

**THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING 13.03.2023**

PRESENT: R Davies (CG and Chair), R Anderson (CG), H Ashton (CG); H Burrows (Deputy Student Governor), M Cameron (Student Gov), J Castor (CG), M King (CG), M Lamb (CG), S Lane (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), D Lusardi (CG), S Mirsalehi (CG), A Pajura-Jaszczak (Staff Gov), D Still (Staff Gov), P Sharp (CG), P Studd (CG).

Through Teams: E Kunonga (CG), P Lynn (CG); M McClintock (CG), I Wright (CG).

OFFICERS Z Foster (Clerk), S Marshall (ED); B Robinson (DP), O Rodley (VP), M Russell (VP).

IN ATTENDANCE: R Lawson – External Reviewer (AoC)

KEY: CG College Governor	EM External Member
DP Deputy Principal	VP Vice Principal
Clerk to the Corporation	ED Executive Director

1. Apologies for Absence and Welcome to R Lawson

A Adamson (VP), M Gaze (CG), M Laidler (CG), K Parkinson (ED), J Tait (CG), M Wild (Student Governor).

R Davies welcomed R Lawson to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest – R Anderson in respect of any discussion on LSIP

3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of 15 December 2022 were approved as a correct record.

3.2 Minutes of 15 February 2023 were approved as a correct record.

3.3 Written Resolution - confirmation was received for the TTE approval written resolution of 6 March 2023.

4. Matters Arising – no matters arising.

5. Strategic Overview

5.1 Strategic Risks Report

Z Lewis gave an update on the Strategic Risk Register and drew particular attention to five new risks identified since the last meeting – behaviour, separating out of ITE from main Ofsted Inspection, qualification reform, separating out Cyber Security from IT and Eton College.

She outlined the six top red risks of: reclassification; recruitment and retention of staff; failure to meet the five year financial plan; reduced standards of behaviour and the potential opening of Eton College.

I Wright drew attention to detailed consideration of the risk registers at the recent Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 10 March 2023 which had concluded that the risks and mitigations were appropriate with mitigations continuing to be carefully monitored.

5.2 Principal/Chief Executive's Report

Z Lewis gave an update to her written report including: TTE progress with the expectation that contracts would be signed over the next two days; initial themes from the recent staff survey with full analysis going to the July Corporate Services Committee; the final strategic plan; detail behind the letter to R Halfon on qualification reform; and an update in relation to Middlesbrough Council changes.

Governors' discussion and questions included: T Levels restrictions, delayed starts to new T Levels, government and opposition view on T Level policy and related lobbying; qualification reforms (Level 3 and Level 2) and possible implications including financial, fewer progression courses and increase in NEETS;

student numbers with part time work; status of Local Authority TTE funding; and Local Authority changes including the Mayoral Development Corporation.

Action by Z Lewis/SLT – to elicit from survey the number of students with part time work.

5.3 Strategic Plan including Corporate KPI Update

O Rodley outlined current progress against the KPI targets.

Questions and discussion included: detail in relation to drop in A Level predicted progress (teacher assessed grades impact); the potential effects of increased class sizes within the College; and possible options for wider collaboration with other local colleges and associated complexities.

6. Student Experience

6.1 Quip Update

O Rodley gave an update in relation to the five key areas for improvement.

Governor discussion focused on aspects of the behaviour issue including: potential links between attendance and behaviour; year group differences; changes from 2021-22; types of behaviour issues and ranges of strategies being implemented (including community police support); and reward policy with recognition that these issues were still with a minority of students with incidents being quite low.

Additionally, overall progress on all five KPIs was considered with outcome clarification/assurances discussed.

6.2 Quality of Education Update

B Robinson gave an overview on overall progress with greater detail in relation to developments within implementation; staff CPD; target grades and the programme of deep dives.

6.3 PDBA Update

B Robinson reported on behalf of A Adamson, drawing attention to the increase in disciplinaries and strategies to address this particularly through the personal development curriculum.

Governor discussion included: behaviour and possible reasons for it within both the local community and nationally; and staff suggestion scheme for improvements.

6.4 Safeguarding Update

B Robinson reported on behalf of A Adamson and highlighted the increased number of students requesting safeguarding support (97% of whom were still continuing with college courses).

Questions and discussion included: how the College was ensuring referrals were appropriate; the trial work with Smoothwall which was being extended across the College; clarification re acronyms; and the possibility of widening clinical support for staff beyond the main safeguarding team who were dealing with safeguarding issues (and how this might work in practice).

6.5 Student Voice Update

M Cameron and H Barrons gave a comprehensive overview of the written report.

Questions and discussion included: any additional support from the College SLT and student ideas for the Behaviour Policy.

Governors expressed their thanks for the super report.

I Wright left the meeting at 6.25pm

6.6 Higher Education Committee Recommendations

P Lynn gave a brief overview of the first meeting of the Higher Education Committee including consideration of the Terms of Reference (to be reviewed again next year in the first instance), the HE strategy and Student Voice.

Governors discussed: the HE strategy (to which minor changes were suggested for the first edition); clarification on where Higher Education's contribution sat within the accounts (not separate); the focus on the accreditation process as a priority; future additions to the strategy in terms of USP and benefits of studying HE at Middlesbrough College; and the value students had placed on staff commitment to ensure student success.

After consideration, ***the following recommendations were approved by the Governing Body:***

6.6.1 the Terms of Reference for the Higher Education Committee

6.6.2 – the Higher Education Strategy (subject to changes discussed)

7. Corporate Updates

7.1 Audit and Risk Recommendations

I Wright gave the background to the three documents for approval all of which had minor updates only.

Governors asked for greater clarity within the policies and procedures relating to issues involving the Principal and VP of Finance. Subject to those additions, ***the Governing Body approved the following:***

7.1.1 Anti-Fraud, Theft and Bribery Policy

7.1.2 Fraud, Theft and Bribery Response Plan

7.1.3 Gifts and Hospitality Policy

I Wright then gave an appraisal of the recent meeting on 10 March 2023 highlighting the detailed scrutiny of the College strategic risks and consideration and planning for the internal and external auditor contracts (with the initial focus being on the internal audit process in which I Wright would be supporting M Russell and team).

Governor discussion followed on the increase in External Audit fees and similar increases in other sectors.

7.2 Corporate Services Recommendations

P Studd gave a comprehensive overview of the recent meeting particularly in relation to TTE and 5 year financial plan considerations.

He also highlighted that the meeting had been the last for H Ashton (whose term ended in March) and S Wilson (whose second and final term ended in May). He acknowledged the significant contribution of both members to the Committee and formal thanks on behalf of the Committee.

The Governing Body approved the recommendation that the current subcontractors continue to be appointed into 2023-24 (as per Item 7.4 below).

The Governing Body also approved the Vice Chair of Governors as signatory to the TTE contract should the Chair of Governors not be available.

7.3 Management Accounts January 2023

M Russell gave a full review of the management accounts. He drew attention to the key considerations including: energy; EBIDTA; updated TTE position; recruitment and retention of staff and some downgrading of forecasts within income streams.

Governors discussed: the softening of gas prices; recruitment and retention of staff and detail of the considerations by the Corporate Services Committee who had given clear parameters for the final financial plan to be approved in July.

7.4 Subcontractors Update

B Robinson detailed good quality and financial performances by the current subcontractors.

There was some discussion on employer advisory feedback and further clarity would be sought post meeting to resolve this.

The current subcontractors were ***approved*** for 2023-2024 as per Item 7.2 Corporate Services Recommendations above.

7.5 Health and Safety Term 1 Update

S Marshall drew attention to key aspects of the report including: positive progress with the health and safety audit actions; an update on student illnesses; actions resulting from the increased prevalence of vapes and related health and safety issues (fire); and the overall low level of recorded accidents.

Governors sought clarity on ambulance call outs/parental consent and further detail was also given in relation to in-house trained staff.

7.6 Equality and Diversity Term 1 Update

Z Lewis gave a brief overview of the written report and of progress with the equality action plan.

7.7 Staff Recruitment and Turnover

Z Lewis outlined the current situation for staffing which had resulted in a swing back to business support staff recruitment. She detailed the complexities and vacancy rates within the FE sector more widely (against which the College was doing comparatively well) and of the balance of managing risk; morale and minimizing the impact on students all within the current economic environment.

Z Lewis highlighted further recruitment strategies being used by the College.

Governors discussed: the difficulties of FE sector salaries against schools/universities; the restrictions on government bursaries; difficult to recruit to teaching areas (including engineering, health and care, construction, digital) and reasons why and possible further opportunities such as greater use of employer networks (especially SMEs) and increased government lobbying; the number of ITE students who go on to work in the College (80-90%) and the benefits of the Teaching Taking Further strategy enabling the College to grow own future teaching staff; and possible future skills bootcamps if devolved funding became available.

8. Governance Update

8.1 Search and Governance Recommendations

R Davies gave a brief appraisal of the meeting including the consideration of future skills gaps within the Governing Body. He encouraged all governors to get in touch re any suggestions for future members with the required skills and experiences.

After consideration, the following recommendations were approved by the Governing Body:

- Sara Mirsalehi to become Chair of the Remuneration Committee as of 21 March 2023 (the end date of Heather Ashton's term of office) and also join the Search and Governance Committee (by virtue of being a Chair of a Committee)
- Jane Castor to join the Remuneration Committee with immediate effect

Further Terms of Office – College Governors:

- Extension to Peter's Studd final term of office due to end on 12 July 2023 by one day to include the July Governing Body meeting on 13 July 2023
- Extension of Marina Gaze's term of office for one year (up to 31 October 2024) or until after the next College Ofsted visit whichever was the sooner
- A second term of office for Phil Sharp at the end of his current term (22 March 2024) with an end date of 22 March 2028

And approval of the following procedures and code:

- Background Information for Governors
- Governors Induction Programme
- Governors Nomination Process
- Code of Conduct for Governors

8.2 Governance Report

Z Foster highlighted the strength and support of the extensive work of the Link Governors as identified in the report.

The Governing Body approved the following:

- **8.2.1 Corporate Governance Annual Report 2021-22 (including the Remuneration Annual Report 2021-2022)**
- **8.2.2. Calendar of Dates 2023-2024**

9. Review of Strategic Risks – verbal

After consideration, the Governing Body were in agreement that the risks identified were correct. However, a greater emphasis on the mitigations and narrative regarding the management of the transfer of TTE to the main site was suggested (which would be strengthened under the recruitment and retention of staff).

10. Date and Time of Meetings 2023 were noted and the following highlighted:

- **Strategic Planning Day 12.4pm on Friday 5th May 2023**
- **Curriculum Planning 5pm on Monday 12 June 2023** – all governors invited

11. Matters for Publication

No restricted matters were identified

12. Any other Business

- a) R Davies thanked H Ashton for her considerable contribution and support to the Governing Body over the past four years and wished her well.

13. Reserved Matters

None taken

The meeting ended at 7.27pm