

## Minutes of the Corporation Meeting Held on Tuesday 6 February 2024

**Present:** Damien Bourke, Simon Boyle, Phill Brown, Kirk Cornwall, Rachael Frankland, Karen James, Nicky Littler, John Lyne (Chair), Jackie Moores, Jemma Newton, Elaine Price, Evelyn Rayne, Arsana Subba, Remell Thompson-Bell, Atta Ul Rasool

Nils Elgar, Clerk to the Corporation

**In Attendance:** Dave Dobson (Vice Principal Finance and Infrastructure), Leon Dowd (Deputy Principal Quality and People), Nicola Welland (Deputy Principal Curriculum)

### ACTION

#### 23/24.43 Apologies for Absence

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to accept the apologies of Jonathan Frankham. **Accepted**

#### 23/24.44 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest. **Noted**

#### 23/24.45 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 5 December 2023

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to approve the minutes (including confidential minutes) of the meeting held on 5 December 2023. **Approved**

#### 23/24.46 Matters Arising

*Simon Boyle joined the meeting during this item.*

On Minute 23/24.39 (Update on Governor Engagement and Development Activities), it was noted that both Malcolm Bruce and Elaine Price had arranged to meet with the Deputy Principal Curriculum after the half-term break regarding apprenticeships. **Noted**

#### 23/24.47 Self-Assessment Report September 2022 to December 2023 and Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24

*Rachael Frankland and Karen James joined the meeting during this item.*

The Deputy Principal Quality and People raised the following points:

- (i) the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) covered the slightly extended period from September 2022 to December 2023;
- (ii) the SAR had been scrutinised by Governors at the well-attended SAR Validation event on Tuesday, 23 January;
- (iii) management had reflected on the challenges given and made a number of amendments. Governor suggestions included:
  - to clearly identify the area for improvement and link this to the proposed action, for example, where learners make

slower progress than expected, to support the teachers to improve;

- to review any contradictory references to strengths and related areas for improvement. For example, while there was reference to a high attendance across all programmes, it went on state further improvement was still required for English and Maths;
- to reflect on the proposed Meeting Skills Needs judgement ('strong'). While it was felt that this was 'strong' for the very significant majority of College provision, management had taken into account the improvements that were being made in apprenticeships provision as well as developments in A levels and adult community learning (ACL) and had revised this judgement to 'reasonable'. However, management were of the view that if the apprenticeship achievement rate continued to rise in the current year, which was predicted, and further progress had been made with identified actions in relation to A levels and ACL, a late inspection could see an improved position statement made on this area of activity;
- to reflect further on how to present the status of apprenticeships, given the low achievement rate in 2022/23 but with tangible improvements in 2023/24. It was suggested that a late inspection combined with further improvements to apprenticeships might enable an improved position statement to be made in this area;
- to include attendance targets for English and Maths in the section on Behaviour and Attitudes;
- to include reference to tutorial activities that addressed drug misuse and county lines within the section on Personal Development;

(iv) an outline of the self-assessment process;

(v) final judgements included:

Overall Effectiveness	2
Leadership and Management	2
Quality of Education	2
Behaviour and Attitudes	2
Personal Development	2
Safeguarding	Effective
Contribution to Meeting Skills Needs	Reasonable
Education Programmes for Young People	2
Adult Learning Programmes	2
Apprenticeships	3
Learners with High Needs	2

(vi) progress against the Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24:

- all Leadership and Management actions were on track;
- all Quality of Education actions were on track:
  - development of ACL offer was on track;
  - CPD and training /development of staff was on track;
  - preparation of learners to achieve L3 Technical Certificate was on track. (Attendance on L3 Site Carpentry was being monitored – but students making good progress);

- progress being made on the majority of courses identified in QIP. Courses being closely monitored included:
  - o attendance and progress – GCSE Maths and English and L2 Travel;
  - o attendance and progress – L2 Certificate and L3 Diploma in Accounting, L2 Cabin Crew and L3 Travel;
  - o attendance and retention – L2 Technical Certificate in Animal Care;
  - o attendance and retention – A Levels: Geography, Religious Studies and Sociology;
- progress made on actions to improve GCSE Maths and English;
- progress made on actions for Apprenticeship provision and progress against target;
- Behaviour and Attitudes:
  - College attendance:
    - o 16-18: L1 = 85% (at target), L2 = 84.8%, 87.5% excl. E&M (below target of 88%), L3 = 90% (at target), A Level = 90% (below target of 94%);
    - o 19+: L1 = 87% (2% above target), L2 = 83.3% (below target), L3 = 87.4% (below target);
  - progress made in ensuring learners know who to speak to if they have concerns;
- Personal Development:
  - progress made on developing non-sport enrichment, particularly with a focus on supporting wellbeing;
- Safeguarding:
  - progress made in further raising peer-on-peer sexual abuse awareness and identifying available support;
- Contribution to Meeting Skills Needs:
  - progress made on developing stakeholder involvement in A Level and ACL provision in line with skills needs.

Issues discussed by Governors included:

- (i) SAR Validation:
  - that the amendments to the SAR reflected the challenge given during the SAR Validation event;
  - a view that the scrutiny given to the SAR at the Validation event, especially by those Governors with educational backgrounds, gave confidence that the validation process was robust;
  - the thanks of the Chair to both Malcolm Bruce and Elaine Price for their scrutiny and contributions;
- (ii) apprenticeships:
  - a more detailed review of apprenticeships would take place between the Deputy Principal Curriculum and Malcolm Bruce and Elaine Price;
  - that it was essential to effectively manage the End Point Assessment (EPA) process to ensure the timely achievement of apprentices. It was noted that the College

felt it had a 'tight rein' on this issue. It was reported that, in the past, apprentices could not be booked onto their EPA until everything had been put on to the portal, whereas now it was possible to book assessment 'blocks' in advance of this, meaning that EPA delays were being reduced;

- (iii) whether the female-only focus groups on peer-on-peer sexual abuse would be extended to sessions for male students. It was noted that while the female-only groups were the focus in the QIP, male-only focus groups were being conducted as was a LGBTQ+ focus group;
- (iv) how the effectiveness of actions identified in the Quality Improvement Plan would be measured upon their completion. It was noted that while these would be reported in the final QIP report in October, the ultimate impact of actions taken would be seen in the achievement rates;
- (v) enrichment activities:
  - it was asked whether Governors should be monitoring the impact of enrichment activities. It was noted that the Senior Leadership Team was doing this monitoring, but this could also be brought to Governors if requested;
  - feedback received included that previously, too many of the activities were sport related and so there had been a focus in 2023/24 on growing further non-sport and inclusive activities. These activities were based on student feedback identifying the activities they would like to do;
  - there was a real cost to enrichment activities because someone was paid for each session;
  - there were a number of reasons why some students were less likely to participate in cross College enrichment activities. Feedback from students included those who were prioritising part-time work. The Student Governor for Clarendon Sixth Form College indicated that as a Year 13 student with A levels examinations later in the year, she was focussed on her studies. Other reasons cited for not engaging in these activities included Catering students, who were instead involved in a significant number of curriculum-related activities, such as trips, visits and external projects, while Hair and Beauty students also had a lot of course-related activities, such as skills weeks curriculum-related enrichment). The Student Governor for Tameside College indicated she appreciated and had participated in some of the LGBTQ+ activities and celebrations;
  - the College also put on breakfast clubs, which were run by staff that were particularly good at engaging. Examples of activities included boardgames, which sometimes had up to 30-40 students participating. There was also a driving theory group;
  - as the College's enrichment activity further matured, there was an increasing emphasis on students leading on their own clubs of interest;

- other extra-curricular / enrichment activities included sessions on hate crime and knife crime, led by Greater Manchester Police and the multi-agency Violence Reduction Unit, and on driving theory;
- the Student Governor for Tameside College commented that the College's engagement with the 'Safe Drive – Stay Alive' road safety initiative run by the emergency services had been very impactful, and included powerful and emotional testimony from the parents of victims;
- that the College's enrichment activities would be the subject of a future Governor discussion and could include details such as the nature of the enrichment, number of attendees, and quality impact and outcomes of the activity.

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to note the Self-Assessment Report September 2022 to December 2023 and the Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24.

**Noted**

## **23/24.48 Principal's Report**

Points raised by the Principal included:

- (i) accommodation:
  - in addition to the start of the Automotive project, where demolition and piling had been completed, the aviaries had been completed in Animal Management and construction of the meercat enclosure was about to start;
- (ii) GCSE November Resits:
  - students already with a grade 3 in either GCSE English and Maths had been entered into the November resits. This resulted in 119 students achieving at least a grade 4. These students would no longer have to continue their classes in these subjects and classes and teachers had been reassigned for remaining students;
- (iii) FE Commissioner (FEC) & DfE Annual Strategic Conversation (ASC) and Great Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) ASC:
  - the key point raised by the College was the demographic growth in Tameside and the College's ability to meet needs. Apprenticeship performance was raised as the key area for improvement. The GMCA had also held an ASC in January with no issues identified;
- (iv) Ofsted inspection:
  - this was likely to take place between 26 February and May 2024. The SAR and QIP was now complete in advance of their visit;
- (v) applications for 2024/25:
  - applications from school leavers had risen again, with no reasonable prospect of further capital funding until after the next Spending Review;
  - an additional 190 applications had been received, with growth expected in Construction, Engineering, Creative

- and Digital, Health and Social Care and Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy;
- curriculum planning for 2024/25 was underway and would be finished by Easter with adverts for any additional teaching staff. Several projects to maximise specialist space in Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy and to increase classroom space were out for costing to facilitate the College to maximise its offer to school leavers;
- (vi) reference to the Top News stories that accompanied her paper. She added that the Astley Cheetham Art Gallery in Stalybridge was currently displaying some excellent art pieces from Clarendon Sixth Form College students. These students were able to work closely with the curator gaining valuable experience.

items raised by Governors included:

- (i) a collaboration between the College's Construction Skills Centre and The LEAP Centre in Ashton-under-Lyne, had seen brickwork students undertaking some work at the centre. An opinion was expressed that these students had provided a positive image of the College with their high-quality work and strong work ethic. The Principal added that this opportunity had provided a rich learning experience for these students;
- (ii) the pride of a Governor whose step-daughter had some of her art displayed in the Astley Cheetham Art Gallery.

## **23/24.49 December Finance Report**

The Executive Director Finance, Estates, MIS and IT reported the following:

- (i) the Corporation had set a budget in 2023/24 for an operating surplus of £138k, before pension costs (FRS102); this had subsequently been revised to an operating surplus of £496k, before FRS102;
- (ii) as at 31 December 2023 there was:
  - an overall favourable variance of £129k to the revised budget, which comprised a favourable variance in income of £103k (due mainly to the additional income for the Adult Education Budget in relation to additional delivery in 2022/23);
  - a £171k favourable variance in pay costs (including agency staff);
  - a £291k adverse variance in non-pay costs. This related to an adverse variance on capital grants linked to the timing on the completion of works and would move closer to budget as the year progressed;
- (iii) the balance sheet remained strong, with cash and investment reserves as at 31 December 2023 totalling £9,886k, with £1,616k held as cash in the bank and the balance within the deposit accounts;
- (iv) a mid-year review that was currently being undertaken would be presented to the Board at its meeting in March;



- (v) an update on the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund (FECTF) project:
- the Motor Vehicle project was progressing well. The project was slightly (£75k) over the £11.664m budget, but this had been provisionally offset by an additional grant by the DfE. The project also had a remaining contingency of £360k. The piling had been completed.

Governors considered the following issues:

- (i) that a significant part of the overall risk to the project would have reduced following the completion of piling;
- (ii) how the College was accommodating the additional learners enrolled in 2022/23. It was noted that College was looking to get the maximum out of its estate, with a clear example of this visible on the evening of the Governors' Dinner where a classroom had been created in the corner of the restaurant. It was noted that the redevelopment of E-floor in the Victoria Building had resulted in two additional classrooms being created;
- (iii) a view from the Staff Governor that while teachers could theoretically teach larger group sizes, the problems came in, for example, marking where the additional workload here made life much more difficult. It was noted that the introduction of more T-levels, however, would change the dynamic for teachers – with an increased number of teaching hours per week, but a reduction in the overall amount internal assessment as these qualifications were based on final exams;
- (iv) that teaching space would need to be flexible, for example with movable walls, to allow for classrooms of differing sizes;
- (v) the College was finalising its curriculum plan for 2024/25, including making assessments on the impact of further growth, for example on the number of support staff;
- (vi) the Board, at its meeting in November, had reviewed projected growth over the next few years. The College had met with the local authority in this regard in that the College might not be the best answer for some learners and the local authority might need to get involved;
- (vii) the College had recently purchased 200 licences for TeacherMatic, an AI tool for teachers that seeks to reduce workload and improve the quality of teaching and learning. An example of its potential was in the almost instantaneous creation of flashcards on any subject. The College was recruiting someone to assist in professional development, including digital support and for the College's new immersive teaching environment. The impact of this initiative on both staff and students would be brought to Governors in approximately a year's time.

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to note the December Finance Report.

**Noted**

## 23/24.50 Update on Governor Engagement and Development Activities

The following Governor development and/or engagement activities that had taken place since the last Board meeting were reported:

- (i) 6 December – attended the HE Graduation – Karen James
- (ii) 18 December – AoC NW Chairs' and Principals' Meeting – John Lyne;
- (iii) 11 January – AoC Audit Committee Masterclass – Kirk Cornwall, Jonathan Frankham and Elaine Price;
- (iv) 16 January – undertook an elearning course on KCSiE 2023 – Kirk Cornwall
- (v) 16 January – Governor Learning Visit to Hair and Beauty and Food Studies – Phill Brown, Jonathan Frankham, Nicky Littler, Jemma Newton, Atta Ul-Rasool, Evelyn Rayne, Arsana Subba and Remell Thompson-Bell;
- (vi) 19 January – Annual Strategic Conversation with FE Commissioner and ESFA – John Lyne and Jackie Moores;
- (vii) 23 January – SAR Validation event – too many to name
- (viii) 25 January – AoC Staff Governors' Network Meeting – Jemma Newton;
- (ix) 25 January – Clarendon Sixth Form Art Exhibition – John Lyne, Arsana Subba, Remell Thompson-Bell

The Chair recommended to Governors that the College's social media was a great way to stay in touch with all that was going on in College.

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to note the verbal update on Governor Engagement and Development Activities.

**Noted**

## 23/24.51 Items to Note

### (i) Chair's Action

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to note that no Chair's Actions had been taken since the date of the last meeting.

**Noted**

### (ii) Use of the Seal of the Corporation

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to note that there had been no use of the Seal of the Corporation since the date of the last meeting.

**Noted**

### (iii) Interim Report on Governor Attendance 2023/24

**Resolved:** The Board of Governors resolved to note the Interim Report on Governor Attendance 2023/24 (86%).

**Noted**

## 23/24.52 Time and Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 26 March 2024

The Chair reported that the date of the next meeting was Tuesday 26 March 2024. It was noted that this meeting would be held in the Boardroom at Beaufort Road site and would be observed in person



by Fiona Chalk, who was conducting the External Governance Review.

The Clerk to the Corporation mentioned that immediately prior to the next meeting there would be a Governor Learning Visit to Animal Management and Floristry.

The Staff Governor and Student Governors withdraw from the meeting for the consideration of a confidential item.

**23/24.53      Confidential Item**

*This minute is confidential as it contains personal information about members of College staff.*

**Minutes formally approved by the Corporation:**

**Chair**

**Date**