation responsibilities, duplication, and the communication of responsibilities.	
	Merger of Search and Governance and Executive Employment Committees	
v	This had had Corporation approval and would take effect in September. The Search & Governance and Executive Employment Committees would not be wound up during the initial trial period but they were not expected to meet. The new Committee would approve their last set of minutes.	
18	GOVERNOR TRAINING AND ACTIVITIES	
i	JW, Dr A Conn, Mr F Parvez and Ms F Hussain-Butt had attended sessions from the Association of Colleges Governance Finance Masterclass Series.	
19	PUBLICATION OF AGENDA PAPERS	
i	RESOLVED:	
	(i) All items marked with an asterisk on the Agenda shall be deemed confidential and excluded from publication in accordance with clause 18.2 of the Instrument of Government.	
	UTIVE EMPLOYMENT MATTERS	
20	INVOLVEMENT OF STAFF AND STUDENT GOVERNORS	
i	The meeting discussed whether Staff Governors should participate in the discussion and decision-making for Item 20(ii)-(v) and whether Staff Governors and any future Student Governors should receive the papers or minutes relating to them.	
ii	RESOLVED:	
	(i) Pursuant to clause 13.5(b) of the Instrument, Staff Governors should be required to leave the meeting for Item 20(ii)-(v).	
18.20	l All non-Governors, except for the Clerk, and Mr A Greaves, left the meeting.	

	Vice Principal Finance & Resources Recruitment Update		
iii	Interviews were scheduled for Monday 18 July. If the interview panel was able to identify an appointable candidate, a recommendation would be made and authority to confirm their appointment would be sought via written resolution.		
iv	<b>Action:</b> To share the outcome of the 18 July assessment centre with Governors; if appropriate, to circulate a written resolution for the approval of an appointment.	Clerk	
	Executive Employment Committee 27 June mins		
V	The minutes of the 27 June Committee meeting were received and the items of report were noted.		
	Restricted Item: Senior Post Holder Performance	Synopsis	
	This matter is considered confidential and is restricted to Independent Governors only, therefore the discussion is recorded in a confidential annex marked Annex 2, 15.07.22.	Item 14	
	Restricted Item: Clerk's Performance		
	This matter is considered confidential and is restricted to Independent Governors only, therefore the discussion is recorded in a confidential annex marked Annex 3, 15.07.22.		
THAN	THANKS AND CLOSE		
21	THANKS AND CLOSE		
i	There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.		

SYNOPSIS		
#	Details	Min
1.	The following Corporation Appointments were approved:  Mr Dave Harding for a four-year term of office with immediate effect;  Dr. Mr. B. H. G.	3iii
2.	<ul> <li>Dr W Bailey for a four-year term of office with immediate effect.</li> <li>The Corporation approved changes to its constitutional documents as follows: <ol> <li>Instrument &amp; Articles;</li> <li>Standing Orders;</li> <li>Code of Conduct;</li> <li>Scheme of Delegation;</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	
3.	New Terms of Reference were approved for the:  (i) Audit Committee;  (ii) Finance Committee;  (iii) Quality, Performance & Standards Committee; and  (iv) Safeguarding Committee.	
4.	The Corporation discussed a report on the Further Education Quality Improvement Plan.	4i
5.	The Corporation discussed the predicted achievements for 2021-2022.	4iv
6.	The new strategic plan was shared with Governors, following staff consultation. The Corporation approved the Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Goals set out in the plan.	7v
7.	The Corporation approved the budget for the year ending 31 July 2023. It also approved the CFFR (a financial reporting template) for submission to the funding body, having satisfied itself that it supported the strategic objectives.	10vii
8.	The Corporation gave approval for management to start work on the disposal of a building and some land in Batley (Park Road, Batley) owned by the College, it not being required for delivery.	12.1iv
9.	The Corporation monitored the status of the business critical performance indicators.	12.2i

10.	A report was provided on the College's exposure to its key strategic risks. Governors discussed the actions being taken to reduce the overall risk level.	14
11.	The Audit Committee Chair reported the findings of an internal audit report, which had given rise to some concerns. An update report was requested.	15
12.	A report was given by the Chair of the Corporation's Safeguarding Committee.	16
13.	Approval was granted for the Clerk to the Corporation to approach the Charity Commission to seek consent for the payment of Student Governors. There is no certainty of this being granted.	17iii
14.	Confidential reporting took place on the performance of the senior post holders and the Clerk.	20