



CORPORATION

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 17:30
The Source, All Saints, Worcester**

Present

Governors:

Neill Bucktin (NB)	Chair
David Ash (DA)	Vice Chair
Michele Dowse (MD)	Principal
Jane Britton (JB)	
Lockie Carbery (LC)	
Gaynor Cheshire (GC)	
Andrew D'Arcy (AD)	
Vickie Davies (VD)	
Chris Hallam (CH)	
Tony King (TK)	
Denis Miles (DM)	
Sarah Owen (SO)	
Harrison Rickerby (HR)	
Steph Simcox (SS)	
Vivienne Stockill (VS)	
Evan Whakahau (EW)	

In Attendance:

Nicki Williams (NW)	Deputy Chief Executive Officer & Vice Principal Corporate
Cherie Clements (CC)	Vice Principal Finance & Corporate Operations
Julia Breakwell (JB)	Vice Principal Student Experience & Stakeholder Engagement
Claire Heywood (CH)	Deputy Principal
Claire Beaman (CB)	Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Quality
Kay Kavanagh (KK)	Clerk to the Corporation
Peter Robinson (PR)	Vice Principal Curriculum & Standards
Lesley Baker (LB)	Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Employer Engagement
Donna Gibson (DG)	Deputy Clerk & SLT Support

Action

61.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting. Apologies were received from Helen Butler, Gary Woodman, and Tony Green.

61.2 Declarations of Interest

Governors were asked to declare any new Interests, financial or otherwise, which they may have in any agenda Item. No interests were declared.

61.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Governors **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

61.4 Matters Arising

Governors **reviewed** the Matters Arising report and **noted** progress.

61.5 Determination of any other urgent business

There was no other urgent business.

61.6 Principal's Report

- a) Principal's Update for Governors
- b) Curriculum and Quality Key Performance Indicators
- c) Financial Key Performance Indicators
- d) Health & Safety Report

Principal's Update for Governors:

MD provided an overview of the Principals' Report, explaining that at the time of writing, MD had been in post for 10 days, with a 90-day already underway.

MD gave details of national issues, including T-Levels. As an SLT, they need to do a mapping exercise to plan offer moving forward, but Colleges continue to be lobby as T-Levels are still not considered to be fit for purpose.

Apprenticeship retention remains an area of focus with apprenticeship retention not reaching the 65% target, MD advised that retention currently stands at 64% compared to 46% in the last academic year.

Apprenticeship achievement was 35% against National Rate of 53%. There is an action plan in place for the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework to drive improvements.

MD provided an update on items to note/celebrate, including:

- Progress of Get2Green project
- Various grants that have been received and the benefits they will provide

Governors **noted** the change of format of the report and welcomed the additions.

Curriculum and Quality Key Performance Indicators:

CB invited questions. There were no questions.

Financial Key Performance Indicators:

CC explained that there is an improvement on the previous position and the College remains in Good financial health.

There were no questions.

Health and Safety Report:

JB provided an update, confirming that there had been a total of 41 incidents, 13 were accidents, 2 near misses and no RIDDOR reported.

First Aid training continues, and a new risk assessment has also been introduced.

There were no questions.

Governors **received** the Principal Report.

61.7 Collaborative Projects update, including Bids

- a) To **receive** an update on Collaborative Projects, including Bids

CH advised that a BID of £228k has been won from WCC to convert part of the St Wulstan's Building to work alongside National Star.

- b) To **receive** an update on the SDF2 Bid

JB explained that this was a collaborative bid with Kidderminster College and the Warwickshire College Group (WCG). This is a short-term project running from Sept-March.

It covers 3 areas:

- Digital skills resources (Kidderminster College)
- Career resources (WCG)
- 'Mock' domiciliary care spaces (HoW College)

JB confirmed that 2 demonstration flats are now in place, in the St Wulstan's Building, for technology enabled care – these are to be officially opened on 26th May 2023.

A governor asked what the benefit is of the units, is it Curriculum, and if so, are they linked to a qualification? JB explained that they will support students and be used for the SWAPS and Bootcamp programs in the care sector. The units can also be rented out, with initial interest already received from the NHS and WCC.

A governor questioned if the remainder of the building was still mothballed. NW explained that only a part of it currently remains mothballed, with further space due to be utilised by National Star. MD added that full use of the building is being analysed, with lots of possible potential being identified.

There were no further questions.

61.8 College Improvement Plan

CB provided an overview of the current position of the College Improvement Plan, highlighting:

- QIP1 is currently at Amber. It is expected to be at green by June 2023. Apprenticeship attendance is being followed up across areas well however is not having the desired impact in driving improvement. There continues to be focus by leaders/managers and staff on ensuring achievements against learners/apprentices are retained. 10 Deep Dives have been carried out, 3 in areas that support curriculum, and 7 in curriculum.
- QIP2 is at Amber and is expected to remain at Amber.
- QIP3 is at Amber and is expected to be Green in June. Deep Dive and Scrutiny Reviews have taken place.

- QIP4 is currently at Amber and is predicted to remain at Amber in June. Leaders and managers will judge their areas against criteria for skills under EIF and include actions to improve where rated as reasonable or limited contribution.
- QIP5 is at Amber and is expected to be Green in June. There is continued work to increase response rate of employers to apprenticeship surveys
- QIP6 is currently at Amber and is predicted to remain at Amber in June. Leaders of THRIVE programme are to develop a revised scheme of work and resources for 2023-24, working with curriculum leaders to ensure effective implementation. There is ongoing CPD for PT's

A governor **asked** if attendance could be monitored for attendance on Teams. CB gave assurance that it could as all work on Teams requires an action or work to be submitted.

A governor **questioned** the 'Green' prediction around Skills given that the College is not clear on the requirements of the LSIP. CB explained that local data and information from employers will be used.

There were no further questions.

61.9 **Accountability Statement**

CH explained that this is the first time the Corporation are being asked to approve an Accountability Statement, adding that it is made up of two parts:

- Part 1 of the agreement replaces the existing annual, grant funding Agreement
- Part 2 is the new accountability agreement which specifies a limited number of outcome targets for the 2023-24 year

CH explained that there has been a disappointing turnout across Worcester from businesses and employers, with Less than 50% stating that skills are on their agendas. Worcester broadly maps the UK.

CH asked governors to note the 5 Aims/Objectives stated with the agreement.

Governors **expressed their concern** at the lack of engagement from businesses, noting however that employers are not able to plan sufficiently ahead.

CH added that there are many family businesses in Worcestershire, not looking to grow. It is however an opportunity to educate employers and elevate their expectations around skills.

A governor **stated their surprise** as in the Black Country and Birmingham skills are the number one priority and is concerned that Worcestershire will fall behind and reflects poorly on Worcestershire.

Governors **approved** the Accountability Statement.

61.10 **Qualification Achievement Report 2021/22**

PR provided an overview of the report, explain that HoW College are 1.2% below the DfE national rate, for all areas. 16-18 remains our greatest focus, with positive achievements for 19+.

There were no questions.

61.11 Learner Destinations and Progression Report 2021/22

PR explained that for 16-18, there has been an extensive increase for students progressing into employment, particularly on Level 3. 43% progress to HE.

94% of adults were in a positive destination.

EHCP learners are positive, with 97% in a positive destination 6 months on.

A governor **asked** for clarification on the relationship with Buckingham University and College. PR explained that this was a link to a degree program.

61.12 EDIM and Action Plan

JB provided an overview explain that The EDI objectives focus on reducing gaps and supporting those who have been identified within an EDIM category. The action plan is made up of 5 key themes with 17 objectives set within them.

There has been positive movement within the action with only 1 Red item remaining, for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

There are many positives, including:

- the creation of the Trans toolkit
- Mental Health First Aid trainer
- Therapy Dog
- Successful foodbank collections were held in December with over 380 items donated
- to local foodbanks in Malvern, Redditch, Worcester, and Bromsgrove.
- £40k has been spent on supporting students out of college time, using funds from WCC, EdenRed vouchers and college funds

A governor **asked** how the progress is reported to staff and students. JB explained that each area has a team, and the feedback is directly given back to students. For Mental Health, newsletters are sent to staff and students, a different newsletter for each.

61.13 Higher Education

a) Academic Board & Management Group

Governors **received** the Minutes of the Academic Board meetings and JaB provided an **update** on the HE Management Group, explaining that 2 meetings had taken place, with interesting discussion taking place at both meetings.

The Students' satisfaction survey provided good data and the survey will be repeated.

T-Levels in Health & Science are planned for sept 2024. Public Services has been paused but may be re-introduced as an Access Course.

b) Higher Education Self-Evaluation Document and Action Plan

PR provided an overview highlighting:

- A mapping exercise has taken place where all areas have identified elements of their courses that can be adapted for short course provision. Higher level bitesize course portfolio has not developed as quickly as anticipated.
- All courses now have mapped sustainability elements to delivery with the majority of courses completing summative assessments if not formative assessments in place.

Stephanie Simcox joined the meeting at this point (18:37)

A governor **asked** if the result was known of the TEF submission. PR explained that it should be known during August, with the final national publication being in September.

Governors **approved** the Higher Education Self-Evaluation Document 2023/24 (includes the Higher Education Action Plan).

61.14 Annual Staff Survey

CC provided a verbal update, explain that 178 responses had been received and a full report and analysis will be provided at the July meeting.

61.15 College HE Fees Policy

There were no questions.

Governors **approved** the HE Fees Policy.

61.16 Draft Revenue Budget

CC advised that the draft budget as at early May 2023 indicates a deficit position of £2,062k. High level items currently outside of budget workings would reduce this to £1,749k deficit. At a deficit level of £1,288k Financial Health would be “good” and the Santander loan Covenant would be “met”.

There is therefore a difference in budget workings of £461,000 to reach this desired level. Areas being considered for savings include:

- Café's
- Electricity
- Facilities contracts
- Staffing

Cashflow looks positive with the initial cashflow forecast through to July 2024 based upon this level of deficit and including the AEB clawback of £1.5m, indicates closing cash balances at July 24 of £9.0m and the lowest cash balance in Jan 24 at £6.5m. This also includes the recently announced DfE capital transformation fund allocation of £3.3m over 2023/24 and 2024/25.

A governor **asked** if the Electricity rates for next year are being based on the current rates. CC explained that they are, but governors **noted** that these rates could improve.

A governor **asked** for an update on the sale of Osprey House. NW explained that the sale is likely to still be a further 12 months away, with planning and consultation still being required.

61.17 Sustainability Update

PR provided an update on the internal Eco Group. NW added that unexpected funding of £259k had been received for measures to improve energy efficiency. Action Plans for all buildings were already in place, so the College can utilise the funds to best effect.

PR explained that there are 3 aims to support the Colleges pledge to reduce carbon by 50% by 2030. There are:

- Estates
- Behaviours
- De-Carbonising the energy source

The College has so far achieved 28% of the 50% target.

A governor **asked** if Solar panels could be installed. NW explained that they are very expensive, but all options are being considered, along with the possibility of using available schemes as an alternative.

A governor **asked** what the potential savings could be if the College operated a 4-day week. NW explained that the College is already as close to a 4-day week as possible, with only 3 buildings open on a Friday.

A governor **asked** if there was a deadline for the £3.3million capex to be spent. NW explained that 2 pots of money have been received: £649k from the ONS reclassification, to be spent by March 2024 (Buildings only), with the remainder to be spent by March 2025.

61.18 Audit Committee

SS provided an update following the recent Audit Committee meeting. It was noted that the Strategic Risk Register is to be approved by Corporation. **Action:** KK to circulate the Strategic Risk Register for approval (100% response rate required due to approval via email)

KK

Governors **received** the minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 7 March 2023.

61.19 GOVERNANCE

a) External Review of Governance

KK explained that the report had not been received but was expected early next week.

DA stated that the output may suggest changes to the future structure of governance, which will need to be fully considered by governors.

b) Standing Orders

Governors **approved** the Standing Orders.

Action

c) Governor One-2-Ones

Governors **noted** that governor one-2one's are to be arranged and both NB and DA are to meet with governors.

d) To approve the appointment of the Chair for 2023-2025

KK confirmed that one nomination had been received for David Ash.

Governors **approved** the appointment of David ash as Chair of the Corporation with effect from 01/08/2023, for a 2-year term of Office.

KK invited nominations for the role of Vice-Chair. **Action:** Governors to submit their self-nominations for the role of Vice-Chair.

ALL

61.20 Any Other Urgent Business

There was no other urgent business.

61.21 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 11 July 2023, 17:30, Bromsgrove

61.22 Confidential Items

-24 See Confidential Minutes

61.25 Restricted Confidential Items

See Restricted Confidential Minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 21:15.

Signed:

Date: