



**WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE**  
CORPORATION BOARD

*Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 17:00*

**GOVERNORS PRESENT:** Kate Truscott, Chair  
 Andrew Cropley, Principal and Chief Executive Officer  
 Charles Heaton  
 Theresa Hodgkinson  
 Neil McDonald  
 Jane Peacock  
 Edward Rawson  
 Keith Spiers  
 Ben Owen  
 Paul Wheeler  
 Scott Smith, Staff Governor (Academic)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement & Student Experience  
 Diane Booth, Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality  
 Jon Fearon, Finance Director  
 Gavin Peake, Director: IT, Estates & Learning Resources  
 Eloise Hopkinson, Clerk to the Corporation  
 Kit Salt, observer (board member from 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024)  
 Tim Brown, Ellis Williams Architects (item 4 only)

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
<b>1</b>	<p><b><u>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b>            Apologies for absence were received from Alison Griffiths, Sian Geeson, Andrew Spencer, David Gillies, Amaya Waddingham, Morgan Williams. Spencer Moore was also absent from the meeting.</p>		
<b>2</b>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b>            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.</p>		
<b>3</b>	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024</u></b>            The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.</p> <p>AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024.</p>		

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Truscott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date: 17/10/2024

There were no matters arising.

4 **CHESTERFIELD ROAD PROJECT**

This item was specifically to allow time to view a demonstration of the Future Tech Centre at Chesterfield Road, delivered by the architects, Ellis Williams, and was not minuted. The recording of this item was shared via the online portal for the benefit of those governors who were unable to attend.

(Tim Brown left the meeting at 17:15.)

5 **ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

The board was happy to note the content of the update provided.

6 **SCENE SETTING**

The chair briefly set the scene for the meeting, indicating that governors should confirm verbally if they need to leave the meeting early, so that quoracy can be ensured throughout. This was noted to be a very full agenda, and the chair explained that some items would be pulled forward within the meeting and discussed out of order to ensure approval could be confirmed.

7 **BALANCED SCORECARD AND ANNUAL KPIS 2023/24**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience introduced this report and then passed the matter to other executive team members, as appropriate. Governors were informed that items which have been RAG-rated amber three times consecutively are now also reported upon, in addition to those which are red.

**Apprenticeships and outcomes**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality reminded governors that, based on R14 data, the college was previously flagged within the apprenticeships accountability measures for achievement and retention. This was based on last year's data and so will not change until the close of this year. Employer feedback also flagged, but this was based on only 31 reviews out of over 300. The vice principal also reminded governors that the threshold for learners past their expected end date changed from 250 learners to 15% and 20%, so the college is currently back on track in respect of that measure. However, the vice principal and finance director recently met with the local ESFA contact, and he explained that it is now necessary to implement an action plan to drive improvements. This is because achievement and retention are lower than the thresholds (62% for achievement and 52% for retention) and are flagging as 'at risk' and 'needs improvement' respectively. The vice principal explained that the issues predominantly related to the electrical transfers and 13 plumbing apprentices who still need to take the gas phase of their course. The college is longer delivering this latter standard, and the vice principal explained that the issues have been

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Tiscott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date: 17/10/2024

exacerbated by challenges relating to end dates. However, staff are now becoming more knowledgeable around how long EPAs take – for example, in computer science, staff now know that students need to be in gateway for four months. Staff are also working hard now on ensuring the numbers of rolled over learners are minimised, as these impact negatively on the data. The vice principal has met with the employer engagement team and more work will be done in relation to advice and guidance, looking at end dates, and where gateway and end point assessments take longer. The vice principal indicated that the college is also considering no longer offering some apprenticeships that currently demonstrate underperformance.

The chair raised a challenge in terms of rollovers which then drift on across multiple years, and the vice principal confirmed that there are now quite a few measures in place to avoid this. She informed governors that the college is now bringing in new standards which are closer to what employers want; managers are monitoring rollovers even more closely with staff; and more meetings are taking place with the employer engagement team in terms of recruitment and length of stay. Staff are also speaking to employers to take into account the endpoint assessment and extend the length of stay to enable assessments to be completed. This work will continue. Managers have also completed some reprofiling in terms of start dates so that apprentices will not finish their learning right at end of the academic year, which is when rolling over is more likely to become necessary. Governors were assured that this is improving, and the comparison between next year and this year shows that there are already fewer learners in the latter month of the academic year.

#### Debenhams

The director: IT, estates and learning resources indicated that the electrical safety checks have exposed some concerns. The cost of putting these issues right is expected to be around £750k, which makes the project unviable for the college. The finance director and the director: IT, estates and learning resources have spoken to Four Seasons management and have given them the report. Subsequently, a reduced proposal has been negotiated, which gives the college four classrooms at the front of the building and provides a fire break in between this area and the rest of the building. However, the director gave a note of caution that this will involve the Four Seasons investing some money to complete the works, so it is by no means confirmed as yet. Another option would involve exploring the potential of having more security on the existing units which the college is using, which are currently on a very short notice period. Having more security on these units would enable the college to spend more money on them and, therefore, close down the Debenhams project completely.

The Four Seasons is eager to work with the college, and managers were surprised by the extent of the issue with the store's electrics. Managers

Signed:     *Kate Tiscott*     Chair Date: 17/10/2024

have assured the director that they will look at the security on the two units, but care is needed to ensure that other tenants are also being treated fairly. The college may have to commit to three years.

Governors agreed that it is necessary to ensure that students and staff are safe, and they could see from the figures presented that the Debenhams project as it was originally proposed was simply no longer viable.

Governors were invited to put forward questions in relation to the balanced scorecard and the reports presented. No additional questions or comments were raised within the meeting, and governors were invited to get in touch with the Executive team if anything does arise.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

8

### **QUALITY AND STANDARDS**

The committee chair's report was taken as read and opened to any questions from governors.

- Governors were informed that the talking heads video is available on ShareFile, and it was recommended that they view this after the meeting.
- Attendance in English and maths continues to be a national challenge, but the vice principal was able to provide the committee with assurance. Governors were informed of an emerging trend where attendance in lessons is much lower than in exams, and this aligns with comments from other colleges. The teams will focus on this in induction to ensure students are aware of the importance of English and maths. The concern is that students may not perform well in exams if the learning is not in place due to low attendance in lessons. The Standards Committee will continue to monitor this.
- Some good news was received in respect of the apprenticeship accountability framework, in that the marker for learners past their expected end date was changed and so the college is no longer flagging as at risk.
- Governors were also reassured that, although there has been a dip in projected achievement for A Levels, the college is starting to see better attendance and progress scores. Year 12 is very engaged and projected grades in most subjects are considerably higher than those of their Year 13 peers.
- The committee chair also drew governors' attention to the progression and destinations data, which was very robust and reflected a lot of positivity. Governors were assured that the by the detailed data and assurance around progression.
- The committee members were delighted to recommend that Kit Salt should join the Standards Committee from 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Kate Trcott*

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair

Date: 17/10/2024

The chair of the Corporation Board thanked staff for the ongoing work and focus. The vice principal indicated that she intends to monitor those apprenticeships which are not performing well, following the clear message from the ESFA that the college needs to focus its attention on what it does well and consider stepping away from those apprenticeships in which performance is weaker and the quality is not as high. The vice principal and finance director explained that they will particularly look at business administration and customer services. These can sometimes be seen as a vehicle through which employers can find 'cheap labour', and employers are then not willing to give their apprentices the time needed to attend college and study. The chair acknowledged that this made sense.

- The safeguarding policy was presented for approval, and the vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience explained that this reflects the updates made to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE). She informed governors that the changes are minimal: the definition of 'safeguarding' has changed for the first time, and there is now a paragraph within the college's procedure which refers to the gender-questioning children guidance from the government. She asked for approval of the 2024/25 procedure but with the caveat that there may be further changes if additional amendments are made to the KCSiE guidance. Governors will be informed via email, should this be the case.

The clerk indicated that, since the committee meeting took place, she has received further comments from a governor in relation to the committee Terms of Reference. Therefore, this document will undergo further updates and will be presented to the October 2024 board meeting for final approval.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to note the progress made against the Community Pledge aims 2023/24
- to note the content of the reports in relation to deep dives and apprenticeships and safeguarding/Prevent
- to approve the proposed Safeguarding Procedure 2024/25
- to approve that the Standards Committee membership will remain the same into 2024/25, but with the addition of Kit Salt
- that approval of the committee Terms of Reference for 2024/25 will now wait until October 2024, pending further suggestions received.

9

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The committee chair particularly drew governors' attention the deep dives. He also indicated that the staff survey was discussed, and the

Signed: Kate Tiscott \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date: 17/10/2024

outcomes of the strategy day in June further highlighted an issue in relation to the staff satisfaction score (88%). This percentage was informed by a number of measures, including how many staff feel the survey is conducted in a confidential way. It was agreed that this has distorted the score and, in future, this will no longer be a contributory measure to staff satisfaction.

Mandatory training was impacted by the implementation of the new training system, in that this was unavailable for some time and staff then had to catch up with their outstanding training. Therefore, the committee was informed that some mandatory training was outstanding at the time of the meeting; however, in general, this was not particularly concerning.

The committee was made aware of an issue impacting that staff wellbeing, in that a very small students have recorded staff and posted the footage online. The chair indicated that it is important for governors to be aware of this. The college needs to consider protection of its staff in these instances. One governor raised the question of whether this is included in the college's internal policies, and the vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience indicated that it is dealt with in the student code of conduct. She reiterated that there have only been a handful of cases, and a hard line has been taken on each one, via the disciplinary procedure. It was suggested that the college should consider implementing a staff safeguarding policy which stipulates the support a staff member can expect to receive if this happens to them. The Corporation Board chair suggested that the director of human resources and organisational developments should look into this, with the support of the Workforce Development Committee. The impact this sort of thing could have on the individual, their reputation, and their family needs to be considered. The vice principal indicated that schools are reporting the same sort of behaviour, and they are also experiencing incidents whereby parents are naming teachers on social media. The vice principal will speak to the director of HR and organisational development about embedding this in the college's policies. She confirmed that staff to whom this has already happened have been supported. Governors indicated that senior leaders and managers also need to be aware of college's legal responsibility and consider whether staff have been protected well enough.

The staff governor suggested that it would be useful to conduct training for staff so that they are aware of what to do if they are being photographed or recorded by a student, to ensure they handle the situation appropriately. The vice principal confirmed that this will be included in her annual safeguarding update.

Finally, the committee requested the board's approval to increase membership to nine and appoint Rob Simcox to the committee. The

VP: CESE /  
Dir: HR & OD

Sept 2024

Signed:           *Kate Trcott*           Chair                      Date: 17/10/2024

committee chair explained that this will help with quoracy and will improve the balance between external governors and staff members.

No major changes were proposed to the committee's Terms of Reference.

AGREED:

- to note the content of this summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to approve the committee Terms of Reference for 2024/25
- to approve that committee membership increase to nine and that Rob Simcox be asked to join the committee; otherwise, to approve that the committee membership remains the same into 2024/25.

10

### AUDIT

The committee chair presented his report, highlighting the following key points:

- Seven audits have been completed in-year. Two were incomplete at the time of the previous meeting and will be reported on in September. Six of the audits had substantial assurance and one had adequate assurance. This was agreed to be very positive, and the committee chair informed the board that this is the second year with such a high level of assurance.
- The committee discussed the college website, which is a point of risk and will need to be replaced in the future. Quotes to update it to the required quality have so far been found to be unaffordable. Statutory updates will be carried out in terms of accessibility, but the main issues are harder to resolve. These are that only one person can handle the website's code, which has been inputted over the years by multiple users, and the live link to the college's data systems. The committee has encouraged the director: IT, estates and learning resources and the team to speak to external partners who have recently refreshed their websites. The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience provided an update that she has very recently spoken to John Gray, a former college governor who now runs his own consultancy. He has worked with a number of colleges on improving their websites, and he is confident that he could work with the college on a website which would take away the data risk without losing too much functionality and would be much less expensive than previously quoted. The committee chair had asked the director: IT, estates and learning resources to present an update to the committee's November meeting, and it was suggested that this could still be drawn up but now in respect of the work with John Gray, should this go ahead. The vice principal confirmed that she has looked at the other websites which he has worked on, and they are of good quality.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Kate Tiscott \_\_\_\_\_ Chair

Date: 17/10/2024

- Two reports of malpractice were received by the committee. Governors were assured that one was due to an incorrect decision following a lack of understanding of the examination guidelines. The committee was assured that this was just an individual's mistake, and members asked that this be monitored. The second incident was under investigation at the time of the meeting, and a full update will be provided in September. This incident involved a staff member who had allegedly left sensitive information visible to students, which then led to issues for the awarding body.
- The external auditor presented the planning memorandum, and committee was assured by this and happy to approve it. In terms of additional audit testing, the external auditor is going to look at the Gene Haas donation; the Ashfield District Council property transaction; and capitalisation of expenditure below the college's capitalisation threshold.

**AGREED:**

- to note the content of this summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to note the 2023/24 risk register and 2024/25 draft risk register,
- to note the Risk Management Strategy 2024/25, as approved by the committee
- to note the external audit planning memorandum
- to approve the Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- to approve that Nick Butler be invited to join the committee but that membership otherwise remains the same into 2024/25.

**11** **FINANCE AND ESTATES**

The committee chair presented his report as read, and governors were invited to raise questions and discussion in relation to any key points.

The director: IT, estates and learning resources informed governors that staff have now been moved into the brewery and seem happy with their new offices and premises.

The Expenses Policy was presented to the committee for recommendation to the board for approval. The rates were out of date, and this new version has brought them up to a more appropriate level, which fits more neatly with current costs. One governor questioned whether the finance director is happy that these align with HMRC's guidelines to ensure there are no tax implications. The finance director is certain that these are below. He indicated that general allowances are not paid – the amounts within the policy are the maximum payments, and receipts need to be provided. However, he will double check that this definitely aligns. Subject to the finance director checking this information, governors were happy to approve the policy as presented.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date: 17/10/2024



No changes were made to the Subcontractor Rationale and Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy 2024/25, bar the date, and governors were happy to approve this as presented.

The board was also asked to approve proposals in relation to two additional matters of business:

1. Contract awards

- Stainsby Education – this has covered areas such as taxi driving; it is currently performing well, success rates are strong, and there is an expert team in place. The proposal for the board's approval was to increase the initial £75k for 2024/25 (which has already been approved) to £200k and approve £75k for 2025/26 to provide continuity across years.
- Maclav has mainly been involved with work to support the delivery of maths and English, and this is doing well. The proposal for the board's approval was an annual allocation of £1.4m in 2023/24 (an increase from the £1m already approved) and an initial allocation of £1m in 2024/25, with a further £250k into 2025/26 (to provide continuity across years).
- The proposal in relation to Skills College was to initially contract for up to £250k. The college previously worked with this provider in partnership with FMBS, an arrangement which was then terminated; however, the rail provision was good, and managers would be interested in starting this again.
- Platinum Rail provides a number of rail-related services, such as agency supply of specialist rail staff to the college, personal track safety, etc. The provider is Network Rail-approved, which is key. The proposal is to approve a combined contract of up to £250k in 2024/25.

2. Subcontractor allocations

The finance director proposed quite a bit of realignment for the board's approval, as follows:

- The college will not subcontract 16-18 activity to Chameleon in 2024/25 due to the level planned in-house. Adult education budget (AEB) delivery is proposed to have a small reduction to £300k.
- The college will allow growth in relation to the Inspire and Achieve Foundation's 16-18 delivery. This is an increase from £75k to £100k. Growth is also proposed in relation to AEB, as the foundation is increasing its provision in Ashfield. This is an increase to £155k from £115k.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Tiscott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date: 17/10/2024

- The college was having discussions with Nottingham Forest Community Trust, but this has been postponed to 2025/26. The college will then work on a project with the trust, which will involve the creation of a coaching/sporting excellence programme across Nottinghamshire. This will involve a number of local partners and organisations, and it has resulted from the work with CIMPSA having attracted this attention.
- Mansfield Town Football Club is now included as a subcontractor following new guidance from the ESFA which states that significant enrichment elements taken on by a partner must be declared as subcontracting.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the summary report
- to note the content of the minutes of the meeting
- to note the May 2024 Management Accounts
- to note the capital projects and estates update
- to approve the Expenses Policy 2024/25, subject to additional checks to ensure the amounts therein align with those suggested by HMRC
- to approve the Subcontractor Rationale and Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy 2024/25, and for the chair of the Corporation Board to sign this document
- to approve the contract awards as presented
- to approve the subcontractor allocations as presented
- to approve the committee Terms of Reference as presented
- to approve the addition to the committee of Kudzai Muzangaza, and that membership will otherwise remain the same into 2024/25.

**12 2024/25 DRAFT BUDGET AND TWO-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN/FORECAST**

The finance director presented this report as read. It was confirmed that the Finance & Estates Committee also covered this matter in detail at the meeting which took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

The finance director explained that he has tried to provide background within the report to demonstrate that the budget for 2024/25 has more risks. The assumption has been built in that the college will see growth of 350 learners in 2024/25, and senior leaders are confident that this is achievable. More learners are progressing from Year 1 to Year 2 than in 2023/24; there are significantly more applicants from Year 11; and the college's additional capacity to teach construction will bring 150 more lower-level learners into the Mansfield centre. In short, the demand is there to suggest that this growth is likely.

The board discussed the demographics, which show that there is a significant number of 16-18-year-olds at present and will be into future

Signed:     *Kate Toole*     Chair Date: 17/10/2024

years, so there is certainly money to come. The chair of the Audit Committee informed governors that he recently attended an Association of Colleges audit and finance chairs' network meeting, and other chairs present were cautious in relation to what the new government would bring. However, he indicated that the college has given a commitment to its community to grow, and there is no one else who could fill this gap if the college failed in this commitment.

Following the general discussion and responses from the Executive team, governors confirmed that they were in support of the 2024/25 budget and pay proposals as presented.

One governor indicated that the update given by the vice principal in relation to conversion was really positive, and it was pleasing to note how far the college has travelled.

AGREED:

- to approve the budget for 2024/25 as presented
- to approve the proposals in relation to pay, as presented.

**13**      **REFURBISHMENT OF THE DERBY ROAD TOWER BLOCK**

The director: IT, estates and learning resources presented this item and informed governors that he needs to seek approval from the board for this expenditure. This relates to once-in-20-years data and power refurbishment work which will also be beneficial for T-Level students in computer science. The director explained that the work required as part of the T-Level course generates a lot of traffic in the network which the director is not comfortable with. This refurbishment work will enable part of the network on these floors to be isolated this sort of work is being undertaken, which will keep the rest of the network safe. This will use part of the £6.1m refurbishment money and is one of the larger projects which the director has come across so far.

Governors questioned whether Electricom has been used before, and the director confirmed that the college has used this company before. Governors did not have any other comments or questions to raise and were happy to approve the proposal.

AGREED: to appoint the approval of Electricom as the contractor for this work.

**14**      **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented this detailed report in place of the principal, and key matters particularly highlighted within the meeting were:

- In May 2024, the principal reported that the bus scheme had been nominated for an award. Governors were pleased to learn that the scheme won this and, furthermore, has now been nominated for another national award.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Tiscott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair      Date: 17/10/2024

- Nottingham Trent University hosted a stakeholder conference, which was planned in partnership with the college and the district councils. The focus of this conference was place-shaping, and the vice principal reported that there was very good input. Overall, it was a very positive event. A report is being pulled together by NTU, and this will be shared with governors once available.
- The college marked the end of the academic year with a series of celebratory events, and the vice principal gave thanks to those governors who attended. Governors were encouraged to attend the similar events which will take place in 2025.
- Governors' attention was also drawn to the completed written resolution pertaining to the Protocol managed service, as this matter missed May's Corporation Board meeting.

VP: CESE

TBC

The chair echoed the vice principal's comments around the events in June. She informed the board that it was very positive to see the pride in students' faces and to recognise what they have achieved and overcome.

The principal expressed his gratitude for the support he has received from the Executive team. He also informed the board that he has written to the newly appointed and reappointed members of the local councils to invite them to look around the college when they have settled into their roles.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the update provided
- to note the formal written resolution.

**15**

**STRATEGY DAY FEEDBACK, FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES**

The clerk presented this report and the notes from June's strategy day. Governors were informed that the Executive team will now take the points raised forward in their development of the Strategic Plan and objectives and the Employer Engagement Strategy. These documents will then be presented to the board meeting in October for approval and printed copies will be available in December 2024.

Governors were invited to put forward any additional comments or feedback but were asked to provide these before 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024, as this is when the Executive team will commence their work on the strategies.

The chair indicated that this was a positive event with a lot of energy, and the points of discussion will help to plan the next set of objectives. She indicated that it is necessary to consider how these are timetabled in future to enable more people to attend, and governors were asked to submit any comments and suggestions to the chair and the clerk. June's

Governors

Oct 2024

Signed:         Kate Tinscott         Chair          Date: 17/10/2024

strategy day received positive feedback from those governors who were present.

AGREED: to note the content of the report and the notes taken during the strategy day in June 2024.

16

**UPDATED DOCUMENTATION**

The clerk presented updated documentation for consideration and approval. Key points were highlighted as follows:

- The clerk recommended that governors agree to form a working group to update the Instrument and Articles of Government. There are quite a few points which require updating and some others which are optional. Although the proposed document will require approval by the board, it is felt that it would be beneficial for a small group of governors to have input throughout. This was the approach taken the last time the Instrument and Articles were updated in 2012. Governors were invited to either step forward within the meeting or to volunteer via the clerk by 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024, and one governor volunteered within the meeting. In the meantime, the clerk will ask other governance professionals to provide copies of their up-to-date Instruments and Articles of Government.
- A slightly updated governor eligibility declaration has been created by merging the college's existing document with a more current version offered by Eversheds. If approved, this updated document will also be recirculated to existing governors for signing as part of the summer update cycle.
- The Code of Conduct for governors has been updated to align with the most recent version offered by Eversheds. This takes account of changes following ONS reclassification and the new requirements surrounding accountability agreements. Many colleges also use clause 1.5 – 'By accepting appointment to the Corporation, each governor agrees to abide by the provisions of this code' – to confirm acceptance of this document, rather than asking governors to sign and return the back page. Governors were invited to decide whether they feel this would be acceptable.
- The board does not appear to have had a Conflicts of Interest policy in place, but this is considered good practice. This document does not ask for the disclosure of anything which governors would not previously have been expected to disclose. It merely sets out and formalises the requirement.
- The declaration of interests form has only had very minor changes and is otherwise the same as the old version.
- Following attendance concerns emerging from committee discussions, the Senior Postholder and Governance Committee asked the clerk to produce an attendance or absence policy. The first draft of this was presented for approval, but governors were also invited to comment and give feedback. If this policy

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Kate Tiscott

Chair

Date: 17/10/2024

were approved, it would be implemented from September 2024. If governors were to request amendments, these would be actioned and the document brought back to the board in October 2024 for further discussion and approval. If the board wholly rejected any such policy, alternative suggestions were welcomed, but governors were assured that the policy would not be implemented in its current state.

The chair of the most recent Senior Postholder and Governance Committee meeting provided context, explaining that it is recognised that governors are very busy and that the role is voluntary, but it is necessary to ensure that the required level of engagement is being seen. It is understood that governors are sometimes unable to attend meetings, but it is necessary to ensure papers are being read and questions raised and that governors are engaging with the business of the meetings even if they have to miss one or two. This policy will also help to avoid meetings being inquorate, which causes delays to decision-making. Governors are responsible for the effective running of the organisation, and they can only uphold this responsibility through regular attendance, preparation and engagement with the papers.

Referring to the suggested minimum attendance percentage within the policy, governors questioned what the sanction would be for not meeting this target and how this is monitored. The clerk indicated that sanction had not been explicitly confirmed as the aim was not to make the policy feel like a punishment, but any governor not meeting the attendance requirements would be asked to discuss this with the chair of the Corporation Board and/or the clerk. The clerk also explained that all elements of attendance are regularly tracked, so it will quickly become clear if anyone is not meeting the attendance requirement, and a conversation can then be arranged.

Governors present indicated that the suggested percentage was too low, and they asked that this be increased to 75% attendance (to both committee and board meetings). With this change, the board was happy to approve the policy.

- The Standing Orders will be reviewed alongside the matters agreed today to ensure that changes which then need to be reflected within them have been taken into account. Accordingly, the Standing Orders will be taken to the Finance & Estates Committee in October 2024 (and then to the board) for their annual review.

AGREED:

- to approve the proposed Governor Eligibility Declaration, as presented
- to approve the proposed Governor Code of Conduct, and to remove the signature page

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Trcott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date: 17/10/2024

- to approve the proposed Conflict of Interests Policy, as presented
- to approve the proposed Governors' Attendance Policy, as presented, once the requested increase has been made to the proposed minimum attendance percentage.

**17**      **GOVERNANCE**

The clerk to the corporation presented her report, detailing four matters of business.

- 1) Governors were asked to note the calendar of meetings for 2024/25. Invitations will go out over the next few days, including to the new committee members if proposed appointments were approved. Governors were reminded that all external governors have an open invitation to attend any committee meeting (except Senior Postholder & Governance Committee) as an observer. Invitations can be requested from the clerk.
- 2) Governors were asked to view the summary of committee membership – formal approval will have been given throughout the meeting as each committee chair's report is delivered, but it will also be recorded under this item for clarity and completeness.
- 3) Governors were asked to review and comment on the presented action plans and updates in respect of the external governance review and internal review against the Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance. The existing and additional actions are mostly owned by the clerk and will now be taken forward into 2024/25. In respect of the public values statement, governors were assured that, in the proposed slightly updated board webpage (currently under development) there is an explicit link to this document which was not as easily accessed previously.

Overall, governors agreed that the board is in a good position, and they were happy to approve the action plans presented.

**AGREED:**

- to approve the appointment of Rob Simcox, Nick Butler, Kit Salt and Kudzai Muzangaza to the proposed committees
- to note the updates provided in respect of the external and internal governance reviews and to approve the actions to be taken forward.

**18**      **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of additional business.

The chair gave thanks to Spencer Moore, as this was his final meeting as a member of the board. He has been instrumental in the CIMPSA work

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Tiscott* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair      Date: 17/10/2024

which the college has been involved in, and governors wished him all the best.

The staff governor indicated that he was looking at a data tool which considers data and recruitment. Apprenticeship uptake seems to be significantly lower for the college than for private providers. The vice principals indicated that this was not unexpected, but the staff governor was thanked for raising this point.

**19**      **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The was proposed as Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 17:00. A number of governors gave apologies in advance, and the clerk indicated that she would send out the invitation but would explore alternative dates should it already be clear that the meeting might not be quorate.

Keith Spiers left the meeting at 18:55.

The staff governor left the meeting at 18:55.

The meeting closed at 19:00.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Kate Tinsley* \_\_\_\_\_ Chair      Date: 17/10/2024