

**THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING 11.07.2024**

PRESENT: R Davies (CG and Chair), R Anderson (CG), J Castor (CG), T Edgcombe (Student Governor), A Hassack (CG), M Lamb (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), J Tait (CG), L Woods (CG), I Wright (CG).

IN ATTENDANCE: O Manners (Student Governor from 1 August 2024)

OFFICERS: A Adamson (VP), Z Foster (Clerk), S Marshall (VP); K Parkinson (VP), G Potts (VP), B Robinson (DP),

KEY:	CG College Governor	CO Co-opted Governor	DP Deputy Principal
	VP Vice Principal	Clerk to the Corporation	

1. Apologies for Absence

M Cameron (Student Gov), S Lane (CG), O Rodley (VP), M Russell (VP), P Sharp (CG), I Wallace (CG).

2. Declarations of Interest – R Anderson in respect of any LSIP/LSIF related discussion

3. Appointments and Minutes

3.1 Appointments

After consideration the following were **approved** by Governors:

- the appointment of A Hassack as a College Governor as of 11 July 2024 on an initial four year term and for Andrew to join the Curriculum and Standards Committee and become the Link Safeguarding Governor as of 1 August 2024
- the appointment of O Manners as new Student Governor as of 1 August 2024 on a one year fixed term until 31 July 2025
- the extension of the term of office for T Edgcombe (second student governor) for a further year until 31 July 2025
- the formal appointment of P Lynn as Vice Chair of Governors (as a result of the uncontested nomination process) as of 1 August 2024 on a two year term of office (ending 31 July 2026)
- the change of status for M King from College Governor to Co-opted Governor as of 11 July 2024 on a four year term and remains as a member of the Audit and Risk Committee

A Hassack and O Manners were welcomed to the Committee. G Potts (new Vice Principal) was also welcomed to the meeting.

3.2 Minutes of 18 March 2024 – were approved as a correct record

3.3 Minutes of 11 May 2024 Strategic Planning 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 gave a brief appraisal of the SLT Risk Management meeting held in June which I Wallace attended on behalf of the Audit and Risk Committee. She drew attention to the increase to the compliance risk detailing the reasons why.

An update was given in relation to staff turnover, which was reducing. The TTE move was still a key risk to monitor particularly within the Autumn term and governors would be kept apprised. She also detailed key elements of the financial plan specifically: the build up of cash and the delay in receiving the allocation from TVCA. Finally, in relation to SLT personnel changes, she highlighted the departure of M Russell and plans in place ahead of S Langstaff's starting date, and the new role of G Potts within the SLT structure.

5.2 Principal/Chief Executive's Report

Z Lewis drew attention to a number of key themes of the Labour manifesto which related to FE (including Skills England; Technical Excellence Colleges; pause and review of L3 courses; merging of Job Centre and Careers Service; reforms of the Apprenticeship Levy; post 16 comprehensive review; how the VAT on private schools may be used (to pay for new teachers in schools and colleges); and review of single word Ofsted judgements) and gave a brief appraisal of B Phillipson's first communication with College leaders, both of which suggested both a period of change and of potential opportunities going forward.

Governor questions and discussion included: local politics; resources to support other colleges and the positive impact of the work so far; the post 16 review and how this might develop; and how FE might support NEETs with a built up careers offer.

5.3 Strategic Plan including Corporate KPI Update

Z Lewis outlined good progress against the plan, drawing attention to A Level results due in August where it was hoped there would be an improved picture particularly in relation to high grades.

Governors' questions and discussion included: overall improvements in relation to staff diversity and future plans to focus on developing this further within the management teams; plans to support students in relation to increasing food prices including the new bursary policy; diversification of Thrive tutorial content for various cohorts and wider national issue in relation to tutorial sessions; and feedback from Year 10 Discovery Day in relation to A Level offer.

6. Student Experience

6.1 Note of Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting of 1 July 2024

P Lynn confirmed that there were no recommendations from the Committee. However, she drew attention to key items of discussion which included: staffing risk particularly in relation to Engineering; Initial Assessment consistency and persistent absenteeism and strategies to address this going forward.

G Potts outlined the Teesworks Skills Academy model which was in the early stages of discussion between local colleges.

The Turing Scheme was discussed by governors particularly in relation to: health and safety measures; the application process and key criteria (which included low income households; care experience, asylum seekers and SEN); communications with parents and fund raising requirements.

6.2 QIP Update

Z Lewis briefly presented QIP progress.

Governors' discussion and questions included: 30% persistent absenteeism – context, lack of national benchmarking, Ofsted view, how absenteeism was measured (which differed from schools), and future work which included potentially tailoring absence targets for different cohorts of students (e.g. Inclusive Learning).

A Adamson also outlined the success of the Maximizing Attendance Policy and processes involved.

Clarification was sought on the ambiguity/use of the terminology of 'persistent absenteeism'.

6.3 Quality of Education Update

B Robinson detailed the plans for the forthcoming year.

6.4 PDBA Update

A Adamson drew out the Social Action work by students (and staff) over the year which had involved around 60% of all students.

A Adamson outlined the positive effect of the Behaviour Management Policy on the reduction in exclusions and further development going forward through the trauma informed practice and training all staff had taken part in as part of the Proclaim initiative.

Governors were supportive of the whole College culture based approach to this.

6.5 Safeguarding Update

A Adamson gave a brief overview of safeguarding cases which had both increased in relation to volume and complexity. She outlined how the Safeguarding Team were able to concentrate on high level concerns with tutors now trained to deal with lower level concerns.

Governors' questions included: clarification on numbers for on-site sexual abuse incidents; reasoning for rotation of safeguarding officers and ensuring that necessary relationship building wasn't being hampered by this; detail of the training for staff dealing with low level safeguarding (which included training for personal tutors and online support); the high number of suicide and suicidal idealization reported; the positive effect of the Smoothwall system particularly for targeting trends and support; and clarification on some figures cited in the summary and corresponding appendices (which should be the same with 735 being the accurate figure).

6.6 Student Journey 2023-2024

Governors were very positive about the student journey report.

T Edcombe confirmed a positive year for the student body. Low level issues highlighted by the Student Council were discussed.

O Manners left the meeting at 6.15pm

7. Corporate Updates

7.1 Audit and Risk Recommendations

I Wright gave a brief appraisal of the June meeting highlighting: an important change to the way of assessing risk by the SLT Risk Management team with a new matrix for the impact element of the scoring which the Audit and Risk Committee discussed and had approved for use going forward; a full discussion on the Internal Audit Strategy which may allow for a further audit over the forthcoming year (and he encouraged Governors to give any suggestions to him); compliance with the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice and subsequent minor changes to the terms of reference; and a discussion on how the External Audit for the coming year may be impacted in light of personnel changes both in College (with the departure of M Russell) and from the Audit Team with a new audit manager. I Wright assured governors that the Committee would be monitoring this.

Action by any governor to share with I Wright any ideas for areas of focus for an additional internal audit over 2024-2025.

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

- The Risk Management Plan 2024-2025
- The updated Audit and Risk Terms of Reference
- The External Audit Strategy to 31 July 2024 (incorporating the 2023-2024 Financial Statements and 2023-2024 Regularity Audit) and External Audit Fee as detailed in the report

Governors discussed the area of AI which the Audit and Risk Committee had raised as a potential training piece and it was **agreed** that this would form part of the annual training/development session in February 2025 (ideally to be led by J Wells, R Shuttleworth and T Pierce).

7.2 Employer Voice Committee Recommendations

R Anderson (Vice Chair of the Committee) gave a brief appraisal of the inaugural meeting and of the structure and focus going forward with those in attendance also sharing their positive views of this additional committee to support Governing Body decision making relating to employers.

The Governing Body **approved** the Employer Voice Committee Terms of Reference.

7.3 Note of approved Corporate Services Recommendations

J Castor confirmed that the recommendations had been approved by a quoracy of Governors on 8 July 2024. For those governors who were not in attendance she outlined the approved recommendations detailed below:

Approval of the Three Year Plan specifically:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of the 2024-2025 detailed revenue budget, capital plan and financing assumptions as the College's Budget for 2024-2025 • Approval of the financial plan for the remainder of the three year period (to 31 July 2027). 			
Approval of the Fees Policy 2024-2025 (and its publication ahead of the new academic year)			
Approval of the 2024-2025 plans to subcontract partners as below:			
<u>Sub-Contractor</u>	<u>Funding Value</u>	<u>Management fee</u>	<u>Contract value</u>
Hope Foundation (TVCA)*	£307,980	£61,596	£246,384
Uplift Associates (NECA Procured)	£707,000	£141,400	£565,600

3T (Skills Bootcamps TVCA)	£296,879	£44,532	£252,347
TBC Skills Bootcamps Project S	£1,103,867	£165,580	£938,287
<i>* Still awaiting TVCA allocation and we may reduce this down depending on allocation awarded.</i>			

In addition, she also drew attention to key discussion points which had included: the TTE move which was both on time and within budget and ongoing summer work and mitigations for disruption; the new colleges Financial Handbook; the Procurement Act due to come into force in October (I Wright confirmed that this had also been fully discussed at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting); the decrease in staff turnover; and an update on the new HR system and future plans to extend this.

Z Lewis gave the key headlines in relation to the three year financial plan for those not at the Corporate Services Committee meeting which would ensure a build-up of cash balances to the recommended levels suggested by the FE Commissioner (by the end of the plan) and would include a 3% pay award for staff next year, both of which were predicated on a successful summer enrolment. She also detailed some good news with an increased allocation from NEMCA for adult allocations.

Action by Z Foster – to recirculate the three year plan after the meeting to all governors.

Clarification as sought on subcontracting management fees variation. Post meeting – it was confirmed that 15% was the maximum which could be charged for bootcamps and 20% the maximum on guidelines for ASF/AEB funding hence the variation.

7.4 Management Accounts May 2024

Governors approved the Management Accounts which had already been scrutinized by Corporate Services Committee.

7.5 Health and Safety Term 2

S Marshall gave an update in respect of Term 3 which included: low numbers of accidents; a successful internal audit in April; detail of one Riddor reportable incident; the plans for the fire brigade to do a full assessment exercise during the summer; an update on automated risk assessments which was working well; contractor and project management and related contingency planning; and fire door prioritization work.

Questions focused around the health and safety assessment of TTE and related training and a review of health and safety at the old site ahead of staff leaving by 1 August 2024.

7.6 Equality and Diversity Terms 2 and 3 Update

K Parkinson shared the update with Governors highlighting the work of L Barry in the creation of the report. She informed governors of the recent accolade from the Business IQ Awards where the College won the Diversity and Inclusion category.

7.7 Staff Recruitment and Turnover

K Parkinson tabled an updated graph on the turnover rate which had decreased by 6% on last year. She gave a positive update on recent Engineering vacancies (of which four out of five vacancies had now been filled). She also outlined plans to bring in a new recruitment model into the HR system which would provide a rich source of up to date information.

K Parkinson also updated Governors on the outcome from the recent IIP assessment where the College had received a Gold award. Furthermore, the College had benchmarked above everyone else in the sector category. A full report would come out after the summer with an accompanying action plan.

Governors congratulated K Parkinson, and all involved on the outcome.

Questions and discussion included: an update on business support recruitment (which was going well); the ongoing issue of counter-offers within the local area; the impact of the positive Ofsted with staff with increased targeting by recruiters; the training of industry based staff and the importance of ITE in supporting staff with teaching qualifications and skills.

8. Governance Update

8.1 Link Governors Verbal Reports

Link governors for Finance; Higher Education; Teaching and Learning; Safeguarding; Adult Education, Equality and Diversity; PDBA/Careers and Student Voice; and Digital Transformation gave an overview of their activity and impact over the past year.

Z Lewis updated the Governing Body on the headlines from the recent NS survey where results were very good and improved across the board from last year and in relation to other local colleges. Full detail would come to Governors next academic year.

P Lynn, on behalf of the Governing Body, thanked M Cameron in his role within the Student Executive and as Student Governor for the past two years.

R Anderson also gave an update in relation to the LSIP and the College's role within this which was very positive.

8.2 Search and Governance Recommendations

R Davies recommended the Training Plan for 2024-2025 **for approval** by the Governing Body which was unanimously **agreed**.

8.3 Governance Report

Z Foster gave a brief overview of her report and recommendations within. She drew particular attention to the change in the training day which would now focus on statutory requirements for all governors as the main focus (thereby removing the Thrive requirement in those areas).

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

- The updated Student Constitution
- Confirmation that the Terms of Reference for the committees had been met and remained fit for purpose
- the application of the College Seal as detailed within the report.

9. College Policies and Procedures

After consideration, the following policies and procedures were **approved** by the Governing Body:

9.1 Disability Statement 2024-2025

9.2 Equal Pay Statement

9.3 Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

9.4 Behaviour Management Policy – A Adamson drew out some minor changes to the policy for information

9.5 Fees Policy (*for information as approved on 8 July 2024 as outlined in 7.3*)

9.6 Subcontracting Procedures

10. Review of Strategic Risks – verbal

The strategic risks remained as at the start of the meeting. It was agreed that the transition to TTE (with the focus being on people) remained the main focus for the Autumn term.

11. Date and Time of Meetings for Term 1 2024

- 11.1** Strategic Planning – Tuesday 1st October 2024 1-5pm
- 11.2** Governing Body (Ordinary) – Monday 21 October 2024 5-8pm
- 11.3** Governing Body SARS – Monday 11th November 2024 all day
- 11.4** Governing Body (Ordinary) – Monday 16th December 2024 5-8pm

12. Matters for Publication

There were no restricted items

13. Any other Business

None taken

14. Reserved Matters

No reserved matters

The meeting ended at 7.25pm