

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2022

Present:

Governors:

Dolly Agoro (via Teams)	Emma Kirk
Antony Ball	Preetha Kumar
Angela Briggs (Chair)	John Rees (CEO)
Ruth Brook	Lee Walker
Greg Clarke	Andrea Ward
Karen Jackson (via Teams)	

The quorum for the meeting was nine members.

In attendance:

Sharon Harmon	Clerk to the Corporation (via Teams)
Barrie Shipley	Chief Finance Officer
Rachel Maguire	Chief People Officer
Sharon Smith	Principal / Deputy CEO
Jason Wilkinson	Chief Information Officer
Dan Fell	Governor Elect (via Teams)
Joe Bradley	Student Governor (HE) Elect

The meeting took place at Doncaster College and MS Teams and started at 5.30 pm.

Item	Minutes	Action	Date Due
	The Chair formally welcomed newly appointed CEO and Board Member John Rees and newly appointed Clerk to the Corporation, Sharon Harmon, to their first meeting of the Corporation Board.		
1	Apologies		
	Apologies for absence were received from Jonathan Davies, Paul Scanlon, Mark Swales, Lee Tillman and Luke Cantrill.		
2	Declarations of Interest		
	Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.		
	There were no declarations of interest made.		
3	Ratification of New Governors		
	Members were asked to consider the appointment of Dan Fell to the Corporation Board as an Independent Governor. Members noted that the Search and Governance Committee had reviewed Dan Fell's application at the meeting on 21 st September and unanimously recommend Dan Fell's appointment. Members were asked to vote on the appointment of Dan Fell as an Independent Governor to the Corporation Board.		

Resolution: Members unanimously approved the appointment of Dan Fell as an Independent Governor to the Corporation Board. The Appointment to start on 19th October 2022 for a Term of Office of four years.

The Clerk to the Corporation informed members that there had been a successful election for the HE student governor vacancy and that Joe Bradley had been elected. Members were asked to ratify the appointment.

Resolution: Members unanimously approved the appointment of Joe Bradley, HE Student Governor, to the Corporation Board.

Dan Fell and Joe Bradley joined the meeting. The Chair confirmed their appointments and welcomed them to the Corporation Board.

4 Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 4 July 2022 and any matters arising

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Members confirmed there were no matters arising and noted all actions from the previous minutes had been completed.

Confidential Minutes

The confidential minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Members noted an action relating to Item 7 and the formation of a Task and Finish Group to include Governors and members of SLT. The Chair of the Corporation, the CEO and the Principal agreed to follow up this action.

Chair /
CEO / 12/12/22
Principal

5 CEO Update

Members received a report from the CEO providing a headline update on College matters, external partnership activity, funding and policy developments and outlining a proposed approach to the development of the long-term College strategic plan. The CEO highlighted points of note and updates to the written report.

Enrolment, Induction and Start of Year Student Experience

Members noted that this was the first 'in-person' enrolment event for three years following the disruption due to Covid. Review and evaluation of the process reported a high degree of satisfaction from students, good levels of access to advice and support services and effective cross-departmental team working. Areas for improvement were identified and are being fed into the planning cycle for future events.

Alignment of Pay Terms and Conditions Project

Members noted that process of negotiation had completed. The CEO reported that an offer was put to unions through the collective consultation process and was subsequently approved by the recognised trade unions on behalf of their members. The changes to staff pay were implemented with

effect on 1st August 2022. The CEO acknowledged the hard work of the payroll team in implementing the changes. Members noted the project was now in the post implementation period and appeal stage.

Members asked about the final position on non-consolidated payments. The CPO reported that unions had rejected the implementation of non-consolidated payments. The CPO confirmed that a detailed cost and review analysis would be presented to the People and Transformation Committee and then come to Board for information after that.

The Chair recorded the thanks of the Corporation Board to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all involved in the project for their hard work in delivering such a large-scale project successfully.

Recruitment and Retention of Staff in Engineering

Members noted that the College is continuing to experience significant teaching staff shortages in Engineering and related specialisms. This is not a new issue and is reflected across the whole of the FE and skills system, although for providers with a high proportion of Engineering in their curriculum offer, as in the College's case, the impact is more significant. The CEO reported on the impact of the shortage and outlined the measures the College is taking to mitigate and improve the position. The CEO reported that the issue was discussed at a meeting he had attended the previous week with a number of Yorkshire and Humber Principals and the FE Commissioners Office. It was recognised at that meeting that the acute shortage of engineering staff within the FE system is universal.

Members asked whether the engineering staff shortage was national or just a local issue. The CEO and CPO confirmed this is a recognised nation acute shortage. The Principal/DCEO noted it also spans into the HE sector. Members discussed with the SLT measures the Group is taking to recruit and retain staff in Engineering.

Capital Projects Update

The CEO update members on the progress with capital projects at North Lindsey College and with the South Yorkshire Institute of Technology. Members noted that both projects are progressing as expected.

Chief Executive's Initial Engagement Update

The CEO reported to members on his engagement with staff, students and external partners. The CEO noted his meeting with the Department for Education and highlighted plans for a forth coming annual strategic conversation visit at the start of the spring term. The CEO updated on meetings with external partners on local skills improvement plans.

Members discussed the progress and role of regional Institutes of Technologies in developing local skills improvement plans.

The CEO recommended governors to follow DNCG on social media to receive updates on the wide range of experiences and successes of both students and staff. The College's postings on LinkedIn provide very good coverage.

Members noted that North Lindsey College's social media activity has been ranked number one by Edurank in September 2022, a rise of 33 places.

Edurank reviews and ranks the social media analytics of some 480 UK and Ireland colleges and updates its rankings on a monthly basis. Doncaster College's September ranking was 111, a rise of 60 places on the previous month.

The CEO reported that the North Lindsey campus Open Evening on 18th October had gone well and had excellent attendance. The CEO confirmed that the first Doncaster campus Open Evening would take place in January.

Doncaster University City Working Group

Members noted that updates on this item are considered confidential, the notes are kept as a separate record by the Clerk to the Corporation.

The CEO provided members with an update on the DfE Funding and Accountability Consultation.

The CEO provided members with an update on work being done on performance monitoring and reporting. Members discussed what this means for reporting to the Board.

The CEO updated members on the progress with the strategic planning cycle and outlined the timeline and plans for the process. Members noted that strategic planning is on the agenda for the Governors development day on 5th December. The CEO confirmed that the final draft of the Strategic Plan will come to the Board for approval in July 2023.

Members asked what measures the Group had in place to support with the cost-of-living crisis. The CPO outlined several financial, health and wellbeing support measures that have been put in place for students, staff and governors.

The Chair reminded governors that they are able to attend meetings of committees they do not sit on if they wish. Governors just need to contact the Clerk to confirm their attendance.

The Board thanked the CEO his extensive and detailed report.

6 Performance Update

Members received a report from the Principal/DCEO providing an outline of predicted achievement for 2021/22 at headline level and an indication of enrolments to date for 2022/23. Members noted that all achievements will soon be final and will be reported in full to the FE and HE CPQ committee meetings. The detailed report will include trends, national averages / benchmarks, where available, and show any equality gaps. A full update on enrolment and income will also be reported to these committees including any financial risks to the budget for this academic year.

7 HE Fees and Tuition Fees Policy

The Board received a report from the Principal/DCEO and the CFO on HE Fees and Tuition Fees Policy. Members were asked to ratify the 2022/23 fees and approve a 5% increase in HE course fees for 2023/24. Members discussed the proposed increase in HE course fees noting the increasing costs incurred by the Group, mitigation and potential strategic risks.

Members noted that HE course fees had remained static for 2 years. Members asked about market positioning and were reassured that the increased fees will still be competitive in the market and represent value for students.

Resolution: The Board ratified the 2022/23 fees and approved a 5% increase in HE course fees for 2023/24.

8 Management Accounts End July 2022

Members received a report on Management Accounts from the CFO providing a draft year end position for the financial year 1st August 2021 to 31st July 2022. Members noted that the final position is subject to final ILR14 and External Audit.

The CFO provided members with a summary of the headline position. Members noted the following points:

- 'Outstanding' Financial Health
- Banking Covenant Compliance
- Draft outturn deficit of £1.25m vs. budget deficit of £213k. However, draft outturn is in line with the forecast deficit from April 22
- Ignoring Pension Adjustments, Surplus of £1.17m
- Net cash surplus from Operating Activities £2.65m
- £878k AEB and £325k Apprenticeship Income subject to final ILR ratification
- LGPS Pension Deficit of £33.2m now a £2.6m surplus
- Strong Balance Sheet, Net Assets£48.6m, Cash Reserves £14.2m
- However, £1.28m of outstanding debt, & £777k bad debt provision
- Cavanagh Kelly external audit going well.

The CFO summarised that whilst the financial outturn is not in line with budget, the draft outturn position still represents a strong financial position for the Group and solid financial footing. However, early indicators paint a more challenging picture for 2022-23 which will become clearer as student enrolment is finalised. The CFO gave an update on the Group's financial position in relation to rising energy costs and the energy price cap. Members noted that a further detailed update will be provided to the Finance & Resources Committee at the end of the month with some options for reducing the shortfall, but it is anticipated that significant in year savings will be required.

Members thanked the CFO for the report.

9 Corporation Board Self-Assessment Review 2021-22 and Governance QIP 2022-23

Members were asked to consider the Governance Self-Assessment 2021-22 report and Governance QIP 2022-23 for approval.

Members noted that the Governance Self-Assessment for 2021-22 has been completed for inclusion in the College-wide SAR. The information in the draft Board Self-Assessment is taken from the outcome of a gap analysis against the Association of College's Code of Good Governance for

English Colleges, the outturn on the 2021-22 Governance QIP, feedback from the recent Ofsted inspection and the annual Board Self-Assessment survey undertaken in June 2022.

The Clerk explained that areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment have been incorporated into an action plan, which has been added to the action plan arising from a gap analysis of the Association of College's Code of Good Governance for English Colleges, to form a new Governance QIP for 2022-23.

Members noted that both the draft Board Self-Assessment Report for 2021-22 and Governance QIP 2021/22 were reviewed by the Search & Governance Committee on 21 September and are recommended for Board approval.

Resolution: The Board approved the Board Self-Assessment Report for 2021-22 and the Governance QIP 2022-23.

10 Updates to Corporation Documentation

Members considered proposed updates to Governance documents. The Clerk explained that following the change of title of the Director of Governance to that of Clerk to the Corporation, there is a need to make changes to some core governance documents. These include the Instrument and Articles of Government, Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, and the Search and Governance Committee's Terms of Reference. It is suggested that changes to other Governance policies to reflect the change of the Director of Governance's title, be addressed when the respective policies are due for review.

Members noted that in addition to the change in title of the Director of Governance, there were a few other minor updates.

Members noted that the proposed updates to the Instrument and Articles of Government, Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, and the Search and Governance Committee's Terms of Reference were reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee on 21 September and are recommended to the Corporation Board for approval.

Resolution: The Board approved the updated Instruments and Articles of Government.

Resolution: The Board approved the updated Corporation Standing Orders.

Resolution: The Board approved the updated Search & Governance Committee Terms of Reference.

Resolution: The Board approved the updated Scheme of Delegation.

11 Corporation Board Succession Plan and Development Plan

Members reviewed the proposed Board Succession Plan 2022-25 and the Board Development Plan for 2022-23. Members noted these plans have

been developed in accordance with one of the actions arising from the analysis of compliance against the Association of College's Code of Good Governance and the new Governance QIP 2022-23.

Members noted that the proposed Board Succession Plan 2022-25 and the Board Development Plan for 2022-23 were considered by the Search and Governance Committee on 21 September and are recommended to the Corporation Board for approval.

Resolution: The Board approved the Board Succession Plan 2022-25 and the Board Development Plan for 2022-23.

12 Review of Confidential Minutes 2021/22

Members reviewed the schedule of confidential minutes of meetings held between December 2021 and July 2022. Members noted that the Search and Governance Committee had considered the schedule of confidential minutes and recommend the publication of minutes no longer deemed to be confidential to the Corporation Board.

Resolution: The Board approved the publication of minutes no longer deemed to be confidential.

13 External Board Review

Members received a report from the Search and Governance Committee recommending a timeline for commissioning and conducting an External Board Review. Members noted that three-yearly external Board Reviews are now mandated for all colleges and must take place between 2021 and 2024 (academic years).

Members noted that it is recommended by the Search and Governance Committee that the College's first external Board Review be commissioned in the Spring Term of the academic year 2023/24 with scoping and planning to begin in the during the next academic year.

Resolution: The Board approve the recommended timeline in relation to the commissioning of the College's first external Board Review.

14 Written Resolutions and Chair's Actions

This item was provided for information. There were no points of discussion raised by Governors.

15 Minutes of Committee Meetings:

Members noted the minutes of the meetings of the Finance & Resources committee on 27 June, the Committee Chairs / Vice Chairs on 21st September, the Search and Governance Committee on 21st September, and the Audit and Risk Committee on 28th September.

Members received feedback reports from the Chairs of the Search and Governance committee and the Audit and Risk Committee. Members noted the addition of reporting on new/emerging strategic risks arising during the business of the committee meetings. Committee Chairs were asked to

consult the Clerk if they would like further explanation on completing this section during future committee meetings.

16 Any Other Business

The Chief People Officer recorded two items of any other business.

Firstly, to pass on thanks from Karen Hackett, School Improvement Officer (Safeguarding) at North Lincolnshire Council. Karen thanked the Corporation Board for their participation in the safeguarding training and for their engagement and enthusiasm for safeguarding improvement.

Secondly, the CPO reiterated to governors that their health and wellbeing was as important to the College as all other members of the College community. The CPO reminded governors that they have access to the Vivup app which provides a range of health, wellbeing and lifestyle benefits, including mental health support. Governors were asked to contact Claire Houlden, Executive Governance PA, if they required assistance accessing the site.

17 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation Board is scheduled for Monday 12th December 2022, at 5.30 pm in the Lindsey Suite, North Lindsey College.

Sharon Harmon
Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: (Chair) **Date:**

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	Minute	Action	Responsibility	Date Due
19/10/22	4. Conf Mins	Follow up action relating to the formation of a Task and Finish Group to include Governors and members of SLT.	Chair CEO Principal	12/12/22