

**The Corporation of New College Durham****Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation  
held on 9 November 2023****Present:**

Christine Warren (Chair)  
Andy Broadbent  
Joy Brindle  
Joyce Drummond-Hill  
Chris Patterson  
Ben Fisher  
Emily Baxter

Stephen King  
Allen Eccles  
Ian Green  
Mark Gomersall  
Davey Benson  
Alice Tomlinson

**Apologies:**

Suzanne Slater  
Moss White  
Peter Morrison

**In attendance:**

Karl Fairley (Deputy Chief Executive)  
Alison Maynard (Deputy Principal)  
Paul Bradley (Chief Finance Officer)  
Adele Dowson (Vice Principal)  
Andy Stephenson (Vice Principal)  
Colleen Peters (Vice Principal)  
Caroline Winter (Head of Governance and Corporation Secretary)

**Action****23/117 Chair's introduction and starred items**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded members to declare their interests in any item of business to be discussed at the meeting. No interests were declared.

Members **confirmed** that they did not require any further discussion about the starred agenda items B1, B2, B3, G1, G4, G5, G7, H1, H2, H5, I, J and K.

*Joyce Drummond-Hill joined the meeting via MS Teams at 4.04pm*

**23/118 Apologies for absence** were received from Suzanne Slater, Peter Morrison and Moss White.

*Chris Patterson joined the meeting at 4.05pm.*

**23/119 Minutes of previous meeting (Paper A1 and A2)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2023 (including confidential minutes) were **agreed** as accurate and signed by the Chair.

**23/120 Matters arising**

There were no follow up actions from the previous meeting.

The Chair confirmed that expressions of interest would be sought in the next few weeks to undertake the SEND governor role and

reminded members of the ongoing request to consider their networks to support future governor recruitment.

A short discussion took place on a proposal to review the level of detail recorded in meeting minutes. It was agreed to trial an approach which reduced some detail in recording items where this information was contained within the written report. Members also noted that a report would be prepared for the next Search and Governance Committee proposing a clear process and criteria for categorising confidential information.

**23/121 Principal's Report (Verbal update)**

This item is recorded confidentially under minute 23/121(a).

**23/122 Receipt of Committee minutes and verbal reports from chairs**

**Finance and Resources Committee (Papers B1\* and B2\*)**

the minutes of the meeting of 11 October 2023 were received.

**Search and Governance Committee (Paper B3\*)** the minutes of the meeting of 23 October 2023 were received.

**23/123 Academic Performance 2022/23 (Paper C)**

Alison Maynard presented Paper C, which updated on academic performance and provided the final achievement position for 2022/23.

Part of this item is recorded confidentially under minute 23/123(a).

Members praised the overall results and observed these were very close to KPI targets, highlighting apprenticeships and adult education in particular. The Chair asked that the Board's congratulations was passed on to curriculum areas and commented that the results evidenced the progress being made on the journey to outstanding.

**AM**

**23/124 Enrolment Update – 2023/24 (Paper D)**

Alison Maynard presented Paper D, which updated on further education, apprenticeships and higher education recruitment up to 20 October 2023.

Part of this item is recorded confidentially under minute 23/124(a).

*Mark Gomersall left the meeting at 5.08pm.*

**23/125 Strategic Monitoring (Verbal update)**

The Principal gave a verbal update on progress with implementation of the revised strategic KPIs and the next steps in reporting. Members noted the year end closing reports were being

considered in the current round of committee meetings to review the final figures for 2022/23 and ratify the KPIs for 2023/24 which Corporation provisionally approved in July 2023. Committees would also receive the first snapshot of any actual performance figures available at the time, with the latest available information being reported to Corporation in December. Following the current transition period, an updated KPI report would be submitted to each Corporation meeting.

#### **23/126 Skills and Employer Engagement update (Paper E)**

Alison Maynard presented Paper E, which provided an updated overview of how the College was meeting local skills needs. Alison highlighted the Ofsted judgement that the College was making a 'strong' contribution to meeting skills needs, and briefed members on the current North East skills landscape, funding for skills initiatives, the role of the core curriculum and the North East Institute of Technology in meeting skills needs. Members commented that the paper was an excellent and detailed summary of a very important area for the College and the region and gave further assurance in relation to the strong skills judgement. Members highlighted that meeting skills needs and the role of employers and advisory boards had emerged in a number of the SAR validation sessions demonstrating that this was central to the curriculum. Members sought clarification on the progression figures in the report and it was confirmed these related to minimum contract targets and that the actual figures would be higher.

#### **23/127 Safeguarding Governor – update to Corporation (Paper F)**

Davey Benson presented Paper F, which summarised his termly meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL). Davey advised there had been a good discussion covering the annual review of safeguarding for 2022/23 and although the College had seen a fall in the number of safeguarding incidents compared with the previous year the same three categories, mental health, self-harm and suicidal thoughts were again the most commonly used. The data was being used across the College to inform the content of Personal Development activity to focus on specific areas. Members noted the latest information from the MyConcern system and the Safeguarding Risk Register with student mental health remaining the key challenge. The DSL group were reviewing the risk on knife crime following a small number of student incidents to determine whether any action was required. Members noted the updated Prevent guidance and confirmation that this did not place any new legal requirements or responsibilities on the College. Members noted the discussion had also considered safeguarding staff and that the potential for training and development on softer skills to enable staff to support colleagues outside of formal HR processes was being explored.

Members welcomed the strong assurance that arrangements to manage Safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities in the College were robust.

**23/128 Annual Report on Risk Management and Key Risks (2022/23) (Paper G1)**

Members received Paper G1, the annual report on risk management which summarised risk management activity over the previous year and highlighted the College's top ten risks.

Members noted the risk matrix used to assess risk score, the changes to the risk register over the course of the year, the current number of high, medium and low risks and the areas of emerging risk.

**23/129 Financial Monitoring to 30 September 2023 (Paper G2)**

Paul Bradley presented Paper G2, which provided members with the financial position of the College as at 30 September 2023.

The report covered the first two months of the financial year and members noted the enrolment position, the key financial indicators which confirmed the College as financially outstanding, the additional funding received from the ESFA to support recruitment and retention and staffing and non-staffing contingency.

Members noted the financial position at the end of September 2023.

**23/130 Financial Monitoring – Westfirst Limited to 30 September 2023 (Paper G3)**

Paul Bradley presented Paper G3, which detailed the financial position of Westfirst Limited to the end of September 2023.

Members were updated on the profit and net liability position and noted the Westfirst Limited financial reports to 30 September 2023.

**23/131 Review of Reserves Policy (Paper G4)**

Members **approved** the Reserves Policy as presented.

**23/132 Budget Policy (Paper G5)**

Members **approved** the Budget Policy as presented.

**23/133 Artificial Grass (4G) Pitch (tender returns) (Paper G6)**

This item is recorded confidentially under minute 23/133(a).

#### **23/134 Capital Projects Update (Paper G7)**

Members received Paper G7, which updated on the College's major capital projects. Members noted progress on The Hub, the Artificial Grass (4G) Pitch Project and Promotion House.

#### **23/135 Review of Governing Body Business, Governance Self-Assessment Report 2022/23 and Governance Development Plan 2023/24 (Paper H1)**

Members received Paper H1, the review of governing body business for 2022/23, which had been endorsed by the Search Committee and recommended for approval. The report provided details of membership changes, meeting attendance, review of meeting arrangements, development and training activities, major items of business conducted, review of prior year governance development plan, analysis of governance survey, draft governance development plan for 2023/24, review of compliance with the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and conclusions on governance. Appendices also comprised individual attendance data, an updated Governor skills audit, diversity monitoring data, summary of the Governors' Register of Interests. Attendance at Corporation and Committee meetings was high at 88%.

Members **approved** the report and governance development plan for 2023/24.

#### **23/136 Search Committee Annual Report 2022/23 (Paper H2)**

Members noted Paper H2, the Search Committee Annual Report for 2022/23. The report provided details of committee membership and attendance, terms of reference and a review of work undertaken during the year.

#### **23/137 Governor Training and Development Plan 2023/24 (Paper H3)**

The Corporation Secretary presented Paper H3, the proposed Governor Training and Development Plan recommended by the Search and Governance Committee. Members reviewed the plan which was structured into four sections covering: mandatory training and development, recommended development activities, ongoing activities including regular briefings/updates and support for members joining a committee, and induction activity for new governors.

Members **approved** the Training and Development plan.

#### **23/138 Appointment of Student Governor (Paper H4)**

Members received Paper H4, which confirmed that Moss White was accepted as the Student Governor nominee by the Cross College Further Education Forum on 10 October 2023.

Members **agreed to appoint** Moss White as Student Governor for the 2023/24 academic year until 30 June 2024.

**23/139 Committee Composition (Paper H5)**

Members **approved** the proposed committee composition and noted that Suzanne Slater and Moss White would join the Further Education Quality, Curriculum & Students Committee, Stephen King would act as Chair of the Search and Governance Committee and Allen Eccles would act as Chair Designate of the Audit and Risk Committee.

**23/140 Use of the College Seal**

Members noted the application of the College Seal to the collateral warranty documents and parent company guarantee in relation to THE Hub building as detailed in the extract from the Corporation Register of Seals attached to the report. The documents were signed by the Chair and Principal on behalf of Corporation.

**23/141 Any other urgent business (communicated to the Head of Governance & Corporation Secretary in advance of the meeting)**

The Chair requested that Corporation's thanks be placed on record to all staff involved in the SAR validation sessions, which continued to be a robust process feeding into the overall College SAR.

**23/142 Date of next meeting: 14 December 2023**

**23/143 Remuneration Committee Annual Report 2022/23 (Paper J)**

Members reviewed Paper J and noted the Remuneration Committee Annual Report 2022/23.

**23/144 Receipt of Confidential Committee Minutes – Remuneration Committee – 16 October 2023 (Paper K)**

Members received the confidential minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 16 October 2023.

Signed.....Date.....