

## MINUTES

*Corporation No 181*

Date: 02/07/2024 (Tuesday)

Time: 18:00–20:00

Venue: Bowland Suite

Committee: Corporation

Present: Allison Jones, Andrew Massey, Barbara Godby, David Hall, Debbie Clayton, Jane Booker (Chair), Karen Dewhurst, Kathryn Townsley, Matthew Chesterman, Richard Morris, Robert Wallace, Robin Newton-Syms, Simon Gerrard, Sue Collinge, Tyler Cockerill and Wes Johnson (Principal)

Attending: Damian Stewart (Deputy Principal), Joanne Sherrington (Vice Principal) and John Wherry (Deputy Principal)

Clerks: Ron Matthews (Clerk)

## ***Public Minutes***

Item number:  
(and category)

Item description:

**58.24**

***Decision***

### ***Attendance of College Management Staff***

*As a matter of policy all meetings of the Corporation and its Committees will be held in private. The agendas and minutes and supporting papers of its public business will be made available to the general public. However: (a) The Principal shall be authorised to invite members of staff to attend in their employed capacity for both public and confidential business as appropriate and in accordance with Standing Order 25. (b) The Corporation however, may exclude members of staff from attending any business that it deems necessary. (c) Attendance by other persons shall be at the discretion of the Corporation following advice from the Principal or Clerk.*

***Resolved: That Management attend for the public, confidential and strictly confidential items.***

**59.24**

***Record***

### ***Apologies for Absence***

Apologies had been received from Governors Karen Dewhurst and David Hall. Damian Stewart, Deputy Principal, Education, was away from the College on business and unable to attend the meeting. Student Governors Matthew Chesterman and Tyler Cockerill were not present. Matthew had finished his course and Tyler had completed his first year of studies and both had left the College before the meeting.

**60.24**

***Decision***

### ***Minutes of Previous Meeting***

The public minutes of meeting number 180 held on Tuesday 11 June 2024 and published on the extranet were agreed and signed as true and correct records of the meeting.

**61.24**

***Record***

### ***Declarations of Interest***

There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda.

**62.24**

***Decision***

### ***Update from the Chair***

The Chair formally welcomed Elton D'Souza to the meeting. Elton was conducting Myerscough's Board Review on behalf of the Association of Colleges. She also welcomed Richard Morris to his first meeting following his appointment as Governor. The Chair then reported that, together with the other Chairs, continued to meet with the Principal on a regular basis. She had also attended a number of the 'Deep Dive' sessions and undertaken an Ofsted training event.

**Resolved: That the report be received.**

**63.24**

***Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2024/2025***

***Decision***

Members considered the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of Corporation for the coming year up to 31 July 2025.

The current Chair and Vice-Chair were eligible for re-election.

Following due process it was:

**Resolved:**

- 1. That Jane Booker be appointed Chair of the Corporation for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.**
- 2. That Rob Wallace be appointed Vice-Chair of the Corporation for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.**

**64.24**

***FE Student Governor***

***Decision***

The Clerk reported that the current FE Student Governor, Tyler Cockerill, would be returning to College in September 2024 to undertake the second year of his course. He had indicated that he was prepared to serve for a second term as FE Student Governor.

**Resolved: That Tyler Cockerill be appointed as FE Student Governor for 2024/2025.**

**65.24**

***Governor Engagement Programme***

***Decision***

The Clerk reported that a new programme of events for 2024/2025 would be produced for the coming academic year and would be presented to Corporation at the September meeting. Attached to the item was a list of Governors that had attended the recent 'Deep Dives' and similar events. Several Governors indicated that they had attended events which did not appear on the list. The Clerk asked Governors to supply him with details of any of these events so they he could add them to the record.

**Resolved: That the report be received.**

**66.24**

***Student Voice Report***

***Decision***

The Corporation considered the Student Voice Report which included details of the FE student end of year survey, a survey amongst apprenticeships and a summary of the HE module evaluation questionnaire. Student feedback forums for each course area had replaced the former HE Student Liaison Committees. The HE NSS survey results would not be published until 10 July although Myerscough the response rate of 62.5% was lower than previous years. Governors expressed concern that if the results had been RAG rated they would have shown red, all being lower than previous years. Improvements in the way the

surveys were conducted for the next academic year were highlighted in the report.

**Resolved: That the report be received.**

**67.24**

***Decision***

***Report of the Audit and Governance Committee of 4 June 2024***

The Corporation considered the report of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 4 June 2024.

**i) Financial Statements Audit and Regularity Audit Annual Plan for the Year Ending 31 July 2024.** Consideration was given to the Audit Plan prepared by RSM, the College Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors, for audit work relating to the year ending 31 July 2024, which included their fee for 2024. Key areas of audit focus were management override of controls, income recognition, pension scheme liabilities and regularity - reclassification to public sector. RSM would also provide an independent reasonable assurance report in connection with the Teachers' Pensions Contributions for the year ended 31 March 2024.

A copy of the Plan was attached to the report.

The Committee recommended the plan to Corporation for adoption.

**ii) Internal Audit Plan 2024/2025**

The Committee considered a report from the Internal Audit representative on the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2024/2025. The plan had been driven and agreed by management, based on the College's risk profile and the view of priorities for coverage in the forthcoming year. The suggested Audit Plan assignments for 2024/2025 were:

1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
2. HR and Payroll
3. Sub-Contracting Controls
4. Lesson Observations
5. Marketing, Applications and Conversions
6. Estates Management

The Plan included a follow up allocation, which would be utilised to test the degree of implementation achieved in relation to actions agreed by management in the previous academic year, and would serve to inform the adequacy of the College's own action tracking process.

The Committee retained the opportunity to amend the Plan during the year, should the need arise. The Committee recommended the Plan to Corporation.

### **iii) Timetable of Meetings 2024/2025**

The Committee received a report from the Clerk on the proposed timetable of meetings for 2024/2025. It was recommended to Corporation for approval.

A copy of the proposed timetable was attached.

### **iv) Membership of Committees 2024/2025**

The Committee considered the proposed Membership of Committees for 2024/2025.

A copy of the proposed Committee Memberships was attached. The Committee recommended the Committee Membership to Corporation

## **OTHER MATTERS FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE CORPORATION**

### **v) External Audit Recommendations – Follow Up**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Finance which indicated that the External Audit for 2022/2023 undertaken by RSM contained several recommendations.

An appendix to the report contained a summary of the recommendations, including progress on their implementation. Whilst implementation dates were not stipulated in the summary, the actions would be reviewed by RSM during the audit for 2023/2024.

The outstanding recommendations would be reviewed at each meeting of the Committee.

The Committee received the report.

### **vi) Internal Audit Report – May 2024**

The Internal Auditor, Jane Butterfield, presented five reports, three of which were on assurance reviews of various services within the College. The first report was a review of Cyber Security with two important, two routine and one operational recommendation. The second assurance review concerned Income and Debtors which had resulted in no recommendations. The third assurance review was the annual one required of Subcontracting Controls which also had no recommendations. The final two reports were the Follow Up Review,

which listed Tiaa's work over the year and their Annual Report which confirmed that they had met their contractual requirement of 32 days.

The Committee received the reports and noted the responses of Management.

#### **vii) Internal Audit Progress and Summary Reports Incorporating Internal Audit Report of May 2024**

The Committee considered the Internal Audit Progress and Summary Report Incorporating the Internal Audit Reports of May 2024. In 2023/2024 a total of 8 recommendations had been made of which 5 (62%) had been implemented with 3 (38%) ongoing.

The Committee noted the report.

#### **viii) Strategic Risk Register 2023/2024**

Audit and Governance Committee considered the Strategic & Governance Risk Report for 2023/2024 as presented by the Vice Principal.

Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.

The Committee noted the report.

#### **ix) Subcontracting Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Principal, Centres and Partnerships, on the subcontracting activities and performance for the year.

The work carried out by subcontractors enables the College to deliver education and training programmes to learners who would not otherwise be enrolled at Myerscough College, due to either geography or the specialist nature of the support they required.

The report outlined the various contractors, student numbers and performance. Due to cost subcontracted student numbers had been reduced over recent years.

The Committee received the report.

#### **x) Data Returns Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered the report on the above document. The report listed all returns and showed that the College had met all necessary deadlines.

The Committee noted the report

**xi) Post 16 Audit Code of Practice 2023/2024**

The Clerk submitted the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice 2023/2024 for consideration by the Committee. From the College's point of view there was very little change to the current requirements. Similarly, Karen Musgrave, on behalf of RSM, also reported that there was very little change to the current audit requirements.

**xii) Governance Quality Improvement Plan 2023/2024**

Audit & Governance Committee gave consideration to the Governance Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/2024 and noted progress on the actions. The Clerk reported progress on the individual items in the plan. He reported that the new Governor Portal system had been installed and was currently in the process of being populated. It should be up and running for the new academic year and appropriate training for Governors would be arranged. The remaining items were ongoing.

The Committee received the report.

**xiv) Audit Committee Annual Cycle of Business 2024/2025**

The Committee received a report on the proposed business of the Committee for 2024/2025.

The Committee received the report.

**Resolved:**

- 1. That the Financial Statements/Regularity Audit Plan for the year Ending 31 July 2024 be approved.**
- 2. That the Internal Audit Plan 2024/2025 be approved.**
- 3. That the Timetable of Meetings for 2024/2025 be approved subject to the Corporation meeting in July 2025 being moved from 1 to 8 July 2025.**
- 4. That the Membership of Committees for 2024/2025 be approved subject to the inclusion of newly appointed Governor Richard Morris being added to the membership of the Audit and Governance Committee.**

## **5. That the items for information be noted.**

**68.24**

### ***Decision***

#### ***Report of the Quality and Standards Committee of 18 June 2024***

The Corporation considered the report of the Quality and Standards Committee of 18 June 2024.

#### **i) Curriculum Planning**

The Deputy Principal, Education, gave a verbal update to the Committee on progress with regard to curriculum planning for the 2024/2025 academic year. He confirmed that Photography and Floristry would be dropped from the curriculum for 2024/2025 although Floristry would have a "follow on" provision for the existing students to complete their courses. Governors sought clarification on a number of points to which the Principal and Deputy Principal responded. The Committee noted the report.

#### **ii) Performance data for 2023/2024**

It was reported to the meeting retention remained strong for FE, HE and Apprenticeships and Skills with improved attendance. Apprenticeship recruitment was performing well despite a national decline, whilst 14 - 16 recruitment was also buoyant. Walkthrough observations were in line to achieve target. Many student survey results were positive. FE numbers stood at 1929, above the target of 1866, although the addition of the partnership enrolments would increase this figure. The College had reduced subcontracted numbers over recent years. There were an additional 274, above the target of 2020, 14-16 year old students funded by both local authorities and the ESFA. Overall, including authorised absences, attendance was 88.1% against a target of 95%. English and Maths remained priorities. However, 90.6% of students attended the Maths exams and 91.4% for the English exams which should be a positive step towards an improved pass rate. HE numbers were up on reduced budget predictions and this was confirmed by a continued reduction in HE applications nationally. Consultations had been held with the HE Partnership Team at UCLan. Work had commenced and was continuing on staff utilisation together with a review of course viability for 2024/2025. At present full time HE applications for 2024/2025 were 461 (347 in 2023/2024) and part time 242 (321 in 2023/2024). Retention was 97.1% against a target of 97%, with overall levels of attendance standing at 87.7%. The report on the Adult Education Budget for both the Preston and Liverpool Centres highlighted the strengths and areas for improvement at both centres and the actions taken to date. Full cost recovery to the end of June was £329,849 against an overall target of £366,560 a difference of £36,711. For Apprenticeship and Skills enrolment remained positive with an average of more than 10 applicants per week. At the beginning of May 2024 there were 446 against a profile target of 487. Retention was at



84.9% with attendance at 97%. Overall achievements were at 78.8%, an increase of 10.6% on the same period last year. The end of year financial target was likely to be met. The Committee noted the report.

### **iii) Quality Performance and Standards Report**

The Ofsted findings had now been built into the Quality Improvement Plan; English and Maths remained key priorities. The report stated that all FE staff had undertaken additional training on a number of topics, CPD for pedagogy had been delivered to all teams and a more rigorous implementation of the observation process had been addressed. Detailed metrics have been developed for 2024/2025 which will provide evidence-based methodology for identifying poorly performing courses, expectations for teaching and learning and classroom behaviour. "Deep Dives" of curriculum areas had been taking place over recent weeks, occasionally attended by Governors. The Committee noted the report.

### **iv) Quality Improvement Plan 2023/2024**

The Committee considered progress during 2023/2024. Again English and Maths remained high priorities together with improvements following the Ofsted report. The Committee noted the report.

**v) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (FREDIE) Action Plan** The Committee considered the FREDIE, (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement) Action Plan for 2023/2024. The Plan detailed all activities and improvements for 2023/2024. The Committee noted the report.

### **vi) Safeguarding Update**

The Committee considered an update report on Child Protection and Safeguarding and the Action Plan. Safeguarding incidents remained at a high level. The reasons and concerns were widespread with the majority concerning mental health issues but they also covered all aspects of safeguarding. Governors echoed the comments made at previous meetings, when concerns were expressed at the large number of safeguarding alerts, the ability of staff to respond and the well-being of the staff concerned and received the report. The Committee received the report.

### **vii) Curriculum Risk Register**

The Committee considered the Curriculum Risk Register noting the key "inherent risks" and the actions taken to reduce them. The Committee received the report.

### **viii) Annual Cycle of Business 2024/2025**

The Clerk submitted a draft of the Annual Cycle of Business for the Committee for 2024/2025. The Committee agreed the report.

**Resolved: That the report be received.**

**69.24**

**Decision**

***Report of the Finance & Resources Committee of 26 June 2024***

The Chair, Sue Collinge, reported on the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on 26 June 2024.

**MATTERS FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE CORPORATION**

**i) The Principal's Strategic Plan Progress Report  
2023/2024; Financial Position Statement for Period Ended 31  
December 2022**

The Committee received above regular reports on the various aspects of the College finances for the period ended 30 April 2023. The key performance indicators relating to income, Capital Plan, Human Resources Statistics and Financial Performance were reviewed. The report was based on the Strategic Goals of People and Sustainability. The targets under People included student satisfaction and in general these expressed good/strong responses. Digital Learning was the only area below target for student satisfaction. Staff CPD was well below a target of 95% at 35% although it was suggested that the target was set too high. There were arrangements in place for further CPD opportunities in the coming days. The remaining financial indicators were on target although HE numbers had been reduced from the previous year. Recruitment to FE was above target. The Capital Plan was anticipated to be delivered within target. The finance report included a statement of comprehensive income together with a detailed analysis. The statements showed the actual results for the period up to 30 April 2024, together with the outturn for 2023/2024, the budget for 2023/2024 (revised December 2023), which was approved by the Board in July 2023 and the Forecast for 2023/2024. The Balance Sheet as at the period end was also included, together with details of Cash Flow for the year to 30 April 2024 and forecast Cash Flow to July 2024. Overall College income indicated a loss of £354k with significant work still to be undertaken to ensure the forecast of 28k was met. Apprenticeship income was behind target but expected to reach forecast by the end of July. Cash balances at the period-end remained strong at £14.629m with cash days standing at 145 days. The farm was showing a loss of £207k against a forecast loss of £161k. A recruitment freeze was in place for new posts and work on non-pay saving continued. The pay award for the next academic year had been agreed as 1% from August 2024, back dated to 1 July 2024, plus a full increment where applicable. The report included the full details of capital expenditure. This was currently £2.965m against a revised budget of £5.581m, which included the additional funding from the ESFA. The comparison to the FE Commissioner's Financial Benchmarks remained positive with the Financial Health Forecast Grade reflected as Good. The

Committee asked various questions on the reports and sought clarification in some areas.

## **ii) FE Bursary Fund Policy, Procedure and Allocation 2024/2025**

The Committee gave consideration to the review of the HE Bursary Fund Policy and Procedure for 2024/2025. Only minor amendments had been made from the previous year. The Committee also considered the reports on the bursary fund awards for 2024/2025. The Committee noted that the Bursary Fund Policy and Procedure remained fit for purpose and agreed the proposed allocations for 2024/2025.

## **iii) Strategic Risk Register**

The Committee considered the Strategic Risk Report for 2023/2024 as presented by the Vice Principal. Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map. The report now identified the top five risks for the College. The Committee noted the report.

## **iv) Human Resources for the Period Ended 30 April 2024**

The Committee considered the Human Resources Report which contained an analysis of staff turnover, breakdown analysis of leavers, a staff stability index and staff sickness statistics for the year up to 30 April 2024. The Committee noted that staff turnover was currently at 19.04% (18.66% in 2023) slightly above national benchmark of 17.8%. The average number of working days lost due to sickness at the College was 2.54 days and lost time percentage was 0.98%. During the same period last year the average number of working days lost due to sickness at the College was 1.88% and the lost time percentage was 0.72%. Currently long term sickness stood at 9 employees compared to 8 at the same time last year. There had been 132 additional vacancies this quarter, similar to the same period last year. The College had failed to fill 43 of the vacancies at the first attempt. There were a total of 58 new employee relations cases during this period with 24 still on-going. The Committee received the report.

## **v) Health and Safety Report for the Period Ended 30 April 2024**

Members gave consideration to the Health and Safety Report for the period ended 30 April 2024 which provided an analysis of accident statistics over the period, together with other Health and Safety activities including policy updates, staff training, free health checks, auditing and inspections. Overall, accidents had increased from 96 to 125 when compared with the same period last year. Likewise near misses had increased from 18 to 27. There were 2 RIDDOR reportable accidents during the period making a total of 4 for the year and, at 1.08%, was better than the target of less than 2.6%. Analysis indicated that the 125 accidents involved 18 staff, 101 students and 6 visitors. Of these 22 (17%) were taken to hospital - 17 Students, 2 Apprentices, 2 Staff and 1

Visitor;76 (61%) received first aid treatment 27 (22%) needed no treatment 82% of accidents were treated on siteThere were no significant concerns.The Committee received the report.

**Resolved:That the report be received.**

**70.24**

***Strategic Risk Register***

***Decision***

The Corporation considered the Strategic & Governance Risk Report for 2023/2024 as presented by the Vice Principal. Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map. The report continued to identify the top five risks to the College.

**Resolved: That the report be received.**

**71.24**

***ESFA Funding Audit 2023/2024***

***Decision***

The Corporation considered a letter from the ESFA indicating that the College had been chosen for a Funding audit of the 2023/2024 accounts. The Audit would be undertaken for the ESFA by Wylie Bisset Audit Services.The Principal reported that this decision was probably made in the light of a new Principal and a new Chair.

**Resolved:That the report be noted.**

**72.24**

***Independence of the Clerk***

***Decision***

The Clerk to the Corporation must provide independent unbiased and impartial advice to the Corporation at all times and must be able to demonstrate his/her independence. Adherence to the policy 'Independence of the Clerk' had enabled the Clerk to demonstrate his independence. Corporation Members agreed that the current policy remained fit for purpose.

**Resolved:That the Independence of the Clerk Policy be agreed.**

**73.24**

***Annual Cycle of Business 2024/2025***

***Decision***

The Corporation considered a report on the Annual Cycle of Business for 2024/2025.

**Resolved: That the Annual Cycle of Business for 2024/2025 be agreed.**

