



Corporation Board Meeting 5

PART 1 MINUTES – NON-CONFIDENTIAL PUBLIC RECORD

**Board Minutes of meeting held 21 March 2024 at 17.30hrs
TEAMS Meeting**

Present

Mr K Norman	Chair of Corporation
Mr D Gleed	Chief Executive Officer/Executive Principal
Dr R Longman	External Governor
Mr M Jenkins	External Governor
Mr L Jones	External Governor
Ms. H King	External Governor
Mrs I Redman	External Governor
Mrs E Cosby	External Governor
Mr D Martin	External Governor
Ms. J Spurgin	External Governor
Mr N Smith	Staff Governor
Mr T Biring	External Governor
Ms S Henwood	External Governor
Miss M Sahota	External Governor

In Attendance

Mr L Jenkins	Deputy Chief Executive
Ms R Hughes	Deputy Executive Principal/Teaching, Learning & Improvement
Mr M Andrews	Deputy Principal/Strategy & Curriculum
Mrs Y Hughes	Clerk & Governance Advisor to the Corporation

Minute no		Action By
926	Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence	
	The Chair of Corporation opened the meeting at 17.30hrs by welcoming all present. Apologies Apologies received from Mr Jonathan Gurney, Ms Suzanne Davies, Mrs N Moore, Dr Sue Hubble and Deputy Executive Principal/Teaching, Learning & Improvement It was noted for the record that the meeting was quorate.	
927	Declarations of Interest	
	There were no further amendments or new declarations of interest declared other than those already registered.	

928	Corporation Board Minutes – Meeting 25 January 2024	
	<p>The Corporation Board received the pre-circulated minutes of the meeting held on the 25 January 2024.</p> <p><i>Formally approved.</i></p> <p><i>The Board formally approved the Part 1 Corporation Board minutes of the meeting held on the 25 January 2024.</i></p> <p><i>The Board formally approved the Part 2 Confidential Minutes of the meeting held 25 January 2024.</i></p>	
929	Actions Register	
	<p>The Clerk & Governance Advisor to the Board reported that there were no outstanding action items and as such no report had been presented to the Board.</p> <p><i>The Board received and noted that there were no outstanding action points to be raised.</i></p>	
930	Chief Executive Report – March 2024	
	<p>The Chief Executive presented his report for March 2024 which was an update on progress against the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Ofsted Inspection</p> <p>The Chief Executive provided the Board with a verbal update on the outcomes of the Ofsted Inspection. It was explained that until the final Ofsted Report had been published that the gradings and outcomes would remain confidential. It was anticipated that the final report would be available in late April.</p> <p>Governors discussed the outcomes of the inspection and formally thanked all of SLT and staff for their hard work and what was a good outcome.</p> <p><i>Noted that the Final Ofsted Report would be circulated to the Board once published.</i></p> <p>Strategic Plan update</p> <p>The Chief Executive referred to his report providing a full update on the progress that had been made against the Strategic Plan. The Chief Executive reported that based on governor’s feedback on the length of reports that he had slimmed the report down the length of the document by not including items that had been completed and reported on in December 2024.</p> <p>The Chief Executive explained that the report now covered the 9 strategic aims that had not been completed but added that since the Ofsted inspection had been completed that there were only 8 to be completed.</p> <p>Dr Longman asked for an explanation on Point 2.3 ‘Staff satisfaction to achieve the overall levels achieved by NKC in 2019’ and why it was unlikely that this objective couldn’t be reached by July 2024. The Chief Executive explained that the College had changed the way the staff surveys were measured, and that the College had gone for a much more qualitative response from staff rather than quantitative. It was explained that over the last 5-6 years, the surveys run had been much the same year on year and although they had achieved the target</p>	

	<p>response rate it did not necessarily mean a lot. HR had therefore adopted a new approach this year and would be launching the 1st of a series of 6 surveys for staff. There were really three questions in each and these should take about 5 minutes to respond to and HR were conducting the surveys over alternate fortnights. The hope is that the responses and feedback would be far more valuable and richer in data to effectively inform SLT and the Board as to what staff were genuinely thinking.</p> <p>Ms Henwood followed up on the angle of the conversation and asked about the Chief Executive sessions that had been held around campuses and what had come out of these meetings. The Chief Executive report that he felt that these meetings had been constructive but added that they had found Hadlow low on uptake, but that Dartford had been very well attended. The discussions had been meaningful and constructive debate had taken place on various matters.</p> <p>SLT were all very pleased with the level of contribution from the staff that turned up and for those staff who came and said something that it was a very positive way forward.</p> <p>Mrs Redman asked whether there was any comparative benchmarking data available across the FE sector on the outcomes of staff surveys. It was noted that there was no national survey and that every college had their own approach in conducting staff surveys.</p> <p>Received</p> <p><i>The Board received the update on the Strategic Plan and would receive Update 9 at the July 2024 meeting.</i></p>	
931	Financial Report – Part 2 Confidential Business – Commercially Sensitive 2nd Quarter Forecast 2023/2024	
932	Monthly Management Accounts Period 6 – Part 2 Confidential – Commercially Sensitive	
	<p>Received</p> <p>The Board having reviewed the Period 6 Monthly Management Accounts, and the 2nd Quarter Forecast accepted the reports as presented.</p>	
933	Annual Fees Policy	
	<p>The Deputy Chief Executive presented the updated and revised policies which required annual review approval by the Corporation Board.</p> <p>A – Tuition Fees Policy 2024-25 draft B – Tuition Fees and Refund and Compensation Policy 2024-25 draft C – Residential Fees Policy 2024-25 draft</p> <p>Formally Approved</p> <p><i>The Board went through the revised policies and formally approved the policies as recommended noting the amendments that had been incorporated within the tracked changes.</i></p>	

934	Subsidiary Company – NKC Business Services - Directors	
	<p>The Deputy Chief Executive presented the paper setting out the proposal for the appointment of a new director of the NKC Business Services subsidiary company.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the subsidiary company, NKC Business Services Limited, was now in use and it was explained that it was historically agreed that when this happened the college would replace Governor Directors who were also due to retire from the Board with an additional staff member from the Senior Leadership Team.</p> <p>The current Directors for the subsidiary are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keith Norman - Richard Longman - David Glead - Lawrence Jenkins <p>It was formally proposed to update the Directors as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Glead - Lawrence Jenkins - Steven Humphries - NEW <p>The Chair commented on the governance processes for the subsidiary company and stated that it would be essential that regular reports be made to the board on the activity of the company. The Deputy Chief Executive agreed and stated that an annual report would be submitted to the Board and added that the subsidiary company was effectively and employment arm for the College and would not have its own bank account. The company although a separate organization would employ staff on behalf of the college.</p> <p><i>Formally approved.</i></p> <p><i>The Board formally approved the appointment of Mr Steve Humphries as a Director of NKC Business Services.</i></p>	
935	Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Review Report	
	<p>The Deputy Chief Executive presented the Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Review report and explained that the College annually approved the Gender Pay Report which was then logged onto a Government portal.</p> <p>Whilst Gender Pay Reporting was a mandatory return it was very high level. The college also reported to the Board on its Equal Pay which was an internal report which sat alongside the Gender Pay Gap report to look at how the college was performing across the college and across various categories. This latter reporting was done based on data from 31 August 2023.</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive referred to the Gender Pay Gap report and stated that there were six specific ways in which the College was required to report the data, with each of the six calculations being completed in line with methods set out in the</p>	

government guidance for this purpose. The mean gender pay gap for 2023 is 15.84%, which was an increase in the gap between male and female pay of 2.52% (from 13.32% in 2022 and 14.49% in 2021). The median gender pay gap, which is the difference in pay between males and females in the middle of the organisation, has also increased slightly by 2.14% to 20.30% (from 18.16% in 2022 and 18.01% in 2021).

The Chair raised a point that had been asked at a previous meeting on the report only being categorized for male and female genders and whether there should be another. It was explained that because the format prescribed by government didn't request this data it was not required.

Governors discussed the gaps between male and female staff at length.

Mr Jenkins commented on the data and the explanations provided and stated that the manner in which the data was collated reflected a relatively blunt tool, but one that was worth paying attention to and that his question would be around the confidence that the Board and College had that some of the roles that were traditionally being paid less but also had a far higher representation amongst female members of staff, that the College was confident that they were being paid within the correct band and that the salary was reasonable and that this additional information within the report would be helpful.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the College had a structured environment as far as pay scales and were an equal opportunity institution and accepted the point made. He further explained that College staff were graded appropriately and that the HR team review this regularly and each time a particular role came up to ensure a standardisation across the college. The Deputy Chief Executive provided a detailed explanation on the standardisation of teaching roles, and that there were numerous grades or tiers where they tried to make sure that roles were appropriate depending on the skills needed for those individual roles. There was a significant amount of work that took place behind the scenes and evaluated by HR which was explained in detail to the Board.

Equal Pay Review Report

The Deputy Chief Executive presented the Equal Pay Review Report and stated that this was the third equal pay review since the transfer of West Kent and Hadlow College's staff to North Kent College (NKC) in August 2020. At that time, the staff numbers of NKC more than doubled and, as part of the TUPE transfer process of these staff to NKC, four additional pay scales, with wide ranging pay points, were inherited following harmonisation projects that had commenced, by the Hadlow Group, but had not been completed within those organisations. The College had now completed a series of significant organisation wide reorganisation programmes including all management and lecturer roles and all support staff departments. This reorganisation of working practices has resulted in positive changes to the terms and conditions of employment and pay for a significant proportion of the workforce.

Mrs Redman accepted the point that the Gender Pay Gap review forms were not particularly conducive to providing the level of detail and stated that it would be helpful for the Board to see a comparison of those graded, irrelevant of the role and how that compared male to female. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the

	<p>information requested was within the Equal Pay Review Report but to provide that level of data for every individual tier would be significant piece of work and added that the College but did have scales for all teaching staff as presented in the report. The data showed the number of staff and the number of male and female and the percentage difference.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed the data within the report at great length and it was agreed that the Deputy Chief Executive would respond to any additional queries governor may have on the report via email.</p> <p>Approved and Accepted</p> <p>The Corporation Board formally approved the Gender Pay Gap Report and accepted the Equal Pay Review Report as presented.</p> <p>Post meeting query: Dr Longman</p> <p><i>Dr Longman raised a query on the breakdown of numbers. The Deputy Chief Executive during the meeting had referred to 702 staff, however Table 1 referred to 595 (accepting vacancies) and Table 2 added up to 361. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the College current headcount for all staff was around 700 in total. The report for Equal Pay was back at the end of August 2023 when it was likely that the College had more vacancies and less casual staff as many were employed term time only. The Equal Pay Report was based on permanent staff so 595 and excluded casual staff contracts (page 2 first paragraph). This excluded a lot of casual staff who were on roll that covered farm duties for College livestock, invigilators, and other casual staff, as these tend to be for short periods, and sometimes include students who are paid to assist. Table 2 analysed some key groups around 61% or 361 out of 595 staff but not all as key examples and explained in the paragraph before, as to try to do every group would be a large process.</i></p>	
936	<p>College Risk Register - update</p>	
	<p>The Deputy Chief Executive presented the revised Risk Register to the Board and explained that ordinarily the document would have been presented to the Audit Committee in the first instances but with the inspection having fallen with this period the register was being submitted directly to the Board.</p> <p>It was explained that the Risk Register originally had 54 identified risks of which many were aligned to the strategic plan and had a significant focus on the acquisition of Tonbridge and Hadlow included of which most had now been completed and therefore the register had been pared down to 17.</p> <p>SLT were now focused on drafting new Strategic Risk Register to be presented to the Board at the July Board meeting.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Deputy Chief Executive and stated that he was delighted that progress was being made with the new Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p>Mr Jenkins commented that the updated Risk Register was a great improvement and much easier to navigate and referred to a couple of specific points around how well the College was reviewing its risks and how ambitious the College was in closing down risks. Mr Jenkins spoke about staff work life balance and commented that the focus seemed to be around developing resilience amongst staff and asked if there was a genuine workload issue. The Deputy Chief Executive responded by</p>	

	<p>referring to the earlier discussions around staff surveys of which there were six and that this was certainly an area that was under scrutiny and hopefully once the staff surveys had been completed that SLT would have a much clearer picture to evaluate and implement positive changes going forward.</p> <p>Governors accepted the updated Risk Register and looked forward to receiving the Draft Strategic Risk Register in the summer.</p>	
937	Quality & Standards Committee Minutes of the meeting held 8 February 2024	
	<p>Mr Martin – Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee presented the minutes of the meeting held on the 8 February 2024 and formally thanked the Clerk for the very detailed record of the meeting held. Mr Norman commented that it was a particularly appropriate time for members of the committee to receive really quite detailed reports on key aspects of the work of the college in terms of curriculum facing aspects and student facing aspects, and as it turned out, it was particularly timely having had the call from Ofsted.</p> <p>Received The Board received the minutes of the Q&S Committee meeting held February 2024 for information purposes.</p>	
938	Compliments & Complaints Annual Report 2022/23	
	<p>Received The Board received the Annual Compliment & Complaint report for 2022/23</p>	
939	Estates Strategy & Capital Projects Committee Minutes of the meeting held 1st February 2024 – Minuted as Part 2 Confidential – Commercially Sensitive	
940	Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee - update	
	<p>Ms Henwood – Chair of the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee reported that the committee had met on the 20th of March and that the minutes of that meeting would be presented to the Board in May 2024 but went onto give a verbal update on the business covered during the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Corporation Board Membership The report on Corporation Board Membership included an update on current board membership, committee membership, governors skills audit and attendance data. b. Governance Improvement Action Plan update – noted that progress was ongoing. c. NKC Standing Orders d. NKC Code of Conduct e. NKC Corporation Board/Committee Virtual Meeting Etiquette f. SPH Recruitment Protocols <p>Noted</p>	

	<i>The Board accepted the verbal update and noted that the minutes and documents requiring formal approval would be presented to the May 2024 Board meeting.</i>	
941	Audit Committee Minutes of the meeting held 14th March 2024	
	<p>Mr Jones – Interim Chair of the Audit committee presented the minutes of the last meeting held on the 14th of March 2024 and reported on the business undertaken by the committee during this meeting.</p> <p>Internal Audit Services - Scrutton Bland - Internal Audit Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Purchasing & Payments b. Maths & English c. Payroll <p>Outstanding Audit Recommendations External Governance Review - Governance Improvement Action Plan - Audit Committee - Clerk/Chair</p> <p>Received</p> <p><i>The Board received the minutes of the last Audit Committee meeting held 14th March 2024.</i></p>	
941	Any other Business	
	The Chair commented that it had been a substantial agenda and thanked everyone for their valuable contributions.	
942	Date and time of the next meeting – Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at 17.30hrs	
	Meeting closed at 19.31hrs	