# **Kirklees College Corporation**

## **People, Culture & Governance Committee**

### Minutes of a meeting held from 1100-11430 on 18 June 2024 (open version)

### Held in HA05009, Waterfront Centre, Huddersfield

Present:

G Hetherington - Independent Governor (Chair)

A Conn - Independent Governor (Chair, Executive Employment)

C George - Independent Governor

C Robinson - Independent Governor

P Singh - Executive Governor

Attendance – 71%

KPI 80%

Quorum: 3 (60%)

In Attendance:

P Lucarz - Executive Director People & Culture (Items 1 - 5)

C Tague - Director of Governance & Compliance (clerk)

### Preliminary Items

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2.1. Notice and quorum

Due notice of the meeting had been given and the meeting was quorate.

### 2.2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Harding and F Hussain-Butt.

### 2.3. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

### 3.1. Approval of previous minutes

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

### 3.2. Matters arising not on the agenda

There were no matters raised.

### 3.3. Update on agreed actions

1. The approach to ascertaining the views of staff be reviewed and the outcomes taken to a future meeting of the Corporation. Noted and under consideration
2. The revised Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure be circulated to the Committee electronically for comment prior to consideration by the Corporation. Actioned
3. The co-opted Independent Governor be approached to ascertain whether they could continue on the Finance & Resources Committee for the remainder of the academic year. Actioned
4. Expressions of interest to be sought from QPS committee members as to the position of Chair which would become vacant from 31 March 2024. Actioned
5. Recruitment activities to commence to fill the 2 vacant Independent Governor positions and increase the number of co-optees. Actioned
6. A report outlining a range of options for recruitment to the position of Chair and Vice-Chair be brought to the next meeting of the Committee. Update at Agenda item 4
7. The Chair to meet with governors on an individual basis for an informal discussion as to their role, term of office and any future ambitions as a governor, in order to inform succession planning activities. Actioned
8. A poll be sent out to all Governors as to their preferred day for the holding of Corporation meetings. Actioned
9. Senior Post Holder mid-year reviews be scheduled for the February meeting of the Committee on an annual basis. Actioned
10. The Corporate Strategic Session on 26 April 2024 to include progress on goals and priorities 2023-24, with background papers, including the Principal’s recent blog, to be circulated in advance of the session. Actioned

### People & Culture

### Synopsis 1

4. Supporting improved performance policy / supporting attendance policy

4.1. P Lucarz, Executive Director People and Culture presented a report in relation to 2 new policies.

4.2. In presenting the report, PL advised that the policy framework was being reviewed and refreshed, with a focus on the more commonly used policies first, to ensure that policies reflected the College’s values and used more restorative and connection-building language where possible.

4.3. The intention was to simplify processes and improve flexibility to enhance the effectiveness of the policy framework. Two new policies had been drafted, namely the Supporting Improved Performance Policy and Supporting Attendance Policy and were being shared with the Committee for approval as part of the consultation process.

4.4. In discussing the documents, the following key points were noted:-

* It was clarified that persistent lateness was a conduct issue so was referenced in the Disciplinary Policy.
* Supporting Attendance – the key change was the reintroduction of absence triggers to avoid the risk of unintentional discrimination and provide appropriate and consistent points for intervention.
* Supporting Improved Performance   
  + Page 9 – Supporting Improved Performance Meeting – Stage 2  
    It was suggested that the phrase ..*if you have made little or no improvement..* be amended – *sufficient improvement* was suggested.

Page 5 – Responsibility of Managers – to consider a reference to duty of care in terms of workload.

4.5. In concluding the discussion, Members were provided with an update as to the ongoing realignment work in the People Department.

4.5. Action & corporation report: The Supporting Improved Performance Policy and Supporting Attendance Policy are both recommended for approval.

### Synopsis 2

5. Equality, diversity & inclusion strategy & action plan 2021 – 2025

5.1. P Lucarz presented the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2021 - 2025

5.2. In discussing the report, Members agreed that the reporting and data periods within the report were unclear and that the report needed to be revised to either:-

1. Add an explanatory paragraph as to the reporting period and data contained; or
2. Remove the 2023/24 data.

5.3. It was also suggested that there should be more explicit reference to actions from previous years and some analysis of the data included.

5.4. A member advised that the Strategy on the website was not the current version and it was agreed that this would be corrected.

5.5. Action:

1. The report be amended to either include an explanatory paragraph as to the reporting period and data contained or to remove the 2023/24 data.
2. To ensure that the current version of the EDI Strategy is published on the website to updated.

5.6. Resolved: Subject to the aforementioned amendments, the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2021 – 2025 be recommended for approval.

### Synopsis 3

6. Modern slavery statement

6.1. P Lucarz (PL), presented the Modern Slavery Statement for the year 2023-2024, in line with section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which requires the publication each year of the steps taken to make sure operations and supply chains are free from slavery.

6.2. Resolved: The Modern Slavery Statement for the year 2023-24 be recommended for approval.

11:45 AM - P Lucarz left the meeting.

### Synopsis 4

7. Governance update

7.1. C Tague (CT) Director of Governance & Compliance, presented a report which outlined a number of areas for consideration in relation to governance and the Corporation membership, including recruitment and succession planning.

7.2. The importance of student governors was discussed and it was noted that one of the Director of Governance targets was to review the approach to student recruitment and involvement. This would include looking at not only student governor recruitment but how to maximise opportunities to hear the student voice and ensure meaningful input and engagement.

7.3. Members were advised that a recruitment campaign was underway to fill the 2 Independent Governor vacancies and potentially increase the number of co-optees. Advertising had placed a particular focus on finance, legal, property, HR and digital skills and experience, as these were potential gaps previously highlighted by the Committee. The closing date for applications was 8 July 2024 and there had been 1 application and 2 expressions of interest to date. The arrangements for prospective Independent Governor interviews were discussed and noted.

7.4. With regards to succession planning, the Chair provided feedback on recent conversations with governors and advised that there had been unanimous feedback that a successor to the Chair should come from within the current membership, rather than via external advert, if possible.

7.5. As there was some potential interest in the role of Chair from within the current cadre of governors, there did not appear to be any timetabling issues so there was potential to make recommendations earlier than anticipated. If this was the case, the Chair indicated that they would be looking to stand down at the end of the 2024/25 academic year, rather than December 2025 if appropriate succession plans were in place.

7.6. It was suggested that a second Vice-Chair be appointed to act as a stepping stone in the intervening period.

7.7. With regards to the number of committee meetings and the need to ensure the best use of governors, there was no appetite to reduce the committee structure of number of meetings at the current time. However, it was agreed that a piece of work be undertaken to look at the structures of outstanding colleges of a similar size who had recently achieved a good or higher in a recent inspection to be inform any future transitional plans.

7.8. Action: A piece of work be undertaken to look at practice across comparable colleges, to identify whether there are potential opportunities to achieve the same output in a more effective way and ensure that we are making optimal use of governor time and expertise.

### Synopsis 5

8. Close down against the current code of good governance compliance

8.1. In presenting the item, C Tague (CT) reminded the Committee, that at its last meeting in February 2024, compliance against the current AoC Code of Good Governance for 2022-23 was assessed as RAG Green, with the exception of the following criteria:-

(7.9) The board must ensure all college policies, particularly safeguarding, are actively implemented in the subsidiaries, partnerships and subcontracting arrangements.

Where it was agreed that this would remain RAG rated Amber to allow time for the new policy suite to embed and be monitored by the Safeguarding and Quality, Performance & Standards Committee (QPS).

8.2. This was reported to Corporation in March 2024 and at the same meeting the adoption of the new AoC Code of Good Governance for 2024/24 was approved, as per the Committee’s recommendations.

8.3. CT advised that in order to close down monitoring against the current Code, a review has been undertaken to ensure that compliance has maintained at an acceptable level. In carrying out the review, the evidence previously cited had been updated where applicable and no negative change in position was identified.

8.4. In considering the review documentation, the Committee welcomed the update and agreed that the aforementioned criteria (7.9) should remain at Amber.

8.5. Resolved: The Committee agreed that there was a high level of assurance in respect of compliance with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and recommend to the Corporation that the current position be reported as ‘Compliant’.

### Synopsis 6

9. Governance development plan

9.1. C Tague (CT), presented a paper which provided an update on compliance against the current Code of Good Governance.

9.2. In considering the action updates, the Committee were satisfied to mark progress against all actions as either green or complete, with the exception of Actions 1 & 1A Committee & Corporation papers, where it was agreed to revise the status from green to amber with a revised target date of December 2024, to allow for the introduction of a new report template and associated guide to be introduced and time to ascertain governor feedback as to improvement.

9.3. Action: That progress against the Governance Development Plan be updated.

12.55 PM - The meeting broke for lunch & resumed at 13.30 PM, chaired by the Committee’s Vice Chair (Executive Employment Items)

C Tague, Director of Governance & Compliance did not re-join the meeting at this point.

### Synopsis 7 & Annex 1

10. Director of governance & compliance 6-month probationary review and objectives.

The details of the Director of Governance & Compliance probationary performance review are considered confidential and therefore the discussion is recorded in a confidential and restricted annex marked Annex 1, 18/06/2024.

13.50 PM - C Tague joined the meeting

### Synopsis 8 & Annex 2

11. Deputy principals’ targets & update

The details of the Deputy Principal’s performance reviews are considered confidential and therefore the discussion is recorded in a confidential and restricted annex marked Annex 2, 18/06/2024.

### Synopsis 9

12. Senior postholder remuneration report

C Tague and P Singh left the room prior to discussion of their individual remuneration.

12.1. C Tague presented a report which set out the requirement for a statement on Senior Post Holder remuneration to be approved by the Corporation and published annually in accordance with the Association of Colleges Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code.

12.2. A draft was statement for 2023-24 was circulated alongside the AoC Senior Pay Survey 2023 and local comparator data.

12.3. Resolved: The 2022-23 Statement on Senior Postholder Remuneration is recommended for approval and publication.

14.15 PM - P Singh, Executive Governor left the meeting

### Synopsis 9 & Annex 3

13. Principal’s pay, performance & objectives

13.1. The details of the Principal’s pay & performance review is considered confidential and therefore the discussion is recorded in a confidential and restricted annex marked Annex 3, 18/06/2024

### Administration

14. Publication of agenda papers

Resolved**:** Items marked as confidential on the meeting agenda shall not be published.

**Close**

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 14.35 PM

### Agreed Actions

PL

1. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2021 – 2025 – the report be amended to either include an explanatory paragraph as to the reporting period and data contained or to remove the 2023/24 data. (5.2, by 10/07/24)
2. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2021 – 2025 – to ensure that the current version of the EDI Strategy is published on the website to updated. (5.4, ASAP)

CT

1. A piece of work be undertaken to look at practice across comparable colleges, to identify whether there are potential opportunities to achieve the same output in a more effective way and ensure that we are making optimal use of governor time and expertise. (7.8, by next meeting)

### Items of Report for Corporation

1. The Corporation heard that People & Culture policy framework was being reviewed and refreshed, with a focus on the more commonly used policies first, to ensure that policies reflected the College’s values and used more restorative and connection-building language where possible. The intention was to simplify processes and improve flexibility to enhance the effectiveness of the policy framework.

The Committee received 2 new policies, namely the Supporting Improved Performance Policy and Supporting Attendance Policy and recommends these for approval. (Item 4)

1. The Committee received the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2021 – 2025. The Committee asked for some amendments to be made to clarify the reporting period. Subject to these amendments, the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2021 – 2025 is recommended for approval. (Item 5)
2. The Modern Slavery Statement for the year 2023-24 be recommended for approval. (6.2)
3. The Committee considered a report in relation to governance and the Corporation membership, including recruitment and succession planning. Members were advised that a recruitment campaign was underway to fill the 2 Independent Governor vacancies and potentially increase the number of co-optees. Advertising had placed a particular focus on finance, legal, property, HR and digital skills and experience, as these were potential gaps previously highlighted by the Committee.

The closing date for applications was 8 July 2024. The arrangements for prospective Independent Governor interviews were discussed and noted. With regards to succession planning, the Chair fedback on recent conversations with governors and advised that there had been unanimous feedback that a successor to the Chair should come from within the current membership, rather than via external advert, if at all possible.It was suggested that consideration be given to the appointment of a second Vice-Chair be appointed to act as a stepping stone in the intervening period. (Item 7)

1. In order to close down monitoring against the current Code of Good Governance, a review had been undertaken to ensure that compliance has maintained at an acceptable level. In carrying out the review, the evidence previously cited had been updated where applicable and no negative change in position was identified.

The Committee agreed that there was a high level of assurance in respect of compliance with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and recommend to the Corporation that the current position be reported as ‘Compliant’. (Item 8)

1. The Committee is responsible for managing and monitoring the Governance Development Plan, which is a tool to drive improvement in the Corporation’s approach to governance.

In considering the action updates, the Committee were satisfied to mark progress against all actions as either green or complete, with the exception of Actions 1 & 1A Committee & Corporation papers, where it was agreed to revise the status from green to amber with a revised target date of December 2024.

This was to allow for the introduction of a new report template and associated guide to be introduced and time to ascertain governor feedback as to improvement. (Item 9)

1. The Committee considered the Director of Governance & Compliance’s 6 months probationary review and performance objectives for 2024/25. (Item 10)
2. The Committee received a mid-year update on the performance of the:-

• Deputy Principal Curriculum & Innovation’s (J Arechiga).

• Deputy Principal Curriculum & Innovation’s (P Doherty)

Members made some general comments about how the review process might be further refined but agreed that the process is robust and the Principal’s findings are reasonable. (Item 11)

1. The 2022-23 Statement on Senior Postholder Remuneration is recommended for approval and publication. (12.3)
2. The Committee received an update on the performance of the Principal/CEO

(P Singh).

No changes are proposed to the performance objectives outlined by the Chair. (Item 13)