



North Kent College

Corporation Board

Part 1 Minutes (non-Confidential) of the meeting held on

Thursday 24 October 2024 at 17.30hrs held via Teams.

Members present:

Mr. D Martin	External Governor – Chair of Corporation
Mr. D Gleed	Chief Executive Officer/Executive Principal
Mr. L Jones	External Governor
Mrs. I Redman	External Governor
Ms. J Spurgin	External Governor
Mr T Biring	External Governor
Ms S Henwood	External Governor
Miss M Sahota	External Governor
Ms J Grant	External Governor
Mr. R Ogefere	External Governor
Mr P MacGahan	External Governor
Ms N Moore	Staff Governor
Dr S Hubble	External Governor

Apologies received.

Ms Heidi King	External Governor
Mr Martin Jenkins	External Governor
Mr Nicholas Smith*	Staff Governor

Senior Leadership Members in attendance:

Mr Lawrence Jenkins	Deputy Chief Executive
Mr Mark Andrews	Deputy executive Principal/Strategy & Curriculum
Ms Rhiannon Hughes	Deputy Executive/Teaching, Learning & Improvement
Mrs Yolanda Hughes	Clerk & Governance Advisor to the Board

Minute No:	Minute recorded	Action/ Decision
979	Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence	
	The Chair of Corporation – Mr Martin opened the meeting at 17.35 hrs and welcomed all present.	
	Apologies received from Ms King, Mr Jenkins and it was noted that Mr Smith was not present.	
	Ms Moore had notified the Clerk that she would need to leave the meeting at 19.35hrs.	

980	Declarations of Interest	
	There were no amendments or new declarations of interest declared other than those already registered and held on record.	
981	Corporation Board Minutes – 7 July 2024	
	<p>The Corporation Board received the pre-circulated minutes of the meeting held on the 7th of July 2024.</p> <p><i>Formally approved subject to the above amendments</i></p> <p><i>The Board formally approved the Part 1 Corporation Board minutes of the meeting held on the 7 July 2024.</i></p> <p><i>The Board formally approved the Part 2 Confidential Minutes of the meeting held 7 July 2024.</i></p>	Minutes Approved
982	Chief Executive Report to October 2024	
	<p>The Chief Executive presented his report to October 2024 and stated that the report included two sections covering:</p> <p>Enrolment 24/25 (Section 1) Performance Data 23/24 (Section 2)</p> <p>Enrolments (Recruitment) for 2024/25</p> <p>The Chief Executive was pleased to report that enrolments for 2024/25 had been very positive and provided a detailed explanation on the data within Table 1 and Table 2 of his report.</p> <p>It was noted that 16- to 18-year-old numbers made up nearly 96% of the overall FE provision at the College and therefore was the largest area of recruitment. The College was now 7% up year on year which was very positive going forward.</p> <p>Table 3 Adult Learners was slightly less positive but had to be taken into context as it only made up 4% of the overall learners at the College.</p> <p>The Board went through the report in detail and were pleased with the positive position in respect of enrolments for the year.</p> <p>Ms Redman commented that the overall the figures looked very encouraging and asked if it was possible to get a clearer understanding on whether the increase in enrolments particularly in respect of 16–18-year-olds was a one off or a long term trend and furthermore asked about why the adult learners that came to the college for the various courses that they undertook chose NKC.</p> <p>The Chief Executive confirmed that he would be able to provide an overall summary at the next meeting to provide the Board with some historical data and information to provide further clarity on enrolments pre and post covid and developing trends. He went onto explain that adult learners at the College were probably no adults in the sense as one would imagine but aged between 19 to 20 and that there were a variety of factors as to why the college did have adult learners. Where the college did get what would be considered traditional adults aged 30 to 40's these tended to be within</p>	

the access groups which was quite specific as they were largely the return to learn or retraining.

By and large, the vast majority of the College adult learners were 19 or 20, and for whatever reason had taken longer to get through the education system and had quite often been at the College from the age of 17 or 18.

Governors discussed the matter in respect of adult learners at length and were satisfied with the explanations provided.

Dr Hubble commented that she was interested to see the growth in Level 1 enrolments on courses which indicated that there was clearly a demand for these courses and that the majority of these were at either Gravesend or Hadlow and asked if there was an increased demand whether there was scope to look at offering more at Dartford and Tonbridge. The Chief Executive explained that the offer at Gravesend and Hadlow were distinctly different from Dartford and Tonbridge and provided a detailed explanation as to why. He further added that Dartford was fully allocated in terms of resource and to expand any more would be incredibly difficult as it would effectively mean closing one provision down and offering something new. Dartford was now close to capacity without building new facilities. The Chief Executive further added that the increase in demand at Hadlow related largely to the Level Animal Management course and a large proportion of these learners had extensive higher learning needs which was explained in detail. There was therefore a practical limit, particularly in respect of the learners that needed one to one adult support staff which meant that even at Hadlow that they were operating a close to capacity.

The Chair welcomed the discussions held and stated that the Chief Executive's overview in respect of Level 1 provision was very useful and something to hear in mind when planning for the future.

Performance Data 2023/24

The Chief Executive referred to the second section within his report which provided the Board with a detailed summary on the performance data for 2023/24.

The Chief Executive referred to Table 8 which provided the overall outcomes for 2023/24 and was pleased to report that it was a fantastic set of overall results with improvement at every level seeing the College report an overall result of 92%.

Table 8 within report focussed on the outcomes for English and Math and the Board were informed that for a number of 16- to 18-year-olds it was mandatory subject if they had not achieved a pass at in either of those subjects when they joined the College. There had been a steady growth and improvement at all levels, the only disappointment and it was one that had been shared by 35 other colleges nationally was around the GCSE English. The Chief Executive provided a detailed explanation on the issues with the awarding body and the actions currently being taken by the AoC on behalf of colleges.

Table 9 provided the Board with the outcomes of each curriculum area with additional analysis and comparative data to previous years. Close to 80% of the curriculum areas were now returning 90% or better success rates.

	<p>The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for this report and the positive outcomes all round.</p> <p>Board received. The Board accepted the report and formally requested that the Boards congratulations be extended to all the staff and the students for their exceptional performance. It was further noted that the progress made was unprecedented particularly when taking into context that it was merely 4 years since the acquisition and the college were producing high quality results.</p>	
983	Part 2 Confidential Business – Commercially Sensitive Monthly Management Accounts -	
984	Part 2 Confidential Business – Commercially Sensitive College Reserves Policy	
985	Committee Report – Audit Committee Minutes of the meeting held 12th September 2024	
	<p>Mr Jones – Chair of the Audit Committee presented the draft Audit Committee minutes of the 12th of September 2024 and proceeded to give the board an update on the business conducted during this meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audit Committee will at future meetings allocated a ten-minute slot to meet and discuss any emerging issues with IAS and FSA confidentially. Members of SLT will not be included in these discussions. 2. Internal Audit Services - Scrutton Bland - Internal Audit Reports Health and Safety Framework Learner Recruitment 3. Internal Audit Services Strategic Audit Plan for 2024/25 requires board approval. 4. Outstanding Audit Recommendations <p>Received The Board received the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held 12 September 2024 noting the outcomes of the internal audit reports and business covered.</p>	
986	Scrutton Bland – Internal Audit Services Annual Strategic Audit Plan for the 2024/25 period	
	<p>The Deputy Chief Executive presented the recommended Internal Audit Services Annual Strategic Audit Plan for 2024/25 which required formal board approval.</p> <p>The plan included for 10 new reviews, 2 transferred from 2023/24 year and a follow-up review for prior year recommendations.</p> <p>Having reviewed the current risk register and strategic plan the following proposed areas are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HE Recruitment and Retention (from 2023/24) 2. Human Resources (Staff Retention) (from 2023/24) 3. Budgetary Control and Cashflow 	

	<p>4. Business Continuity 5. Income and Debtors 7. Funding Assurance (Health Check) 8 Management Information 9. Residential Provision 10.Risk Management 11. Student Satisfaction and Complaints 12. T Level Implementation</p> <p>Follow-up</p> <p>The college is required to have some form of funding assurance review in place, which the external auditors assess over risk on the funding claimed, hence the health check included within the 10 new reviews.</p> <p>Audit days for this year's plan is 58 (7 carried forward), and in line with the 2023/24 days prior to deferment of the 2 reviews mentioned above.</p> <p>Approved The Board formally approved the Annual Strategic Audit Plan for the 2024/25 period as recommended by the Audit Committee.</p>	<p>Approved The Board formally approved the Annual Strategic Audit Plan for the 2024/25 period as recommended by the Audit Committee</p>
987	<p>Part 2 Confidential Business – Commercially Sensitive Committee Report Estates Strategy & Capital Projects Committee Minutes of meeting held 19th September 2024</p>	
988	<p>Part 2 Confidential Business – Commercially Sensitive Committee S106 Agreement - Approved retrospectively by the Board electronically</p>	
989	<p>Committee Report – Minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee meeting held 26th September 2024</p>	
	<p>Mr Martin – Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee presented the minutes of the meeting held and chair by Heidi King on the 26th of September 2024.</p> <p>Business covered during this meeting included: Quality Improvement Plan - Hadlow Quality Improvement Plan - Department A&B Quality Improvement Plan - Department C & D Teaching, Learning & Improvement Report Teaching & Learning Policy</p> <p>Inter Committee Referrals Learner Attendance, Progression and Retention - Final IAS Report Quality Assurance - Final IAS Report Learner Recruitment - Final Report for 2023/24</p> <p>Received The Board received the minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee meeting held 26 September 2024.</p>	

990	Teaching & Learning Policy	
	<p>Approved The Board formally approved the Teaching & Learning Policy as recommended by the Quality & Standards Committee.</p>	Approved Teaching & Learning Policy
991	Annual Safeguarding Report and Annual Review of the Safeguarding Policy	
	<p>The Deputy Executive Principal/Teaching, Learning & Improvement presented the Annual Safeguarding Report for the 2023/24 period and the updated and revised Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p>The report provided the Board with an overview of aspects related to the Welfare & Safeguarding Team (WST) including reference to the annual training for all staff.</p> <p>The College had also undertaken the annual exercise for staff to read the latest Section 1 updates in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE), followed by a 10-question quiz. This exercise is linked to a PowerBi dashboard so that managers can monitor the compliance in timely completion for this compulsory reading. This latter system was introduced on the back of our last Safeguarding Audit, where the only item recommended for improvement was this timely aspect of completion. The College was currently on 98% completion four weeks into the term.</p> <p>Governors having been through the Safeguarding Report asked whether as Board they should be concerned that there had already been 400 safeguarding concerns raised this early in the academic period. The Deputy Executive Principal/T, L&I commented that in her view every college was concerned and that by looking at the statistics that there is a continued sharp upward trend nationally and that it was not unique to the College. She added that the College worked closely with colleagues at East Kent and at mid Kent and explained that some of the referrals may only be lower-level concerns, but some were far more serious and shared examples of these. The 400 cases logged at the college was a broad spectrum of issues and it was ensuring the safeguarding team triaged those that needed urgent intervention.</p> <p>The Chair/Lead Safeguarding Governor commented that from his perspective it was something that should concern the Board.</p> <p>The Deputy Executive Principal/TL&I added that the College were going to review its Fitness to Study policy as sadly some of the young people needed a break in learning or in some extreme situations, they need to take time out and completely withdraw and return later and firstly focus on their mental health.</p> <p>Governors discussed the current support provided through counsellors at the college and the challenges in respect of supporting the learners at length.</p> <p>The Deputy Executive Principal emphasised that the College cared deeply for its learners and had also set up clothes and food banks and time out</p>	

	<p>spaces and that for many of these learners College was in fact a haven for them.</p> <p>Governors asked how the College supported the staff working with these serious safeguarding issues as clearly this would have an emotional impact of them. The Deputy Executive Principal/TL&I stated that it was difficult and dependent on the nature of concerns which were often quite traumatising for a member staff and the students who have to witness incidents. Training is provided for all staff but as in all cases there was only so much capacity and time.</p> <p>Ms Moore the Staff Governor commented that she wished to add her voice as a lecturer and stated that firstly the Board and College should be seriously concerned at the high level and nature of safeguarding concerns being raised. Lecturers were becoming counsellors and that it was very challenging when there were so many learners with complex issues and that there was not a day that past that there weren't issues being dealt with. The staff were not counsellors but that this was what they were having to do to support these learners but emphasised that this was not down to the College management or governance but due to shortages of funding.</p> <p><i>Formally approved.</i> <i>The Board formally approved the updated Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Guidance and the Annual Safeguarding Report noting the serious concerns raised.</i></p>	<p>Approved Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Guidance and the Annual Safeguarding Report.</p>
992	Any other Business	
	<p>1.ICE Visit – Gravesend Campus</p> <p>Dr Hubble and Ms Grant formally thanked the college for hosting them at the Immersive Curriculum Visit held at the Gravesend campus on the 12.10.24.</p>	
992	Part 3 – Strictly Confidential Business	
	Legal Services	
19.23hrs	Ms Sarah Henwood excused from the meeting due to a declared Conflict of Interest.	
993	Date & Time of the next meeting	
	<p>The next Corporation Board meeting was scheduled for the 12 December 2024 at 17.30hrs.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 19.38hrs</p>	