

**THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE  
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING 18.03.2024**

**PRESENT:** R Davies (CG and Chair), M Cameron (Student Gov), T Edgcombe (Student Governor), M Gaze (CG), M King (CG), M Lamb (CG), S Lane (CG), Z Lewis (Principal/Chief Executive), D Lusardi (CG), P Lynn (CG); M McClintock (CG), S Mirsalehi (CG), A Pajura-Jaszczak (Staff Gov), D Still (Staff Gov), P Sharp (CG), I Wallace (CG), L Woods (CG), I Wright (CG).

**OFFICERS** A Adamson (VP), Z Foster (Clerk), S Marshall (GD); K Parkinson (GD), B Robinson (DP), O Rodley (VP), M Russell (VP).

<b>KEY:</b> CG College Governor	CO Co-opted Governor	DP Deputy Principal
VP Vice Principal	Clerk to the Corporation	GD Group Director

**1. Apologies for Absence and Welcome**

R Anderson (CG), I Anwar (CG), J Castor (CG), J Tait (CG).

**2. Declarations of Interest – none**

**3. Minutes**

**3.1 Minutes of 18 December 2023** – were approved as a correct record

**3.2 Minutes of 21 February 2024 Development session** were also approved as a correct record

**4. Matters Arising** – all matters were resolved or in progress.

**5. Strategic Overview**

**5.1 Strategic Risks Report**

Z Lewis drew out the biggest strategic risks currently impacting on the College which were: the negative impact of post 16 qualification reform (particularly in an election year) and recruitment and retention of staff (albeit with some stabilization over recent months). She also highlighted two areas which had increased in probability since the last meeting: safeguarding and TTE International future strategy.

I Wright confirmed that the Audit and Risk Committee had agreed with the risks as determined by the SLT Risk Management Group, at their recent meeting.

**5.2 Principal/Chief Executive's Report**

Z Lewis talked of the current stable position, evidenced by the positive Ofsted and strong Skills judgements and financial position of the College. Specifically in relation to future forecasting, the Audit and Risk Committee, had discussed the likelihood of national budgetary constraints ahead and of possible College mitigations/considerations to avoid difficulties.

Governor questions and discussion included: detail of the funding simplification pilot and possible outcomes; and apprenticeship numbers nationally and locally including the PM's announcement to support SMEs from April 2024.

**5.3 Strategic Plan including Corporate KPI Update**

O Rodley detailed progress against all the corporate KPIs.

Governors had a full discussion on destination data including: ESOL destination data and reasons; greater clarification on destinations capturing with change of survey company; and lack of a benchmark for destinations data (due to current lack of a central capturing tool/mechanism).

**Agreed** to add a destinations data workshop to the Strategic Planning Day.

**6. Student Experience**

**6.1 Curriculum and Standards Committee Recommendations**

P Lynn confirmed that whilst there were no explicit recommendations, the Committee itself had agreed to reintroduce apprenticeship Level 3 Hairdressing. Z Lewis gave the wider background to the reintroduction.

Discussion included: College strategy in relation to Childcare qualifications (Level 2) particularly with introduction of 15 hours for 2 year olds coming in; and possible LSIP second round and potential for adult courses.

## **6.2 Higher Education Committee Recommendations**

M McClintock gave a brief appraisal of the second meeting of this Committee. Further work on developing an appropriate structure for the interrelated roles of the HE Committee, Academic Board and Curriculum and Standards Committee would come to the Strategy Day for consideration.

## **6.3 QIP Update**

O Rodley outlined progress towards actions and targets of the five areas for improvement, giving further information to the two which were not progressing as quickly i) persistent absenteeism and provision areas where this was of particular issue. He detailed the impact of the trauma informed approach which was a more supportive mechanism that had positively impacted retention ii) Initial Assessment and monitoring of learner progress with further work to be done in relation to Maths and English predictions in particular.

A comprehensive discussion on persistent absenteeism took place which included: the importance of whether persistent absentees would achieve/progress; the tailored strategies in dealing with persistent absenteeism and reasons why; clarification on 'progressing' terminology; the impact on the letters home strategy on attendance; wider societal views on the need to attend post Covid; confirmation that overall attendance was higher than the previous year (and above national standard); whether additional strategies would be added for September 2024 bearing in mind local secondary school attendance drop and related consideration of the summer results against the success of the strategies introduced in September 2023; the impact of a culture of poor attendance on future work/job expectations and success and the critical role of colleges; and Inclusive Learning attendance (including monitoring) and reasons why.

B Robinson drew attention to a new group of academic trusts and colleges which would be considering attendance in detail which could give further insight into students coming through.

**Action for O Rodley** to find out if attendance was back at pre Covid levels.

It was **agreed** that the Curriculum and Standards Committee would consider persistent absenteeism a focused part of their discussions.

## **6.4 Quality of Education Update**

B Robinson confirmed that the recent Ofsted was a fair reflection of where the College was currently with a clear sense of areas to work on.

## **6.5 PDBA Update**

A Adamson gave a brief update to all areas where the College was developing students outside the academic.

## **6.6 Safeguarding Update**

A Adamson updated Governors on the latest safeguarding statistics.

Governors' questions included: clarification on multiple categories for a student (more than one can be recorded); rise in significant mental health issues for students; appropriate training for staff to deal with student issues; transition information from schools (minimal in most cases) and progress to improve that with a Transition Co-Ordinator; Inclusive Learning safeguarding and support; and staffing resource levels.

**Action for A Adamson** – to look at a more suitable report for future meetings which focused on trends/issues.

## **6.7 Written Update – Student Voice**

M Cameron gave a full account of the new year so far highlighting: recruitment for key positions ahead of the new academic year; better communication between buildings with an officer now in each; new enrichment timetable for students; Pride Parade; Prison Me No Way event; Mental Health Walk and other mental health events (including students being interviewed by BBC Tees).

Governors asked if there was anything which could be improved leading to a full discussion on: student experience trips including the requirements of the Turing Scheme and of future options; an update on free school meals offer; and the wider role of the Student Council with understanding and disseminating the reasons behind decision making/changes within the College.

## 7. Corporate Updates

### 7.1 Audit and Risk Recommendations

I Wright gave a brief appraisal of the March meeting including: the focus on risk; decision making regarding internal and external audit contracts (including recommendation as outlined). He also highlighted the decision to remove IT security as a regular agenda item other than by exception due to the significant improvements and reassurances gained over the past two years of scrutiny.

Governors queried how internal audits were determined with clarification that this tended to mirror the risk register and risk profile of the College and was usually determined June-September.

After consideration, the Governing Body **approved** the appointment of the current Internal Auditor – RSM for a further academic year (2024-2025) until 31 July 2025 at the full 50 day service.

### 7.2 Corporate Services Recommendations

S Mirsalehi confirmed that there had been no formal recommendations from the March Committee meeting and gave a brief overview of the meeting which included TTE risks and a considered discussion on International.

P Sharp also gave an update regarding dilapidations of the old building with S Marshall confirming the appointment of Hollis (to act on behalf of the College).

S Mirsalehi informed Governors that the Strategic Planning Day would include a tour of the new TTE building.

A discussion took place on TTE International, the wider international market within FE and when it might be sensible to consider this in greater detail as the relocation and staffing of TTE was taking priority currently. Consequently, a strategy on TTE International may come to the May Strategy Day (or deferred if more appropriate).

### 7.3 Management Accounts December 2023

M Russell gave an update to the accounts shared with some potential positives which may be realized by the end of the plan.

### 7.4 Subcontractors Update

B Robinson confirmed that progress for all three subcontractors was on track.

There was some discussion on internal audit requirements / certification requirements. M Russell gave an update in respect of the DfE feedback yet to be received (which if positive would be a three year window) and of the devolved position and TVCA light touch review.

### 7.5 Health and Safety Term 1

S Marshall appraised Governors of health and safety activity over term one and of forthcoming work over term 2 (including fire doors; certification fire door inspection courses for some staff, TTE relocation, and an internal audit in April).

Questions and discussion focused on: how external validations could be captured and where (evidence including via the KPI monitoring; exception report; through the Quality Team; as part of the mitigations on the risk register, and via P Sharp who sits on the Health and Safety Committee).

**Action by O Rodley/Quality Team and Z Lewis** to consider how best external validations could be used/shared and tracked appropriately.

### 7.6 Equality and Diversity Term 1 Update

K Parkinson shared the update with Governors highlighting the work of L Barry in the creation of the report.

Governor questions and discussion considered where women and girls (and any other underrepresented group) were underrepresented and the College actions/responses to that. Z Lewis gave an update in respect of achievement gaps and how this had improved and of tracking mechanisms through the IoT.

It was **agreed** that it would be useful to add this further detail to future reports with **action by L Barry**.

### 7.7 Staff Recruitment and Turnover

K Parkinson detailed an improving picture overall (with the exception of Business Support). She updated Governors on the new Recruitment Business Partner and her remit.

Questions and discussion included: if and when Eton College was likely to open (2026 or 2027 opening likely); staff workload generally and where there are gaps/new staff and how the College was responding (including via a staff workload group, Department teams sharing of workload/timetables/support etc); Engineering particularly in relation to TTE relocation and new staff support (J Chance's role); the impact of the use of market supplements; recruitment strategies in difficult to recruit areas; and management retention (which had stabilized).

Z Lewis gave detail of the Levelling Up premium which would be given to teachers in their first five years of employment in certain areas (of 6K) which was due to come into force in September which may assist recruitment and potentially reduce the use of market supplements.

## **8. Governance Update**

### **8.1 Search and Governance Recommendations**

R Davies recommended the following for approval by the Governing Body:

- 8.1.1** Vice Chair Nomination Process (to start 18 March 2024)
- 8.1.2** Governors Induction Programme
- 8.1.3** Updated Code of Governance (for use as of 1 August 2024)

Members present **approved** all three documents.

### **8.2 Governance Report**

Z Foster gave a brief overview of her report and recommendations within.

After consideration, the Governing Body **approved** the following:

**08.2.1.** Corporate Governance Annual Report 2022-2023 (including Remuneration Report 2022-2023) for publication

**08.2.2** Calendar of Dates 2024-2025 (with some further changes to follow)

The Governing Body then also **approved** the retrospective use of the College seal in February 2024 as detailed in the Governance Report.

## **9. Review of Strategic Risks – verbal**

The strategic risks were discussed by the Governing Body with agreement that TTE relocation (including the merging of the teams and harmonization of contracts) was the number one priority (within the overall **RED** risk of retention and recruitment of staff).

## **10. Date and Time of Meetings Summer Term 2024**

**10.1** Strategic Planning Day – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024 10-2pm

**10.2** Curriculum Strategy Meeting – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 5-8pm

*And attendance to hear recommendations via Teams for the final 15-30 minutes of the following two meetings:*

- Curriculum and Standards – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 4.30pm
- Corporate Services Committee – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025 4.30pm

**10.3** Ordinary Governing Body meeting – Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 5-8pm

Z Lewis and S Lane also gave an update on the Employer Voice Committee which would be having its first meeting on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June.

## **11. Matters for Publication**

There were no restricted items.

## **12. Any other Business**

None taken

*The meeting ended at 7.46pm*