

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION BOARD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 24TH MARCH 2025

Present:

Governors:

Angela Briggs (Chair)	Emma Kirk (Staff Governor)
Ruth Brook	Philippa Poland
Greg Clarke	John Rees (CEO/Principal)
Sue Craggs	Mark Swales
Dan Fell	Lee Walker
Peter Grant (via Teams)	Lizzie Brown (Student Governor)
Helen Kirby-Hawkins (via Teams)	

The quorum for the meeting was eight members. The meeting was quorate.

In attendance:

Danny Fenwick	Deputy Principal
Sharon Harmon	Clerk to the Corporation
Rachel Maguire	Chief Operating Officer, People and Information (via Teams)
Barrie Shipley	Chief Operating Officer, Finance and Infrastructure

The meeting took place in the Boardroom at Doncaster College/via MS Teams and started at 5.30 pm.

Item	Minutes	Action
1	Apologies	
	Apologies for absence were received from Bella Burton-Mano (Student Governor), Rebecca Chamley (Staff Governor), Sam Hewson (Student Governor), Karen Jackson (Governor) and Preetha Kumar (Governor).	
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.	
3	Minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 11th December 2024 and any matters arising	
	The minutes of the Corporation Board meetings held on 11th December 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
	There were no matters arising.	
4	Feedback from Committee Meetings	
	The Corporation Board received committee Chairs' feedback reports from the Search and Governance committee meeting held on 10 th February 2025, the CQP Committee meeting on held on 12 th February, the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 5 th March, the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 10 th March, the People	

and Transformation Committee meeting held on 12th March and the HEPQ Committee meeting held on 17th March.

5 CEO Report

The CEO provided an update report covering a range of whole College updates both internal and external, including Ofsted inspection outcomes, recent funding announcements and early proposals for the next phase of the capital strategy. Members noted and discussed the contents of the report.

Members considered and discussed the Ofsted inspection outcomes following the recent inspection visit. Members had a full discussion of the many strengths identified within the inspection report and reflected on planned actions in relation to areas highlighted for improvement. The Deputy Principal outlined the next steps and members discussed quality review activities and considered stakeholder feedback. Members were assured by planned actions to drive continuous improvement across the Group including areas identified for further development. Members discussed how the Corporation Board can support with the next steps. Members noted and discussed the Ofsted consultation on a proposed new inspection framework and considered the proposals in the context of the quality review cycle. Members agreed the Ofsted inspection outcomes were overall very positive, highlighting the strengths and quality of DN Colleges Group. Members recognised the hard work and dedication of staff and recorded their thanks.

Members noted and discussed updates in the report covering people, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, partnerships and funding. Members noted the appointment of a new Vice Principal, Business Growth, Skills and Partnerships. Members noted and discussed the update on proposals for potential new capital projects, aligned to the key training and skills needs in priority sectors.

The CEO provided members with a full update on a recent incident at Doncaster College. The CEO outlined the College's response and the follow up measures implemented to prevent any future incident. Members were reassured by the College's response and the tightening of measures to prevent future incident.

6 Strategic Plan Update

The CEO presented a Strategic Plan Progress Report providing progress updates against each of the strategic plan projects confirmed for 2024/25. Members noted the contents of the report providing a snapshot of key actions and impact to date. Members sought further detail on the status of some projects. The CEO explained in greater detail the status of projects. Members were assured there is good progress being made against projects overall but acknowledged that the timing of both the Ofsted inspection and some senior staff changes had delayed activity in some areas. Members were assured by planned actions and progress against strategic plan projects.

7 Performance Report - Curriculum Recruitment, Performance & Quality

The Deputy Principal presented an update report covering curriculum, recruitment, performance, quality planning, teaching and learning, assessment and progress, stakeholder feedback and external quality assurance across provision. Members noted that performance and quality reports had been presented and discussed in detail at both the CPQ committee and the HEPQ committee meetings.

Members considered and discussed the contents of the report. Members noted that overall recruitment, attendance, retention and achievement remained strong across provision. Members noted some recruitment challenges in adult provision and were assured by the action plan in place to address any shortfall. Members were assured that students at high risk of not achieving are being managed well with rigorous interventions to support. Members were pleased to note that the College had successfully secured a wind turbine technician apprentices contract with Orsted. Members noted the detailed funding update and discussed further development opportunities.

Members noted and discussed the update on quality activities and quality planning across provision. Members discussed stakeholder feedback and were assured by the overall positive feedback. Members noted the update on external quality assurance reports and were assured that actions and recommendations are being followed up.

Members thanked the Deputy Principal for the update report.

8 Management Accounts End February 2025

The Chief Operating Officer, Finance and Infrastructure (COOFI) presented the Management Accounts update report providing an update on the Group's financial performance to 28 February 2025 and the current forecast outturn for the 2024-25 financial year.

Members noted the advised variations to income and expenditure and the current projections. Members were assured that overall, income is broadly in line with budget, with forecast income shortfalls mitigated by continued underspends on both pay and no-pay expenditure. Members noted an overall positive variance to the year-to-date performance tracking an operating surplus vs budget deficit. Members noted the update on in-year and future year additional funding. Members were assured by the overall strong financial position and forecast Financial Health rating 'Good' and banking covenant compliance achieved.

Members thanked the COOFI for the update report.

9 Pay Award – all staff

The COOFI provided an update on the staff pay award negotiations. Members were advised that since the Special Corporation Board meeting held on 24th February, all unions had voted in favour of accepting a pay offer, within the agreed financial framework approved by the Corporation Board. Members were pleased an agreement had been reached and noted the implementation timeframe.

10 Tuition and Exam Fees Policy 2025/26

Members received and considered the Tuition and Exam Fees Policy 2025/26. Members were assured the fees set out in the policy were in line with the HE fees for 2025-26 approved by the Corporation Board at the Corporation Board meeting on 11th December 2024. Members agreed the policy was appropriate.

Resolution: The Board approved the 2025/26 Tuition Fees Policy.

11 Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2023/24

Members received and considered the Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2023/24. Members noted the purpose of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report is to outline how DN Colleges Group (DNCG) complies with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, the Equality Act (Amendment) Regulations 2023 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Members were advised that by publishing this report, the College complies with Section 149 of the Equality Act, and its general duties and meets its specific duty under the PSED, that requires the publication of equality information annually by 30 March.

Members considered and discussed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2023/24. Members noted that the People and Transformation Committee considered the report in detail at the committee meeting held on 12th March 2025, and recommend the report for Corporation Board approval.

Members were assured that the College has continued its good practice and set equality objectives after a detailed analysis of the data for staff and learners and monitored progress against the objectives as identified in this report. Members recognised and supported the actions that the report identifies and commented on the high quality of the report.

Resolution: The Corporation Board approved the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2023/24.

12 Board and Committee Membership Update

Members noted the current membership of the Corporation Board, Subsidiaries Boards and the Corporation Board Committees. Members noted governors and directors with terms of office ending in the 2024/25 academic year. Members noted the number of forthcoming governor vacancies on the Corporation Board and discussed recruitment strategies. The Clerk provided assurance that a comprehensive recruitment programme was currently underway to fill external governor vacancies.

13 Written Resolutions and Chair's Actions

Members noted the Chair's actions and Written Resolutions which had been approved since the last Corporation Board meeting on 11th December 2024.

14 Minutes of Committee Meetings:

Members received and noted the draft minutes of the meetings of the Search and Governance committee meeting held on 10th February 2025, the CQP Committee meeting on held on 12th February 2025 and the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 5th March 2025.

15 Any Other Business

Members noted that this would be Mark Swales' last meeting in attendance with the Corporation Board as he will not be at the July meeting and his final term of office on the Board ends on 31st July 2025. The Chair, on behalf of the Board and the College, thanked Mark for his tremendous contribution and commitment during his time on the Board.

16 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members noted the next meeting of the Corporation Board is scheduled for Wednesday 9th July 2025, 5.30 pm, at Doncaster College.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Sharon Harmon
Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: (Chair) **Date:**

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	Minute	Action	Responsibility	Date Due