

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD  
HELD AT 5.30PM ON THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2024**

**Present:** Dr A Birkinshaw (Chair) Mr D Langton  
 Ms J Atkins Mr A Micklethwaite  
 Mr E Drake Mr C Morgan (via Teams)  
 Mr A Hussain Mrs J Rogers  
 Mrs H Kerrick Mr R Scott  
 Mrs A Lall (Interim Principal and CEO) Ms C Thomas

**In attendance:** Mr G Dixon Vice-Principal (Finance and Resources)  
 Mrs A Crabtree (Interim Assistant Principal – Quality)  
 Mr D Bulloch (Interim Assistant Principal – Quality)  
 Mr W McGlinchey (Interim Assistant Principal – Curriculum)  
 Mrs J Tracy (Interim Director of Governance)

		<b>ACTION</b>
M23/265	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
M23/266	The Chair informed the Board that it was Mr Ed Drake’s last Board meeting – his term of office ending at the end of March. She thanked Mr Drake for his time, commitment and work on behalf of the Board and wished him well for the future.	
M23/267	The Chair also informed the Board that Mrs A Crabtree would leave the College tomorrow but would be assisting the College in a handover period. Mrs Crabtree was thanked and wished well in her retirement.	
M23/268	The Board was informed that the permanent Director of Governance would start at the College from 8 April 2024 but would not take on the role of Director of Governance until 1 May 2024. Mrs J Tracy would continue as Interim Director of Governance until 30 April 2024 and would then provide support during May to the Director of Governance, Mrs S Francis. The Chair thanked Mrs Tracy for her work at the College and in supporting her as Chair.	
M23/269	An event would be organised to thank Mr Drake and Mrs Tracy.	<b>IDG</b>
M23/270	As the Student Governor, Mr A Hussain would need to leave early, it was <b>agreed</b> that Agenda Item 9 – Student Governor Report would be taken earlier. The minutes would be recorded in the order of discussion.	
	<b>Item 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
M23/266	There were apologies for absence from Professor J Craig and Dr J Guth.	
	<b>Item 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
M23/267	There was a declaration of interest from Mr Chris Morgan in relation to his role as Director of Education – Employability and Skills with WEA (The Workers’ Educational Association).	
	<b>Item 3a: MINUTES OF 25 JANUARY 2024 AND 8 FEBRUARY 2024</b>	
M23/268	There were no non-confidential minutes of the meetings held on 25 January 2024 and 8 February 2024.	
	<b>Item 3b: REVIEW OF ACTION TRACKER AND MATTERS ARISING ON THE MINUTES</b>	
M23/269	Governors had received the action tracker and noted the updates on previous actions.	
M23/279	M22/212 – Designated Governor – consideration to taking on the role was ongoing.	
M23/280	M22/318 – GDPR – 6 staff yet to complete the training; were being followed up.	

- M23/281 Board briefing (21.09.23) - Marketing dashboard - some draft dashboards had been produced – applications to enrolment – which had improved the information available for analysis.
- M23/282 M23/019 - Staff survey – the Interim Principal provided an update and the union support re completing the survey was noted.
- M23/283 M23/08 – The Chair of the Governing Board would meet with the Interim Principal after Easter. The Strategic Plan would then come back to the Board. The Board noted the further consultation which was taking place with staff to ensure that all staff felt that they had had a voice; ditto re students and stakeholders.
- M23/284 M23/092 – Attendance at College events – Governors would receive a termly newsletter in addition to the direct invitations.
- M23/285 M23/248 – Financial Recovery Plan – reports would be made at the Optional Finance, Resources and Investment Committee on 1 May and at the Board Briefing on 23 May 2024.
- M23/286 17:40 Mr C Morgan joined the meeting via Teams.

**ITEM 9: STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT**

- M23/287 The Student Governor presented his report – a copy of which would be uploaded to VBR.
- M23/288 Whilst the report covered areas for improvement, the Student Governor wished to acknowledge the areas which were successful. The main focus of the report covered student enrichment – the need to improve its impact and on the need to develop the wider skills which students would need in their future careers/education. A soft-skills workshop and guest speakers in this area were suggested. The report also covered a need for a student prayer room and gym facilities.
- M23/289 A member of the Board asked how student participation could be increased, with the Student Governor commenting that tutorial time could be spent on enrichment.
- M23/290 It was noted that access to local gym facilities at a reduced rate was available to students. The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources would follow up to ensure that all students were aware and that the College had secured the best deal in terms of cost.
- M23/291 The Head of Student Services informed the Board that the provision of a prayer room was in hand for the next academic year. The Board was also informed that discussions on ‘badging’ the employability programme were underway, and that tutorials covered ‘managing money’ aspects.
- M23/292 A member of the Board asked how much of the enrichment programme was student led. It was confirmed that students are asked for suggestions, via a survey and also via tutorials; the lunchtime clubs on offer were as directed by the students.
- M23/293 It was **agreed** that the College should look at how the enrichment offer was promoted and on which were as a result of student suggestions.
- M23/294 The Chair of the Governing Board thanked the Student Governor for his report.
- M23/295 17:51 Mr A Hussain left the meeting.

VP – F&R

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**ITEM 4: PRINCIPALSHIP**  
**Item 4a: Principalship Report**

M23/296	The Board had received the Principalship report and members noted the content on the key activities in relation to Ofsted, policy update, recruitment, finance and resources, and the Annual Accountability Agreement 2024-25.
M23/297	The following minutes were classified as confidential and not for publication.
	<b>Item 4b: FEC Report Update</b>
M23/302	The paper provided the Board with information on the key findings of the Strategic Review and on the recommendations which were now being taking forward. The Board noted that Phil Cook and Esme Winch (FEC Deputy Commissioners) would be supporting the College.
M23/303	A member of the Board commented on the need for the College to grow income and to try and restrict the growth of costs, rather than only cutting costs. The College was also reminded of the Board's requirement to increase average class sizes, this being critical and as had been discussed at Finance, Resources and Investment Committee.
	<b>ITEM 5: FINANCE</b>
	<b>Item 5a: Financial Position Summary</b>
M23/304	The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources presented the paper which provided a snapshot view of the College's cash position and cash forecast as at 28 February 2024. The Board noted that the sale of the High Street would be completed in April 2024 and that plans to increase the income from the Equine Unit were being taken forward.
M23/305	The following minutes were classified as confidential and not for publications.
	<b>ITEM 6: POLICIES AND STRATEGIES</b>
M23/308	The Committee was reminded that all the policies for consideration at the meeting had been given detailed scrutiny by the relevant Committees.
	<b>Item 6a: Course Fee and Refunds Policy and Fees Approval</b>
M23/309	The Vice Principal – Finance and Resources informed the Board that Finance, Resources and Investment Committee had requested that the College look to increase fees to the maximum in some areas of HE provision.
M23/310	A member of the Board raised the potential impact of increasing fees, and the College was encouraged to undertake a review of the potential impact via a sensitivity analysis based on historic recruitment.
M23/311	Noting the above and the recommendation of Finance, Resources and Investment Committee, the Board <b>approved</b> the Course Fees and Refunds Policy and Fees Approval.
	<b>Item 6b: Estates Strategy 2024-2029</b>
M23/312	The Chair of the Governing Board updated the Board on the discussions which had taken place at Finance, Resources and Investment Committee. The Chair of Finance, Resources and Investment Committee commented on the link between the work which was being undertaken on the Recovery Plan and the Estates Strategy, and that the Committee had agreed to recommend the Estates Strategy in principle, with the Strategy being amended as necessary.
M23/313	The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages relating to freehold/leasehold property. It was noted that whilst leasehold might provide more agility on future actions, the preference of the ESFA was for freehold, with leasehold property potentially restricting capital funding bids.
M23/314	Noting the recommendation of Finance, Resources and Investment Committee, the Board <b>approved</b> the Estates Strategy 2023-2029 in principle.

	<b>Item 6c: Risk Management Policy</b>	
M23/315	The Chair of the Audit Committee provided the Board with an update on the discussions which had taken place at the Audit Committee meeting on risk appetite, it being noted that the risk relating to Board efficacy would be taken to Search and Governance Committee for consideration, with the Committee's feedback then being considered by the Board.	
M23/316	Noting the comments above, the Board <b>approved</b> the Risk Management Policy.	
	<b>Item 6d: IT Strategy 2023-2026</b>	
M23/317	The Board discussed the need to be mindful of student needs against the limited capital available. It was informed of the regular review on IT, the staff training to ensure IT skills were as they should be and the support from JISC and other digital learning groups.	
M23/318	Noting the recommendation of Finance, Resources and Investment Committee, the Board <b>approved</b> the IT Strategy 2023-2026.	
	<b>Item 6e: Financial Regulations</b>	
M23/319	The Board noted the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations as per the paper.	
M23/320	A member of the Board commented on the duplication of content in the Financial Regulations and the Anti-Bribery and Anti-Fraud Policy, and on the need for consistency. The member would provide the information on the duplications for review by the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources.	RS/VP – F&R
M23/321	Subject to any amendments relating to duplication/consistency and on the recommendation of Finance, Resources and Investment Committee, the Board <b>approved</b> the Financial Regulations.	
	<b>Item 6f: Anti-Fraud and Anti- Bribery Policy and Procedure</b>	
M23/322	Noting the amendments to the Policy and on the recommendation of Audit Committee, the Board <b>approved</b> the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery Policy and Procedure.	
	<b>ITEM 7: GOVERNANCE</b>	
	<b>Item 7a: Board and Committee Appointments</b>	
M23/323	The Chair of the Governing Board provided an update on the discussions which had taken place between the Search and Governance Committee and a prospective candidate, and on the background of the candidate. The candidate's skill set had been agreed to replace that of Mr Ed Drake.	
M23/324	On the recommendation of Search and Governance Committee the Board <b>approved</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The appointment of Mrs Sara Wright as a member of the Board and of Finance, Resources and Investment Committee subject to the satisfactory outcome of the usual DBS check, her term of being from 1 April 2024 to 1 April 2028.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Item 8: LEARNING AND TEACHING</b>	
	<b>Item 8a: Learning and Teaching Report</b>	
M23/325	The Interim Assistant Principal – Quality presented the paper which provided summary updates on FE, apprenticeships and HE, teaching and learning, and the curriculum plan. The paper also informed the Board on the implications of performance trends, key risks and action. Quality and Curriculum Committee had also considered the report in detail at its meeting on 20 March 2024.	
M23/326	It was noted that a comprehensive forecast achievement report would be presented to Quality and Curriculum Committee at its next meeting.	
M23/327		

	In answer to a question from a member of the Board, an explanation was given on how attendance was measured. The Board also considered the correlation between attendance and achievement, with information being provided on the work undertaken and the monitoring and reviews which took place. The Board noted the increasing challenge of the Heads of Department on the predicated achievement which was undertaken by the Interim Assistant Principals – Curriculum.	
M23/328	The Interim Assistant Principal – Quality also provided information the national survey of schools’ sixth form and colleges and that the College was looking at all the surveys which were available.	
	<b>Item 8b: AEB Update including Sub-Contracting</b>	
M23/329	The Interim Assistant Principal – Quality (Duncan Bulloch) and Vice Principal - Finance and Resources presented the paper which provided an update on the current position for AEB from both a financial and quality perspective.	
M23/330	The Board noted that the non-devolved budget presented the biggest risk, with specific detail being provided on the ESFA Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ).	
M23/331	It was <b>agreed</b> that future AEB reporting would focus on an agreed profile and the College’s position at the time of reporting.	IAP-Q / VP – F&R
	<b>Item 9: STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT</b>	
M23/332	Minuted as above.	
	<b>Item 10: RISK REVIEW</b>	
	<b>Item 10a: Risk Review</b>	
M23/333	The Interim Principal presented the report which provided the Board with an update on the College’s strategic risks and the actions being taken. Four risks had increased with eight remaining the same, it being noted that only one of those was an increase requiring an additional action plan.	
M23/334	The Board was reminded that the risk associated with the efficacy of the Board would be taken to Search and Governance Committee for consideration.	
	<b>Item 11: APPLICATIONS UPDATE</b>	
M23/335	The Board considered the paper which provided an update on performance on applications for study programmes and higher education recruitment for September 2024, together with the current pipeline for in-year adult and apprenticeship recruitment.	
M23/336	In answer to a question from a Board member, information was provided on the work undertaken with those applicants who had not yet enrolled, and on changes to the current approach.	
M23/337	At the request of the Board, it was <b>agreed</b> that future reports would include reporting on predicted numbers for T levels.	HofSS
	<b>Item 12: GOVERNANCE</b>	
	<b>Reports from the Committees</b>	
	<b>Item 12a: Audit</b>	
M23/338	The notes and feedback summary were presented for information.	
	<b>Item 12b: Finance, Resources and Investment</b>	
M23/339	The notes and feedback summary were presented for information.	
	<b>Item 13: WRITTEN RESOLUTIONS</b>	
M23/340		

The Interim Director of Governance presented the paper which provided an outcome of written resolutions circulated since the previous Board meeting.

**Item 14: REVIEW OF MEETING**

M23/341 The Board considered the usual review points and, noting the comments as above regarding report content, no other comments were made.

**Item 15: DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

M23/342 It was noted that the next meetings would be held on:

- Thursday 23 May 2024 – Board Briefing - 5.30pm (via Teams)
- Thursday 27 June 2024 - Board Away Day (in person, timings and venue tba)
- Thursday 4 July 2024 at 5.30pm – Ingleborough Board Room (I1.10)

**Item 16: CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: PART 2: CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

M23/343 The Board **approved** the confidential minutes of the meetings held on 25 January 2024 and 8 February 2024. There were no 'confidential' action tracker items/ matters arising.

M23/344 The meeting closed at 19:20.

M23/345 The Chair thanked all present for their attendance and contribution.