

Minutes of the meeting of the Northampton College Corporation held at 1700 hrs 5 October 2023.

Present	David Bailey	Steven Bunker	Pat Brennan Barrett (Principal)	Anne-Marie Kilday
	Philip Hilton	Paul Nutter	Mark Robbins	Helen Scott (Chair)
	David Smith	Rod Wood		
In Attendance	Gary Brough (VP (Res))(01to 04/23)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Thomas Goodridge (AP (SAVS))(01 & 02/23)	Helen Janska (AP(SAVS)) (01 & 02/23)
	Phil O'Hara (VP(SS))	Patrick Leavey (DP)	Mark Poole (Head/Estates) (01to 04/23)	Julian Wood (DP(FCA))
Apologies	Molly Allen	Becky Bradshaw	Geraldine Schofield	Michael Watkin

Strategic Update

There had been a tour of the College for Corporation members (1200-1300) followed by lunch (1300-1345) and comprehensive briefing on current arrangements and plans for 2023/24. (1400-1615)

01/23 OPENING

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there were no agenda related interests declared. The Chair welcomed all to the first meeting of the academic year particularly the newly elected staff member, Steven Bunker and explained that there would be some rearrangement of the Agenda order to allow those presenting to leave the meeting. **(Action 1RD)**

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

02/23 SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS & DISABILITY (SEND) REVIEW

The comprehensive report, including a Learning Support element was considered and discussed. The detail had been gathered into 5 elements:

- a. 2022/23 Closing Data. Detailed numbers for all categories of high needs cross-college student provision, including comparative data from the previous 3 years had been tabulated, was explained, and discussed. The strong performance and reputation for SEND provision, partly evidenced by sound retention, was contributing to an increased number of applications for the 2023/24 academic year.
- b. 2023/24 Provisional Headcount, Educational Health & Care Plan (EHP) and High Needs enrolments to date, in the 3 categories showed respectively a total of 271 and 270 students.
- c. Initial Assessment. Initial assessments for Reading and Maths had now been completed on-line and Free Writing remained paper based. These processes allowed more rapid and effective circulation of performance data and the Red Amber Green (RAG) rating was explained. Cross College teachers had received SAVS training on how best to utilise this information to inform delivery and strategies for teaching and learning.
- d. Student Support and Catch Up. Support Hub activities had been tabulated, including responsibilities for each area; these were explained and discussed.

- e. SEND Review. Weston College, an Education and Training Foundation (ETF) Centre of Excellence had completed a review of the provision and had determined that “SEND was highly visible and reflected in all areas of campus life” and the consequent recommendations and excellent action plan were explained and discussed.

Q	<i>An excellent comprehensive report TY, does this continue to be a strength it certainly sounds as though it should be?</i>
A	Yes, it is one of the College’s “outstanding” areas and is very relevant to future plans.
	<i>Is the special funding to help with the catch up (post Covid) to be extended beyond the current year?</i>
	There is no information on this.

The information was received.

Helen Janska & Thomas Goodrich left the meeting.

03/23 HEALTH AND SAFETY (HAS) (out of Agenda order)

- a. Annual Report. The Annual HAS Report 2022/23 was considered and discussed, the detail clearly showed the College was well served in this area; comprehensive detail over the year was a digest of the required and necessary measures and responses, which had been regularly brought to Members’ attention through reports. There was a comprehensive training regime. The Risk Assessment (RA) process and residual risks continued to be developed to be considered. The reassuring Report was received and welcomed.
- b. Policy Statement. The HAS Policy, supported by specific HAS risk assessments. Control procedures and safety management procedures had been reviewed for immediate implementation; the Policy was discussed and approved for signatures. **(Action 2Chair)**

	<i>The number of staff who have received (induction and continuation) training is impressive, similarly, the overall programme and associated literature is comprehensive. Are attendees enthusiastic?</i>
	They certainly appear to be and there is no history of avoidance of continuation training. The relatively low number of incidents evidences the programme effectiveness.
	<i>It would be helpful to have comparative numbers against percentages to provide perspective?</i>
	The number of people on site during most weeks is 10k+; the low number and nature of incidents can reassure Members that this is a safe environment,

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

04/23 ESTATES - ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report on the Estate 2022/23 was considered and discussed; the comprehensive document was presented as a written narrative supplemented by photographic and tabulated detail. That detail would inform Members of the work completed during the year and inform on the maintenance programme, management of utilities and security, accidents, and update on ICT. Also included were full details of the “Green” and sustainable initiatives particularly the energy and carbon details at Annex A. The excellent report was well received with appreciation recorded. **(Action 3RD)**

The information was received.

Gary Brough & Mark Poole left the meeting

05/23 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The minutes of the last meeting (20.06.23) were confirmed for electronic signature **(Action 4RD)**

- b. The Minutes of the:
- (i) QTLA Committee meeting (19.06.23), had been verbally reported to the last meeting and the unconfirmed written minutes were then presented by the Committee Chair (AMK) the meeting date on the minutes was amended. **(Action 5RD)**; and
 - (ii) Governance Committee (05.10.23) were verbally presented by the Committee Chair (RW). The Corporation Chair had withdrawn from the Governance Committee membership and Becky Bradshaw had volunteered to fill the vacancy, that was unanimously approved wie. **(Action 6RD)**. Dr Julie Teckman, a recently retired and valued staff member had indicated a wish to join the Corporation, she had been interviewed and was recommended for appointment; that was unanimously approved wie. **(Action 7RD)**
- c. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.
- d. Outstanding Actions. Actions from the previous meeting had been completed or were in progress. Action 11, "AC" was amended to QTLA.

See referenced minute for full action.		Status
Action 1	50/22. PH to Chair meeting.	Complete
Action 2	51/22. Safeguarding & Prevent annual report approved.	
Action 3	52/22. Last minutes (11.05.23) confirmed,	
Action 4	53/22. External Audit fee approved	
Action 5	54/22. L3 curriculum introduction approved.	
Action 6	56/22b. Budget & Plan approved for submission	
Action 7	56/22. Investment plan to be brought to Corporation.	In progress
Action 8	56/22. Capital plan approved,	Complete
Action 9	57/22. Amended FR approved.	
Action 10	59/22b. GS re-appointed.	
Action 11	59/22c. AMK appointed to AC (Chair).	
Action 12	59/22d. DB & GS to join AC.	
Action 13	59/22e. Business Plan approved.	

- e. Urgent Business. There were no requests for Urgent Business.

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

06/23 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal's Report included a verbal update on current issues together with a progressive colour RAG rated table. The overall picture remained strong and initiatives included the new staff Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme at 1.2. However. Item 1.5 "Develop English and Maths (EAM) Competence" had been demoted to Red (Oct 22 – Amber) with the "Expected Outcome" rising to Amber. EAM exam results had been above National Averages (NA) for both subjects however the NA was felt to be very low; the College approach was positively progressing, and students' interest was improving, evidenced by increased attendance and retention in both subjects.

The information was received and noted.

07/23 FINANCE REPORT

- a. Management Accounts. The Management Accounts to the end of July referencing the unaudited forecast year-end position comprised a narrative informed by graphical and tabulated detail. The accounts showed an EBITDA of £2,966k (Budget £2,012) c£1,899 outturn, (Budget c£1,035k). Income, at c£986k above budget had been boosted by in-year growth and increased apprenticeship funding. Pay costs had been unfavourable by c£357k (3%), in part due to the additional payment made to all staff in July 2023. All variances were explained and the total at 65.1% of total income was marginally above the recommended 65%. Non-pay costs had been c£325k better than budget, contributory reasons were all fully detailed in the paper. The Balance Sheet that cash available had increased by an

underlying c£2,634k during the year. The accounts did not reflect the recently received, FRS 102 required, Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Actuarial report, which indicated a move from a net liability of £213k to a net asset of £6,883k prompted by changed actuarial assumptions, which had been challenged by many sector audit firms and until confirmation the detail had not been included in the accounts. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were considered, discussed, and noted; the projected financial health assessment remained “Outstanding.” The Report was received and welcomed.

- b. Sub-Contract Policy. The College Sub-Contract Policy required Corporation approval; there had been some changes since the previous year prompted by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) revision of rules and guidance, all explained in the accompanying paper. The attached document explained the reasons for sub-contracting, together with the procurement and charging processes; a review of the provision and reduction was included. The Policy was considered and unanimously approved. **(Action 8JW)**

<i>How are we assured of potential sub-contractors' capabilities</i>
The process is fully detailed in the Policy and contractors are approved each year together with the management and quality assurance requirements.
<i>How is sub-contractors' performance monitored?</i>
The approach mirrors the College's internal monthly quality monitoring regime, with regular reviews of student progress and eligibility allowing monitoring of standards, additionally there are regular learner surveys and individual learner feedback.

- c. Student Enrolment. The enrolment data was discussed, the data was largely provisional since the 16–18-year-old (yo) numbers were liable for withdrawals until completion of the 42-day period (late October). As of 25 September, there were 4,829 students (2022 4,271), 16-18 yo stood at 4,435, an increase of 588 (13%) over the previous year while 19 plus were 30 below at 394. Accepting that some changes were likely, it was likely that the allocation of 3,718 student would be exceeded with a consequent increase in lagged funding in 2024/25, which was not yet reflected in the financial projection. The T-Level recruitment had been lower than expected, and since these were part-funded outside of lagged finding a clawback of c£100k should be expected. Of the 1,900 adults, 394 were full-time (FT). Part time (PT) student numbers would become clearer from December but are not expected to show any significant improvement over last year. Apprenticeships and HNC/D numbers were discussed.

<i>Will the increased number of enrolments require increased expenditure?</i>
Yes probably. Pay and non-pay costs are likely to increase but it is not yet possible to estimate amounts nor to know if the College will receive in-year growth funding.
<i>How are apprenticeship numbers looking?</i>
There has been a slow new start response through employers offering fewer vacancies it is likely that 175-200 will be the outcome. The funding position will be re-evaluated when enrolments are completed.

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

08/23 TEACHING & LEARNING (T&L)

The headline 2022/23 achievement rates were contextualised. The headline rate data on enrolments would become clear after the 42-day point however some negative effect should be expected through lower than expected Level 1 (L1) standards, consequent to the Covid related learning deficit. Retention data was improved from 2021/22 by .8% to 94.3% and, as had been explained in the previous item enrolments were improved well. The establishment of Vocational Support and individual analysis of detailed individual and diagnostic assessments continued to mitigate the pandemic adverse learning gaps and “wrap around” support was helping positive adjustment to educational settings, socialisation, increasing confidence and resilience. Students that had been year 8/9 during lockdown had suffered as schools focused and concentrated on those imminently facing assessments; there were unavoidable learning personal development deficits. A return to post CAG/TAG assessment strategy and normal grade boundary adjustment to 2018/19 norms and response to focus on examination base

assessments was now complete. Table 1 showed 558 missing results although positive outcomes were expected. Examination outcomes were then discussed informed by tabulated data: EAM were particularly considered reinforcing the focus highlighted in the Principal's report as well as the apprenticeship outcomes. The information was noted.

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

09/23 GOVERNANCE

- a. Committee Membership. Changes to Committee membership were discussed and the following changes were approved wie:
 - (i) Dr Julie Teckman was added to the Corporation membership (05/23);
 - (ii) Rod Wood replaced David Smith on the Audit Committee; **(Action 9)**
 - (iii) Becky Bradshaw replaced Helen Scott on the Governance Committee; (05/23)
 - (iv) the Remuneration Committee membership was confirmed as: Philip Hilton, Anne-Marie Kilday and Rod Wood; **(Action 9)** and
 - (v) the Task and Finish Group membership was confirmed as: Paul Nutter, Rod Wood and Mark Robbins, Part 2 refers. **(Action 9)**
- b. Regulatory Documents. When finalised, the recent Governance Review would inform an update to the Regulatory Documents and that would be brought to the Corporation for consideration. **(Action 10)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

10/23 URGENT BUSINESS AND NEXT MEETING

- a. There had been no urgent business requested.
- b. The next meeting would be at 1700 on 15 December 2023. Members were requested to advise remote attendance to the Clerk in advance. **(Action 11 All)**

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 11/23 below.)

11/23 ACTION REGISTER

ACTION REGISTER		Resp	By
See referenced minute for full action.			
Action 1	01/23. Agenda sequence amended.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	03/23. HAS Policy approved for signature	Chair	
Action 3	04/23. Estates Annual Report commended.	GB/MP	
Action 4	05/23. Last Corporation minutes confirmed for signature.	Clerk	
Action 5	05/23b(i). QTLA meeting date amended.		
Action 6	05/23b(i) BB to join Governance Committee (vice HS)		
Action 7	05/23 b(ii) JT appointed to Corporation.		
Action 8	07/23b. Sub-Contact Policy and Procurement approved.	DP(FCA)	asap
Action 9	09/23a(ii) RW appointed to AC. RC and TFG confirmed.	Clerk	
Action 10	09/23b. Regulatory Documents tbc.		
Action 11	10/23b. Next meeting attendance to be confirmed.		