



Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Thursday 20th October 2022 at 5pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Sean Lyons, Chair
 Andrew Cropley, Principal/CEO
 Alison Barker
 Charles Heaton
 Rebecca Joyce
 Neil McDonald
 Spencer Moore
 Jane Peacock
 Sheik Rayhan
 Sardip Sandhu
 Kate Truscott
 Kia Shaw
 Tony Westwater
 Elizabeth Whitehead
 John Winfield

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Director of Governance
 Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience
 Jon Fearon, Finance Director
 Matt Vaughan, Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality
 Gavin Peake, Director: IT, Estates & Learning Resources
 Jane Fishwick, Assistant Principal: Academic, Creative, Community, Digital and Professional Studies (for agenda item 6)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.

2 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from David Gillies, Ben Owen, Andrew Spencer, Keith Spiers, Steve Sutton, Angela Newton-Soanes and Sian Geeson. The three new student governors and Alison Barker were

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

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welcomed to their first meeting.

The chair noted that this was the final meeting for Tony Westwater and Sardip Sandhu, it being the case that they are due to conclude their four-year term of office this month.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH JULY 2022

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2022.

There were no matters arising.

4 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The board were happy to note the comprehensive update provided.

5 TEL AND DIGITAL STRATEGY – 2021/22 YEAREND SUMMARY AND 2022/23 TARGETS

The assistant principal drew the board's attention to her detailed written report, and key matters highlighted were:

- All of the KPIs set for 2021/22 have been achieved and are RAG-rated as green.
- 2022/23 sees some new performance indicators introduced.
- IT security is a significant focus.
- The digital strategy has been a focus in the recent staff development days.
- Student engagement and development has been a challenge because of the system changes.
- The college has now appointed all staff required and there is potential for a paid work placement.
- The college would like to see more students joining the student group.
- The team undertook a pilot with catering staff yesterday, and only one out of the seven were at level 1 in terms of essential digital skills, which means there is a lot to do to support. The team are very enthusiastic in terms of their personal development. There were also some security issues identified which are being addressed.
- The college is doing more work with Mansfield District Council and there is a great level of engagement.
- The college is now doing more to reach out into the community. A challenge from one governor was whether or not the college can use a learning company to support this.
- The team are running some 'demystifying' sessions within the

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community.

Governors who had attended the 'meet the staff' session prior to the board meeting asked what the position is regarding equipment availability and distribution. The board were given assurance that there are several hundred more devices on order, and it was confirmed that there is also a need to develop some additional fixed resources. The board were advised that there were some timetabling issues in 2021/22; therefore, the plan is to have all digital sessions timetabled as a priority alongside maths and English. Governors were advised that there are 3,000 laptops available within the organisation, but it was acknowledged that there is more that can be done to make sure that staff are aware of availability.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

(Jane Fishwick left the meeting at 5.25pm)

6 BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS – 2021/22 YEAREND

The principal introduced this item and drew the board's attention to the detailed written report. Key matters highlighted were:

- Only one dynamic measure was RAG-rated as red at the yearend; however, there are a few that are only just in the amber bracket.
- A significant contributor to this is the need to turn good teaching and learning into good exam results.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

7 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS PROPOSED FOR 2022/23

The principal introduced this item and drew governors' attention to the detailed written report.

1) Strategic objectives and aims

Governors were invited to provide feedback and comment on those proposed. One suggestion made and agreed was to identify the need to respond to employer requirements alongside the college remaining as a 16-18 provider. It was suggested that this could be incorporated within an existing objective. A challenge from one governor was that the document is very linear in presentation and that it would be helpful to show how the objectives drop down from the aims. A challenge from the board was to pictorially show how they all link together.

2) Balanced scorecard

Principal

Dec. 2022

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The principal indicated that the team have tried to convert these into key KPIs and explained that some were still being populated. Governors were invited to participate in the target setting discussions.

Governors

Nov. 2022

A challenge from the Workforce Development Committee was noted in the minutes in relation to clarity on the boundary between items turning from amber or green, i.e. the tolerance levels, and whether they are too large and need to be reconsidered. The principal confirmed that this would be included in the discussions that governors have been invited to as part of the process to finalise the KPIs.

AGREED: in principle, to approve the strategic objectives, balanced scorecard and annual KPIs proposed for 2022/23 as presented.

8 QUALITY AND STANDARDS

In the absence of the Standards Committee chair and vice chair, the principal provided an overview. He drew the board's attention to the detailed minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2022 and the summary report from the chair. Key matters highlighted were:

- Committee discussions had a significant focus on exam results. A-Level results were disappointing in all but a few subjects.
- Some improvements were seen in relation to GCSE Maths results, but the college is still not where it wants to be
- Higher grades are also not where the college wants them to be.
- Areas of assurance and areas for further review set out in the chair's summary note are clear.

A question and challenge from one governor was whether or not it is possible to use teachers more in the deep dive processes. It was confirmed that it is possible but does present logistical challenges. The intention is to use the 'teaching to the top' group of teachers first.

It was also suggested at the meeting that student surveys could be done in a different way so that they are more effective, e.g. not on phones as this can be distracting. Student governors indicated that, whilst students do want to give their opinions, there is perhaps currently too much freedom given to opt in or out of the process.

One governor asked whether the deep dive planned for the Inspire and Achieve Foundation has been scheduled. The vice principal confirmed that it has.

Governors' attention was particularly drawn to the fact that the committee were advised that the overall SAR grade may be 'requires improvement' rather than 'good'; however, assurance was given that extensive work continues to improve the situation.

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In relation to maths and English, one governor asked what an ideal trajectory is. The vice principal indicated that the college is stronger in English, with 80% achieving +1 grades and 40% +2 grades. The position in maths is 50% at +1 and 20% at +2. English outcomes were described as strong, whereas maths outcomes are not quite there yet. Governors were reminded that quite a high benchmark has been, and continues to be, set. A challenge from board was whether or not there are any lessons learned that are being acted upon. Staff confirmed that there are, and an example given was embedding maths and English within the contextual in vocational delivery. The board were reminded that the flux and churn within the maths department will have had a negative impact. The board were reminded that there have been some challenges because of the TAGs and the CAGs, with some historic inflation. This has impacted and will continue to have an impact in 2022/23. The national position for grade 4 in maths and English is 28%. WNC's position is 28.4% and, therefore, is quite similar to national. A challenge from one governor was that this means the targets set have to be balanced and realistic. They felt that, whilst they should be a 'push target', they should also be achievable. Governors commented that all children, no matter what year group they have sat in, have had disruption and, therefore, there is likely to be a long tail. However, it was acknowledged that the college will be looking at real exam grades as the starting point from at least next year.

Governors were then provided with an opportunity to watch the 'talking heads' recording. It was explained that the focus is on the teaching and learning experience within A Levels, which will give a good insight in to the A-Level experience. Comments and observations made in the video were:

- Courses are very interesting
- A big change from secondary school
- Students have more freedom
- There is more creative freedom
- Standards expected are higher
- There were a number of staff changes last year, particularly in sociology
- I learnt a lot
- Found the work interesting
- Work is now starting to make more sense
- Everyone is really nice
- I have been able to fit in well
- I like the environment
- Teachers are respectful
- Teachers are better than in secondary school
- They are really helpful and brilliant
- They teach in a variety of ways
- They are fun and have a sense of humour
- They set high expectations
- There are some strict rules

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- In relation to homework, I have been given enough to do and can ask for extra. I am provided with a week to complete.
- In relation to deadlines, teachers are lenient if there are personal issues
- I like the one-week deadline to work to
- We are given plenty of time and it be extended if needed.
- In terms of future plans, they include:
 - Law
 - Teaching at university
 - Paediatric nursing at university
 - Becoming an English teacher
 - Policing degree or apprenticeship
 - Business management
 - Detective
 - Degree apprenticeship in accountancy
 - Attending a college in America.
- In terms of improvements, these include:
 - Buses – they are too busy and there are some issues in terms of student behaviour
 - More homework
 - More support for dyslexia
 - Delay in dyslexia tests
 - More use of Teams and Class Notebook
 - Provision of a list of the clubs so that it is easier to access and join
 - In relation to trips, there is not much notice provided and there could be more information. An example given was the Iceland trip in geography.
 - More study group activities
 - More one-to-one time with teachers
 - It is a big jump from GCSEs and the work is ‘thrown at you straight away’. There could be a more gradual lead in.
- In terms of final thoughts, these included:
 - I am loving it
 - A lot better than school
 - A more grown-up environment
 - There are more breaks and free time
 - An amazing experience
 - Great college
 - More mature atmosphere
 - Emphasis is on students
 - Students have more responsibility.

Governors discussed the feedback provided and agreed that they could see the evidence of staff turbulence last year, particularly in sociology and psychology. A question and challenge from the board was in terms of the lack of dyslexia support mentioned, and they asked whether there is more that can be done. The vice principal advised that it really does

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depend where the individual students are on the screener and that not all will get one-to-one support. She indicated that students with mild dyslexia wouldn't routinely get one-to-one support. She agreed to look into the matter and then provide an update at the next meeting.

VP CESE

Dec. 2022

Governors were then invited to consider the Quality Improvement Action Plan, and key matters highlighted were:

- In terms of key actions, there have been some changes to the areas of focus. The new foci include:
 - retention – the college can do better as there are some areas of concern
 - teaching to the top/high grades
- In terms of the areas that have been removed, these include:
 - tutorials
 - leadership and management
- Areas that will always be key and have a critical focus include:
 - English and maths
 - apprenticeship provision

A question from one governor was that, on the front of the QIAP in the section headed 'overall judgements', it looks like the position has been downgraded since January; therefore, they asked where the college currently is. The vice principal expressed the view that the college is currently at 'good'. It was believed that the college slipped to 'RI' when the August reviews were undertaken; however, a lot has been done since then.

Governors' attention was then drawn to the SAR 2021/22 timetable, which was noted. The board were advised that there are only three validation sessions which currently do not have a governor allocated to them to participate. Volunteers were identified at the meeting, which would ensure that every area of college provision would have a governor contributing to validation. It was agreed that papers for each session would be circulated in advance and a briefing/guidance note provided.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the chair's summary report
- b) to note the content of the detailed minutes of the meeting
- c) to note the content of the QIAP
- d) to note the content of the safeguarding and Prevent annual report for 2021/22
- e) to note the timetable for 2021/22 SAR finalisation.

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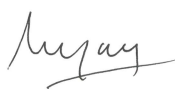
KCSIE – 2022 UPDATE

The vice principal provided a presentation and explained that this was an annual update for governors. Key matters highlighted were:

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- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- The safeguarding policy and procedure:
 - reflects the whole college approach to peer-on-peer abuse (p. 8-9)
 - reflects reporting systems for concerns (p. 10-12)
 - describes procedures in accordance with guidance (p. 4)
 - refers to local arrangements for safeguarding (p. 4, p. 12-13)
 - refers to online, SEND, and serious violence (p. 5-10)
 - is reviewed annually (Standards Committee, September 2022)
 - is available publicly.
- In addition, there are:
 - the positive behaviour policy (reviewed annually)
 - the staff code of conduct (revised 2021; reviewed annually)
 - safe recruitment processes (internal audit 2021 and audited annually by the DSL)
 - information-sharing and the nature of safeguarding information as linked to GDPR
 - staff training and development (mandatory induction, annual updates)
 - embedding safeguarding within teaching and learning (tutorial programme and curriculum content)
 - online safety measures (filtering and monitoring, Smoothwall)
 - the management of concerns about staff (within safeguarding procedures, central log)
 - the restraint policy (use of reasonable force), reviewed annually
 - processes for the use of premises for non-college activity.
- The designated safeguard lead:
 - is a senior member of staff
 - has lead responsibility for safeguarding
 - has deputy DSLs
 - liaises with external safeguarding partners
 - is always available within term time and college hours
 - facilitates out of hours arrangements
 - has a training update every two years

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- has regular and ongoing CPD.
- Accountability of DSL:
 - Oversight of cases
 - Escalation to the principal and link governor where needed
 - Records
 - Summary of concern
 - Chronology of actions
 - Decisions and outcomes
 - Storage – confidential and accessed by only those that need to
 - Transfer of files and transition information
 - Training and raising awareness
 - Oversight of the progress of young people who have, or have had, a social worker, and engendering a culture of high aspirations for all
 - Linking with the senior mental health lead
- The role of governors:
 - They have a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements and **must** ensure they comply with their duties under legislation. They **must** have regard to KCSiE, ensuring that policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law.
 - Senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take **leadership** responsibility.
 - They facilitate a whole college approach.
- What is new this year:
 - It should be ensured that all governors receive **appropriate** safeguarding and child protection training – they should be equipped with the knowledge to provide **strategic challenge** to test and assure themselves that policies and procedures are effective and support the delivery of a **robust whole-college approach to safeguarding**. Training should be regularly updated.
 - Awareness of obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 and awareness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Human Rights Act:
 - It is unlawful for the college to act in a way that is incompatible with the convention.
 - The right to freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment.
 - The right to respect for private and family life (protect individuals’ physical and psychological integrity).
 - The right to education.
 - Harassment, violence, and abuse may breach any of these rights; what processes and procedures do we have in place to prevent such breaches in college?

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- The Equality Act:
 - Harassment: must not unlawfully discriminate against individuals with protected characteristics.
 - How are we supporting students with regard to their protected characteristics?
 - We can take positive action where it is shown to be proportionate to deal with a particular issue.
- Online – governors should:
 - do all they reasonably can to limit children’s exposure to online risks.
 - ensure that the college has appropriate filtering and monitoring.
 - Ensure that the leadership team have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place.
 - consider the proportionality of systems given the size and age range within the college.

VP CESE 2022/23

In general discussion, a number of matters were discussed and agreed, including:

- Recommendation in relation to the college as a corporate parent to come to a future meeting.
- In relation to online searches, these are to be completed for shortlisted candidates (employees). All agreed that this would help to show a good fit for the organisation and identify whether there are any concerns, e.g. links with other organisations. It was agreed to extend social media searches to governors as well as staff recruitment. In relation to governors, it was agreed that candidates would be asked to complete an application form as well as provide a CV.

In terms of the presentation, one governor asked for more clarification in relation to the term used: ‘may harm’. The vice principal indicated that an example of this could be if a member of staff has taken students out on a trip without following any agreed processes and procedures. Whilst there wasn’t any actual harm, there could have been.

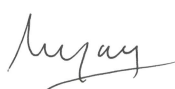
In relation to the reference to low-level concerns, the vice principal indicated that the organisation is looking for patterns and whether there are any organisational issues, i.e. processes and procedures not being followed. In terms of the questions to be answered to test knowledge and understanding, it was agreed that these would be circulated to governors to consider and respond to outside the meeting.

VP CESE Oct. 2022

AGREED: to note the content of the presentation provided.

10 EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience

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presented her detailed written report. Key matters highlighted in relation to progress against the 2021/22 targets included:

- The college's reputation has improved significantly.
- The college has not been able to move as fast as originally envisaged in relation to joint NTU conversations; however, NTU has now committed some resource to this which should help to progress.
- The college has to balance dual priorities, which are employers and the 16-18 curriculum. The college believes that it is asking too many staff to be 'all things to everyone', which is negatively impacting upon the ability to respond quickly enough to meet employer expectations.
- In terms of website development, it is unlikely to be a priority for 2022/23; therefore, the team are looking at how to use LinkedIn as the primary communication method with employers.

In terms of priorities for 2022/23, these include:

- LSIP engagement
- Devolution discussions
- Curriculum areas to try to work agilely with employers.

In general discussion, the board asked for an update on the work being done by the employer advisory panels. The vice principal indicated that the first panel established, which was engineering, has now met three times since September and has plans to meet every couple of months. There are twenty employers on the panels and, routinely, fifteen or sixteen attend. In terms of college representatives at this panel meetings, these include the VP: CESE, Phil Clark, Karen Millward, and board member David Gillies.

A challenge from one member of the board was to formalise the 'reputation feedback' from employers so that there is a good evidence base. A challenge from one governor was to carefully consider what the college wants to be famous for. In discussion, it was agreed that a key aspect of this is to be the service offered. The principal expressed the desire to 'break the mould' and for the college to become the first choice for any business partner and/or student. In addition to this, all agreed that a key aim is for the college to make a difference to the prosperity of the community and that part and parcel of this is being the first place employers come to when they are looking to recruit staff.

In terms of the feedback from employers, the vice principal indicated that an employer survey is undertaken; however, the response rate is not great and, therefore, the intention is to start to use advisory boards more in relation to this.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

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11 AUDIT AND RISK

The Audit Committee chair drew governors' attention to his summary report and was happy to take any questions. He confirmed that the newly populated 2022/23 risk register would be considered in detail by the committee at the next meeting and then presented to board at the December meeting.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the summary report
- b) to note the content of the detailed minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2022
- c) to note the content of the final 2021/22 risk register
- d) to note the need to review the risk appetite associated with each strategic objective now that they have been agreed for 2022/23.

12 WORKFORCE

The committee chair drew governors' attention to the summary report and detailed minutes of the meeting. She advised that areas for further consideration relate to achieving strategic objectives. Key matters are:

- Recruitment and retention – the college is looking at the wraparound offer provided when new people join
- New appraisal process – there is a need to make sure, at an appropriate point in time, that it is making a difference
- New People Strategy – which is to include an EDI section.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the summary report
- b) to note the detailed minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2022
- c) to note the content of the updated People Strategy and action plan
- d) to note the content of the EDI (staff) action plan update.

13 FINANCE AND ESTATES

The committee chair introduced this item and drew the board's attention to the summary note and detailed minutes of the meeting. He confirmed that there were four matters requiring board approval. Matters highlighted were:

- Overall, 2021/22 was a good year.
- The cash position in March 2023 is tight.
- The 2021/22 yearend accounts were provided in draft and are in a different format to that seen historically.
- A contractual allocation increase is proposed to Chameleon.
- The committee discussed cap ex projects, and it was acknowledged that there is a lot taking place.

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- The Chesterfield Road project has had to be redesigned to enable cost management.
- There are lots of bids and projects in the pipeline.
- NTU was identified as an organisation that is slow to pay the college.

In relation to the cash low point challenge, one member of the board asked whether the college will be able to meet the new bank covenants proposed later on the agenda. The finance director expressed the view that the bank has been, and will continue to be, supportive. There are discussions currently ongoing regarding how the bank treats growth and the impact of lagged funding, which is unusual, and they acknowledge this. The board were advised that, if the organisation reaches 5% growth in 16-18 numbers and is successful in securing in-year funding, this could be a benefit of circa £500k. The finance director advised that the college does have capacity to delay the payment profile by one week if or when this is needed. He provided assurance that the plans do not include any breaches at this point in time. He advised that he was also in discussion with the ESFA regarding the timing of planned repayments, i.e. not in December but, instead, later in April when the cash position is improved. He indicated that it has been explained to the ESFA that this is an important way to handle the growth in student numbers seen this year.

One governor commented that it was very positive to eventually see a balance sheet which is in credit.

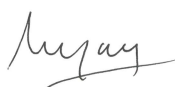
The board were asked to consider the aspects requiring approval, and all agreed that they were self-explanatory and reasonable.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the summary report
- b) to note the detailed minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2022
- c) to note the content of the July 2022 management accounts
- d) to approve an increased subcontract allocation to Chameleon (+£75k)
- e) to approve the updated Estates Strategy
- f) to note the content of the bids and projects report
- g) to approve the green skills flagship and green skills accelerator project
- h) to approve submission of the ESFA growth fund bid
- i) to approve the amendments to the Standing Orders proposed as presented.

14 BANK COVENANTS

The Finance Director presented this item and explained that the changes proposed have come about because the college has now exited intervention and is no longer managed in the same way by the bank. He

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explained that a more standard set of covenants has been proposed and that it is part of the changing relationship. Specifically highlighted was the requirement to increase cash balances. He explained that it is going to be important to invest to grow whilst at the same time being prudent.

Governors' attention was specifically drawn to the format of the resolution required by the bank. Governors were happy to approve.

AGREED:

- a) To approve the draft extract resolution as presented
- b) To approve the signing of the revised bank covenants

15 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The principal presented his detailed report and specifically asked the board to consider the impact statement. He explained that there were two drivers for creating this, including:

- the requirement to review how well the college meets local needs – this is a statutory review required every three years and must be 'published'
- Ofsted

He explained that there were a number of component parts, including:

- a start at the LEP level
- Mansfield and Ashfield community needs
- local context interpretation
- national priorities
- curriculum areas with career opportunities.

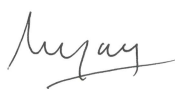
He indicated that it would be helpful for governors to provide a critical input and insight, and it was agreed that governors would email him directly outside of the meeting with any comments and/or observations.

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A challenge from one governor was whether or not it is possible to refer to 'Mansfield, Ashfield and Bolsover', which would then take account of the work being done in partnership with the college. A suggestion made was to refer to 'Mansfield and Ashfield and the surrounding areas'. In terms of feedback, governors all agreed that the table provided as an appendix is really very powerful.

One governor asked for an update on dialogue with the Federation of Small Businesses, who have been commissioned to undertake the LSIP work. The principal indicated that he has met with them twice and that a steering group is now established. The first meeting of the steering group is planned for next week, and it is hoped that there will be some further insight following that.

It was agreed that governor contribution to the document would be provided by the end of the month.

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The principal then provided an update on a number of aspects reported, including:

- Rising Stars – he took the opportunity to thank governors who have offered to be mentors. There are two projects identified, which are ‘energy and sustainability’ and ‘the employer brand’.
- The Business Hour programme was dedicated to WNC as part of the Colleges Week initiative. This was a really brilliant piece of marketing and opportunity to showcase what the college does.
- Uniformed Protective Services participated in the Desert Rat Challenge yesterday and did exceptionally well.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

16

GOVERNANCE

The director of governance presented her written report and invited governors to agree the recommendations. All felt that these were self-explanatory.

AGREED:

- a) to formally ratify the written resolution approval given for the appointment of new governors David Ainsworth and Sam Handley.
- b) to approve the appointment of David Ainsworth as a member of the Finance & Estates Committee
- c) to agree delegated authority to the chair to identify which committee Sam Handley will join.

Governors were then invited to give feedback on any link visits. Comments and observations made were:

- The role description is very helpful.
- The template provided for feedback is good, although an observation made was that within this there is a section headed ‘actions for the board to consider’ and it is not necessarily the case that the loop has been closed in relation to this, although it was acknowledged that this could potentially be more of a discussion for executive rather than board. A challenge from the principal was that it is important that link visits are not seen as a way of circumventing line management and going straight to the executive. It was agreed that, outside the meeting, the Principal and the director of governance would work to develop a ‘loop process’ where it is possible to provide feedback to governors on any issues identified or areas potentially requiring further review.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

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17 **AOB**

As a matter of additional business, the chair took the opportunity to formally thank Rebecca Joyce, Sardip Sandhu and Tony Westwater for their dedication and commitment during their terms of office as governors.

(Staff and students left the meeting)

18 **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded on a separate basis.

Signed : _____  _____ Chair

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