MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND PEOPLE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2026

Present

Angela Briggs	Governor
Sue Craggs	Governor (Chair)
Andrew Oldham	Governor
Lee Walker	Governor
Mike Welsh	Governor

The quorum for the meeting was 40% of membership to include at least 3 External Governors. The meeting was quorate throughout.

In attendance

Karen Dainty	Associate Director EDI
Sharon Harmon	Clerk of Corporation
Rachel Maguire	Chief Operating Officer, People and Information

The meeting was held on MS Teams and commenced at 5.00 pm.

Item	**Minute**	**Action**
1	**Apologies**	
	Apologies for absence were received from John Rees (CEO and 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 meeting of the Search, Governance and People Committee held on 24th September 2025 and any matters arising**	
	The minutes of the last meeting of the Search, Governance and People Committee held on 24th September 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
	Members noted that all the actions from the previous meeting had been completed.	
4	**Gender Pay Gap Report 2025**	
	The Chief Operating Officer, People and Information (COOPI) and the Associate Director EDI presented the Gender Pay Gap Report 2025. Members noted that the report outlines the DN Colleges Group's, including Optime Support Limited (OSL), compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017) and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Members considered the contents of the report including the detailed data for 2024/25 and actions outlined in	

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relation to the Group's statutory Gender Pay Gap reporting requirements for 2025/26.

Members discussed the contents of the report looking at gender pay gap data, including mean and median pay gaps, bonus pay gaps, and quartile distribution. Members were assured that both DNCG and OSL sets of data show year-on-year improvement in mean pay gaps, though median gaps remain above sector benchmarks. Members discussed bonus pay noting that fewer than 3% of staff received bonuses therefore figures represent a very small sample size. Members asked about the staff receiving bonuses and the COOPI explained these were primarily Business Development staff members. The COOPI further explained that all staff members receiving bonuses work on the same bonuses structure ensuing equity.

Members discussed the trends in data and considered the context and changes driving trends. Members discussed staff progression throughout the organisation and supports in place for staff. Members were assured by the positive steps undertaken with a range of initiatives that include leadership development programmes with 66.67% female delegates, enhanced inclusive recruitment, and menopause support initiatives. Members congratulated the Group on the considerable work to address the gender pay gap. Members recognised, discussed and supported the actions that the Gender Pay Gap Report identifies for 2025/26 to address gender imbalances and improve pay equity.

Members commented on the high quality of the report and thanked the Associate Director EDI. Members noted that any typographical and formatting errors would be corrected in the final report.

Resolution: The Search, Governance and People Committee endorsed the DNCG Gender Pay Gap Report 2025 for recommendation to the Corporation Board for approval.

5 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2024-25

The COOPI and the Associate Director EDI presented the Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report 2024/25. Members noted that 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 assured 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 contents of the report. Members discussed the EDI key achievements and the EDI future priorities 2025-26. Members discussed and sought further context and detail behind the data presented for 2024/25. Members noted and discussed the high percentage of learners with a declared disability. Members discussed the robust supports in place for high needs learners noting the high achievement for these learners. Members discussed the conversion rate from application to appointment of BAME staff and the context behind the data. Members discussed and supported the positive initiatives that are being undertaken in 2025/26, including working in collaboration with the AoC Equality Exchange and

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the Doncaster Anti-Racism Group, developing CPD Resources on disability inclusion, conducting an EDI Audit and further developing peer support groups for staff and students. Members discussed trend analysis and how to effectively measure the impact of initiatives. Members were assured that further KPIs and trend analysis measures are being developed for future reporting and as part of the Support Accountability Framework (SAF).

Action: The COOPI and Associate Director EDI agreed to develop a specific EDI monitoring document for Governors and SLT as part of the SAF KPI work in the autumn term.

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 considered and supported the College's Equality Objectives. Members commented on the high quality of the report. Members recognised and endorsed the actions that the report identifies.

Resolution: The Search, Governance and People Committee endorsed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2024/25 for recommendation to the Corporation Board for approval.

6 Staff Sickness Policy

The COOPI advised the Committee that the Sickness Absence Policy has been updated to reflect legislative changes to statutory sick pay (SSP) implemented as a result of the new Employment Rights Act 2025. Members noted the update to the policy. Members noted that the employee may be entitled to SSP if they satisfy the relevant statutory requirements. The rate of SSP is set by the government in April each year. SSP is payable from the first day of absence and may be payable for up to 28 weeks. Members noted the changes come into effect on 6th April 2026.

Members thank the COOPI for the update.

Note: *The COOPI and the Associate Director EDI left the meeting.*

7 Committee Risk Register

Members received and considered the Group Risk Register. Members noted that the committee has specific oversight of one risk in relation to 'Governance'. Members considered the controls, assurances, mitigations, and planned actions in relation to the Governance risk. Members discussed updates on governor recruitment and induction. Members were assured that the induction programme for the newly appointed governors was underway. Members were assured that a recruitment programme is underway to fill remaining vacancies on the Board. Members noted that the residual risk score currently sits within the target risk appetite score. Members agreed that the current risk score remains appropriate.

8 Board and Committee Membership Update

Members received and reviewed the Corporation Board and committees' membership update report. Members noted that since the last meeting of the SG&P committee, two External Governors have stepped down from the Board and one new

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	External Governor, N Colclough had been appointed to the Board. Members were advised there are currently two External Governor vacancies on the Board. Members discussed and agreed a recruitment strategy to fill the vacancies. Members noted that since the last meeting one FE Student Governor vacancy had been filled and there is one FE Student Governor vacancy remaining on the Board. The Clerk outlined the ongoing recruitment programme to fill the FE Student Governor vacancy.	
	Members were advised that D Fell, External Governor, will complete his first term of office on 31 July 2026. Members considered and discussed appointing D Fell for a second term of office. Members acknowledged D Fell's valued contribution to the Corporation Board and agreed to recommend D Fell's appoint for a second 4 year term of office to the Corporation Board approval, pending confirmation of D Fell's availability for a second term of office.	
	Action: The Clerk agreed to contact D Fell to ascertain his availability for a second term of office.	**Clerk**
	Members reviewed and agreed updates to the Board Committee's membership. Members agreed to invite N Colclough to join the Audit and Risk Committee. Members reviewed DNGC Subsidiary Companies Boards memberships and noted that since the last meeting of the committee P Poland had joined the Kingsway Consulting Ltd Board. The Clerk advised members that and Helen Kirby-Hawkins is nominated to join the Optime Support Ltd Board and would be joining the Board in due course. Members noted updates to Link Governor roles for the academic year 2025/26. Members agreed to invite Link Governors to join committee meetings for any items covering reports linked to their Link Governor roles.	
	Action: The Clerk agreed to invite Link Governors to join committee meeting for items under discussion pertinent to their Link Governor roles.	
9	**Governance Development Plan Update**	
	Members received and reviewed an update on progress against the objectives set out in the Governance Development Plan for 2025-26. Members were assured by good progress against targets.	
10	**Committee Chair's Report to Corporation Board**	
	Members considered the business of the meeting and recorded key items and any changes to strategic risks identified for feedback to the Corporation Board in the Committee Chair's Report. The following items were highlighted for inclusion:	
	Members agreed there was no change to Governance risk profile following the business of the meeting. Members received assurance from the successful appointment and induction of new Governors. Members received assurance that a robust recruitment programme is in place to fill the remaining vacancies on the Corporation Board.	
11	**Any Other Business**	
	There were no items of any other business raised.	

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12 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Search, Governance and People Committee is scheduled for Wednesday 13 May 2026, 5.00 pm, MS Teams

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm.

Sharon Harmon
Clerk to Corporation

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	**Item**	**Action**	**Responsibility**	**Date Due**
04/02/26	7	The COOPI and Associate Director EDI agreed to develop a specific EDI monitoring document for Governors and SLT as part of the SAF KPI work in the autumn term.	COOPI and Associate Director EDI	Autumn Term 2026
04/02/26	8	The Clerk to contact D Fell to ascertain his availability for a second term of office.	Clerk	Feb 2026
04/02/26	8	The Clerk to invite Link Governors to join committee meeting for items under discussion pertinent to their Link Governor roles.	Clerk	Ongoing