

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on
Thursday 4th July 2024 at 3.30pm at
The Kingfisher, Cardington Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK44 3SA

Present: Alasdair Simmons Luisa Vecchio
 Allan Schofield Luke Ferebee
 Catherine Anne Barr Raj Randhawa
 Cliff Wragg Richard Dimpleby
 Dennis Buckley Sheila Selwood
 John Butcher Tom Dove-Wallington
 Laura-Jane Rawlings Yiannis Koursis OBE

In attendance: Sarah Baxter (Executive Director of Marketing and
 Communications)
 Caroline Biddle (Executive Director of Human Resources)
 Karen Campbell (Principal (Bedford))
 Gulam Fatima (Deputy Director of Finance) (CFO from 24.07.24)
 Debbie Houghton (Executive Director of Apprenticeship)
 Patricia Jones (Deputy CEO Finance)
 Em Lowe (Deputy CEO Education)
 Sarah Mortimer (Principal (CBC))
 Natasha Stringer (Senior Governance Coordinator) (Minutes)
 Robin Webber-Jones (Principal (Northamptonshire))

C/22/24 Apologies for absence and declarations

Apologies

Apologies were received from Joe Gallacher, Yasmin Jones, Noor Nazir and Faheem Mir.

Rachel Nicol, The Group Director of Governance also sent apologies.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest relevant to the matters on the agenda.

The Chair of the Corporation welcomed Gulam Fatima as the newly appointed CFO from 24 July 2024.



C/23/24 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

CEO's report

C/24/24 CEO Update

The Chair of the Corporation introduced the agenda item, and the CEO summarised his paper, which included three items; the CEO update, the strategic plan provided as a hard copy in the meeting and the balanced scorecard. The CEO highlighted two messages of assurance from the CEO update:

- The annual strategic conversation letter, annex 3.1a
- The financial statements review 2022-2023

Questions and Discussions

The Chair of the Corporation echoed the assurances provided within the annual strategic conversation.

A governor asked for and received clarification on a sentence in the annual strategic letter regarding the National College for Motorsport potentially needing more space for its growing student population.

The Board enquired about the areas marked in red on the high-level dashboard. The CEO discussed that the target for higher education (HE) is being set too high for the sector and that the College is developing a higher-skill strategy that will see benefits in the future. ***The Corporation requested that for future reports, any areas of red in the high-level dashboard have some narrative in the report.***

C/25/24 Strategic Plan Re-statement 2022-2027

The Chair of the Corporation explained for newer members the strategic plan and the meetings held in the planning stages and how it is now in the final stages.

The CEO explained the document is a reproduction of the previous documents, now aligning objectives to the three pillars. The pillars guide agenda shaping.

Questions and Discussions

A governor asked for clarification on the targets and the CEO explained that the audience for the Strategic plan is external whereas the balanced score card is internal so will hold more targets and more detail.

The Chair of the Corporation asked for any feedback or comments on the document before the Corporation approved for publication.



A governor asked for targets within the document, 16 things we are going to do which are linked to United Nation targets and to have a key within the document explaining their link to the United Nation targets for clarity to assist those not familiar with these targets. **Action SHB to update.**

The Corporation felt it was a professional document and approved, subject to the feedback received.

C/26/24 Balanced Scorecard 2-24-2025

The Deputy CEO Education presented a PowerPoint presentation for the Corporation, which broke down how the balanced scorecard provided key performance indicators by each pillar that form the strategic plan.

Questions and Discussions

The CEO spoke about RAG rating the report, last year's actual, expected actual this year, and what is being proposed for 2024/2025 actual and then what is targeted for the end of the plan as the plan is till 2027. **The design of the balanced scorecard will be further developed.**

The Board enquired whether safeguarding would be reported through the balanced scorecard. The Deputy CEO responded that safeguarding would be reported, but not through the scorecard as it isn't a numerical target. Instead, there are other levels of assurance, such as the link governor. The Board felt that the balanced scorecard lacked information on safeguarding and discussed the possibility of including a statement within the scorecard to provide assurances that safeguarding is effective.

The Board discussed the staff survey, the challenges of attracting staff, the importance of appraisal, the move towards accountability targets and clarity, and the multidimensional movement. The Board asked if the appraisal included learning and development plans, and it was confirmed that it does.

The Board had a detailed discussion about the design and functioning of the balanced scorecard. They considered strategy planning, development planning, and the "this is where we think we are" statements from Ofsted. The Board also discussed the risk of including too much detail, which could lead to an oversaturated scorecard, emphasising the need for core performance elements. The CEO provided more insight into the balanced scorecard, describing it as a holistic view with significant measurement and monitoring behind it. The classic balanced scorecard presentation is a single-page, 4-quadrant layout using red, amber, and green indicators, but the current version has too many individual metrics. It was emphasised that summarisation is important; if any underlying metrics turn amber, the entire summary turns amber or red, alerting the Board. It was also noted that a



rule or metric needs to be established for this purpose such as if one metric turns red or two turn amber, the Board needs to review the scorecard. ***The Deputy CEO and AS and RD will have a conversation – opened up to any governor who wishes to be part. Action.***

Educational Leadership

C/27/24 Curriculum & Quality rag rated report

The Chair of the Corporation introduced and explained the RAG rating reporting to the new members, which rates each agenda item the nature of the risk and whether committees are content with management action.

Richard Dimpleby, the Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee, summarised the Curriculum and Quality RAG-rated reports, focusing on the amber-rated items and providing feedback from the first year of the two-year trial on the Curriculum and Quality Local Groups.

C/28/24 Quality of Education (including QIP)

The Deputy CEO Education summarised the report to the Board, which included

- Still saying not yet good needs improvement for consistency
- Increasing retention across the Group
- Attendance has improved in particular for English and Maths

Questions and Discussions

The Board enquired about the attendance rate of residential students at Shuttleworth College. The Deputy CEO Education explained that non-attendance is generally due to sickness.

The Board asked for clarity on the term “learner disciplinary interventions”. The Deputy CEO of Education explained that interventions focus mainly on attendance and consist of a stage one warning, where a letter is sent home to remind students of expectations. The College recognises that this needs to be balanced with different approaches, such as the use of five-star awards for students who are attending and achieving.

The aim for next year is to reduce the number of disciplinary actions and move to a more positive structure with dedicated student support staff and learner mentors.

A governor asked if the personal achievement tutor would still facilitate a lot of this. The Deputy CEO Education confirmed tutorials are being embedded into the curriculum, freeing PATs to focus on attendance, mental health, and student support.



A governor asked if the Teaching Excellence Framework (“TEF”) will be brought to the Board. The Principal (Northamptonshire) confirmed that, yes, there will be an opportunity for governors to see draft versions once it has gone through the Executive team.

4.2a Quality Improvement Plan (“QIP”)

The Deputy CEO Education summarised the QIP for the Board, which included the only red-rated item focusing on English and Maths, the work done with consultants coming out to work with departments around Ofsted.

The Board felt that there needed to be an early meeting in the autumn term to discuss the QIP. The CEO shared that this would come after the results, a presentation to the Board of the results and what will come from that.

The Board felt it was somewhat disappointing that seven areas were marked amber, but the Deputy CEO Education assured the Board that this was due to the way it is currently scored and changes were being made for next year.

Safeguarding report and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

The Deputy CEO of Education shared with the Board changes to the policy and procedure, which are marked in yellow; ***a governor had feedback on the policy and will link with the Deputy CEO of education to discuss. Action EL/LJR***

The Safeguarding Link governor shared feedback with the Board on the safeguarding meetings, which were considered robust. Some key training will be returned to face-to-face, which the Board sees as positive.

A governor fed back an anecdotal experience with the security at CBC on how they positively engaged with students and was happy to hear that that best practice model would be shared across the Group.

The CEO provided further insights on behaviour and improvement of staff completing mandatory training and shared anecdotal story on discovery days held for new students and how the culture and sense of belonging was created.

The policy was agreed subject to amendments made.

4.2c SEND strategy

The Deputy CEO Education shared with the Board the updated structure of splitting the Director level lead for English and Maths and SEND into two roles.

The Board suggested the first meeting of the Curriculum and Quality committee in the Autumn term focuses on the impact of the SEND strategy. The Board felt the



strategy was quite broad, there needs to be a way to see the impact and to monitor that the impact the strategy has on SEND students meets the same ambition targets of other students and ensures a sense of belonging and social integration.

Draft for further discussion at C&Q committee and a version will come back to the Board Action

C/29/24 HE Quality Improvement Plan (“QIP”)

The Principal (Northamptonshire) summarised the HE QIP for the Board, which included the internal auditor undertaking an audit which will come to the Board in due course, and with the change in senior appointments, a reportable event will be needed. ***Action to update the CFO and Chair of the Corporation. RWJ.***

Questions and Discussions

A governor asked for more information around critical thinking skills and the Board discussed what effective assessment looks like.

C/30/24 Curriculum Strategy

The Deputy CEO of Education provided the Board with the updated version of the Curriculum strategy.

Questions and Discussions

The Board briefly discussed the possible upcoming change of government with the general elections. The Deputy CEO Education provided assurances that regardless of the outcome, the context of the Curriculum strategy doesn't change; it is based on the right thing to do.

A governor highlighted the inconsistency of the style the document is written in. ***The Deputy CEO Education will edit – Action EL***

Board agreed to approve the Curriculum Strategy.

Sustainability

C/31/24 Resources rag rated report

Cliff Wragg who chaired the most recent Resources Committee meeting and The Chair of the Resources Committee summarised the Resources RAG-rated report for the April and June meetings.

The Board briefly discussed the metrics behind rating amber versus green and it was agreed the governance committee would discuss and review of the definitions of the ratings.



C/32/24 Management accounts

The Deputy CEO Finance summarised the report, highlighting the name change from the College information report to management accounts.

Key messages from the reports included likelihood of a break-even year end position, cash being higher than expected and a delay in procurement. Risks around apprenticeship withdrawals and high interest on pensions were highlighted.

Questions and Discussions

The Board discussed current assets and liabilities and enquired why the balance sheet is carrying credit, the Deputy CEO Finance shared that it will be linked to project work being done with the LSIP.

The Board noted the report.

C/33/24 3 year financial plan (including budget 2024-2025)

The Deputy CEO Finance summarised the agenda item for the Board, which included the number of 16-18 years the College is funded for. If student targets are achieved, a grown income will be received in January.

Questions and Discussions

The Board discussed student numbers and a governor enquired as to staffing costs if a higher number of students are achieved and the Deputy CEO Finance explained staffing is already funded and discussions would happen to balance it out in

The Board discussed investing in the quality of education and the benefits of having reserves when it comes to applying for grants and funding our growth and reinvesting in quality of education to continue growing student numbers. The Board heard in some more detail about the structure change within the quality team, which included coaching staff and the use of consultants and was noted to provide opportunities through retention and progression.

The Board briefly discussed pay rise awards; the sector averages and the expectation that awards are to be made in December.

C/34/24 Capital programme 2024-2028

The Deputy CEO Finance summarised the capital programme for the Board which included raising a concern over the pool at Trinity Arts and Leisure and a leak has been found. A paper was brought to the Board in March but since then a further leak has been found.

A discussion around the pool was held focusing on the funding and a question of timing as a grant cannot be raised retrospectively. The Board discussed the reputational risks. It was agreed that depending on timing of the engineers report



that if this comes before the next Resources committee meeting then the Chair of the Resources Committee will discuss with the Deputy of CEO Finance the best course of action.

The Board briefly discussed the link Esports has with learning, the new course and the opportunities present within the industry.

C/35/24 Sustainability update

The Deputy CEO Finance briefly summarised the sustainability update for the Board which included the progress made, and the amount of carbon saved. The College is increasingly sharing best practise and nationally speaking at public events on sustainability. An area to focus on is how to capture sustainability within the curriculum.

Questions and Discussions

The Board briefly discussed the use of sustainability purchasing options such as non-profit organisations. The College is currently prioritising the purchasing from local organisations but due to being part of the public sector there is a need to prove good value for money.

The Board agreed that more focus is needed on sustainability and would like to see it built into the agenda as a standing item.

C/36/24 Partnership & subcontracting arrangements update

The Deputy CEO Finance summarised the Partnership & subcontracting arrangements update for the Board, which includes the subcontracting partners the College will be using next year for what the College cannot deliver itself and all partnerships and subcontracting will add value to achievement rates.

Questions and Discussions

The Board sought clarity on what the partnerships bring to the students and the CEO provided further insight on how the use of local clubs can benefit learners.

The Board agreed to approved the policy.

C/37/24 Associated undertakings update and annual reports

The Chair of the Corporation and the CEO ran the Board through the Annual reports from BCS and BCPS which included moving forward a need to align the subsidiaries and the College. The CEO shared with the Board anecdotally about free breakfasts for students.



The Board agreed to recommend that the framework for governance of the wholly owned subsidiaries is reviewed in 2024-2025 in collaboration with the various boards.

Inspirational Training Partnership Limited

The CEO updated the Board on the current position of Inspirational Training Partnership limited, which included three options. Legal advice had been taken and the Board endorsed the third option, taking steps to strike the company off the register.

Silverstone UTC

The College became a member by virtue of succession on the merger with Tresham in 2027 and the Principal (Bedford) is the Chair of the UTC. The CEO provided a verbal update to the Board on the reputational risk and the **Board noted the update and endorsed the approach being taken to development of strategy in the context of the wider group structure.**

Community Leadership & Reputation

C/38/24 Business engagement strategy

The Executive Director of Apprenticeships summarised the Business engagement strategy for the Board which included, improving communication with employers, and the measurement of impact and outcomes. Appendices contain supporting data.

Questions and Discussion

The Board asked to what extent consultation with employers had been held for them to raise issues highlighted in the paper. Various methods were confirmed, including employer surveys.

Where does oversight lie within the Board? Confirmed to sit between Resources and Curriculum & Quality; *How do we bring industry into the classroom?* The CEO confirmed that on the workplan the strategy (and monitoring of progress) is going to be brought to the Board twice a year, the same as for the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

A governor asked if employer forums will be replaced by employer academies? It was confirmed that the academies centre on partnerships with businesses that sponsor classroom facilities, helping to integrate industry into the curriculum

The Board agreed to approve the draft the Business engagement strategy.



Assurance, Governance, Regulatory & Compliance

C/39/24 Audit Committee rag rated report

The Chair of the Audit Committee briefly summarised the Audit Committee RAG rated report which included the first meeting where the new internal and external auditors joined as well as amber rating around DPO but expected progress.

The Board approved the internal audit strategy

C/40/24 Risk & opportunities

The Deputy CEO Finance briefly summarised the Risk and opportunities register. Scrutton Bland has offered a workshop to the Board to discuss the risk appetite to feed into the risk register.

The Board asked is the workshop offer would be taken up and when it would be offer, ***The Group Director of Governance will look into options.***

The Board enquired as to if Universal studios would be an opportunity on the register, The CEO confirmed it is likely but with more detail needed on size, timeline, etc.

C/41/24 Update on Health and Safety

The Chair of the Corporation formally thanked Barrie Baldwin for the effort and work he has done in his role.

The Board had no questions on the update and approved the Chair to sign on behalf of the Corporation the Health and Safety statement.

C/42/24 Governance and remuneration update

The Chair of the Governance Committee briefly summarised the Governance RAG for the Board, which included governor attendance and induction.

The Corporation agreed to endorse the appointments of Titus Logan and Leona Tiribabi as student governors for 2024-2025

There was a draw for staff governor following a tie in the voting, and it was agreed that the **Governance Committee will look into how to deal with this in future.**

The Corporation agreed to endorse the appointment of Shaun Wilson for two years from 1 August 2024.



AS summarised the recruitment drive for external governors and updated the Board on interviews, the panel has seen some very good candidates and is looking to bring 4-6 new governors into the Board.

SS and AS left the room and the Board discussed:

The Corporation agreed on the recommendation of the Governance Committee, to extend Alasdair's term of office as an external governor, to 31 July 2026 to align with the term of office as Chair.

The Corporation agreed, on the recommendation of the Governance Committee, to extend Sheila's term of office as an external governor, to 31 July 2025.

It was agreed Dennis Buckley would join the Audit Committee as a co-opted member and the CBC local group, Raj Randhawa would continue with the Bedford College local group, and Luisa Vecchio would join the CBC local group.

The Board formally noted Dennis Buckley, Raj Randhawa, and Luisa Vecchio's end of term as governors and thanked them for their time and contributions to the Board and the College.

As Joe Gallacher comes to the end of his two-year term as staff governor and Yasmin Jones comes to the end of her term as student governor, the Board formally thanked them for their contributions.

The Board formally noted the resignations of the Deputy CEO Finance from BCPS and Aston and thanked her for her contribution to in these roles in addition to her college role.

Allan Schofield retires as a governor and Chair of the Corporation, Allan has served on the Board for 10 years and the Board would formally like to thank him for his commitment in terms of hours and effort.

The Board noted the following written resolutions

- a. Approval of the CEO's objectives for 2024-2025**
- b. Approval of the appointment of Scrutton Bland as the internal auditors for 3 years from 1 August 2024 subject to annual re-endorsement**

The Corporation is asked to note the written resolutions made since the last meeting.



The Corporation agreed to re-endorse the appointment of Buzzacott as the financial statement auditors for 2024-2025

C/43/24 Policies and approvals (Assurance, Governance, Regulatory & Compliance)

The Board approved the following policies and documents on the recommendation of relevant committees. All had been circulated in advance of the main Board pack for feedback:

Draft Internal Audit Plan 2024-2025

Fee Policy

Financial Regulations

Treasury Management Policy

Reserves Policy

Raising Concerns Procedure

Anti-corruption and Bribery policy

Data Protection Policy

Data Privacy Policy

Freedom of Information Policy

C/44/24 Minutes of the meetings held on 20 March 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

C/45/24 Any Other Business

There was no other business not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Meeting ended at 6.38pm