

Minutes of the meeting of the Northampton College Corporation held at 1700 hrs 29 February 2024

Present	David Bailey	Pat Brennan Barrett (Principal)	Philip Hilton	Anne-Marie Kilday
	Paul Nutter	Mark Robbins	Helen Scott (Chair)	Julie Teckman
	Rod Wood			
In Attendance	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Jan Hutt (VP(P&OD))(32/33 only)	Jason Lancaster (Principal (Designate))	Patrick Leavey (DP)
	Paul Wakeling (Governance Consultant)	Julian Wood (DP(FCA))		
Apologies	Steven Bunker	Becky Bradshaw	David Smith	Mike Watkins

29/23 OPENING

- a. 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.
- b. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular: Jason Lancaster and Paul Wakeling as observers.

The information was received.

30/23 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 were confirmed for electronic signature, Clerk to Action. **(Action 1RD)**
- b. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.
- c. Outstanding Actions. Actions from the previous meeting had been completed or were in progress.

See referenced minute for full action.		Status
Action 1	12/23a. Congratulations recoded re Green Gowns award.	Complete
Action 2	12/23b. JT welcomed to Corporation.	
Action 3	13/23a. Last minutes (04.10.23) confirmed.	
Action 4	15/23a (i). IAS Strategy approved.	
Action 5	15/23a (ii). Agenda Item 6b recommended for approval.	
Action 6	15/23b (i). Agenda Item 4 recommended for approval.	
Action 7	15/23b (ii). QTLA TOR approved.	
Action 8	17/23. SAR approved.	
Action 9	18/23. QIP approved.	
Action 10	21/2a. Revised budget 2023/24 to next meeting.	
Action 11	21/23b. Necessary approval & signatures confirmed.	
Action 12	23/23. Info to be circulated to Members for decision.	
Action 13	23/23. Comments re Action 12 to Chair to relay to JW.	
Action 14	24/23. Visit to LA approved.	
Action 15	26/23a. BB re-appointed to Corporation.	
Action 16	26/23c. Regulatory documents interim approval.	

re Action 12. The information presented re utilities had been incorrectly based (wrong year) and no current action was necessary.

- d. Urgent Business. There was no urgent business requested.

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 38/23 below.)

31/23 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The unconfirmed Committee Minutes were then considered and recommendations noted.

- a. Quality of Teaching Learning and Assurance (QTLA) (26.02.24). The Committee Chair explained that 2 key documents (The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) (16/23) and the Teaching and Learning (T&L) (17/23) update had been closely considered, in particular, progress with the new curriculum. The detail was received and noted.
- b. Governance. (27.02.24). The unconfirmed minutes of the last meeting were explained by the Committee Chair, in particular:
 - (i) re 09/23. Neus Garrock, had attended the meeting and had explained in detail why she would like to join the Corporation and what she had to offer. The Committee had been impressed by Neus and her wide local (as an employer) and national experience. Accordingly, The Committee had unanimously recommended her appointment and that was accepted and approved (**Action 2RD**)
 - (ii) re 11/23. A review of Governance was in progress conducted by Paul Wakeling who introduced himself and briefly explained that as part of the review, he would hold 1:1 meeting with Committee Chairs and with a group of Members.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 38/23 below.)

32/23 PAY REVIEW

Confidential (Part 2). The Vice Principal (P&OD) was required on urgent College business elsewhere, she would however, present Item 12 (Pay Review) and since all Members present were eligible it was decided to receive the information at this point.

The information was received and noted.

33/23 PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

The Report was considered, informed by a verbal update with reference to a progressive colour coded table Blue, Red, Amber, Green (BRAG); the Covid related blue coding had been retained since it remained active in College but did not register in this report. Several items had been upgraded from Amber to Green, evidencing the inherent strength of the curriculum and the College learning environment. Several particularly rewarding performances were highlighted; including sound retention and the "Good or Better" percentage from the lesson observation process together with the moves towards bolstering and developing of the existing digital focus. In response to a challenge around the evidential basis for the recorded assumptions it was explained that the robust student feedback arrangements were a strong and clear source of information, available (at a minimum) 5 times a year. Regular Teaching and Learning (T&L) exchanges examined all information in respect of individual students and considered the effectiveness of their intervention processes and these were reinforced by checks every 6 months. Additionally, Student Services meticulously monitored pastoral and other associated needs and considerations. Development of English and Maths (EAM) remained Amber including the expected outcome, however the integration into the wider cross-college curriculum change had resulted in more available time for Maths and the arrangements were popular with both staff and students. Local skills provision remained a focus and was aligned with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The College was actively engaged in local collaborative projects, especially with "Green Skills" issues, a particular NN interest. All collaborations were related to our 8 LSIP priorities. Generally, the prevalence of Green ratings, at this point in the academic year was encouraging.

The information was received.

33/23 FINANCE REPORT

- a. Budget Review 2023/24. As recommended by the Teachers' Pay Review Body the Department for Education (DfE) had increased 16-18 funding to the level that closely matched that applicable to schools. This had funded a 6.5% pay award formally approved by the Corporation in August) and previously incorporated into a revised budget. The last Corporation meeting agreed to receive a budget review based on mid-year projections (Period 06) and effective use of the significant funding increases expected for the remainder of the year. Confirmation of additional £3.1m (£1.5m in previously announced changes to the underlying allocation and a net £1.6m in In Year Growth funding) had now been received. Pay and Non-Pay Costs had increased, fully described in the report and explained, together with additional interest payments on cash reserves. The detail was fully considered and discussed, informed by the useful table on Page 3 of the Report. Three actions were proposed to maximise utilisation of income in 2023/24, whilst preserving value for money:
- (i) to reserve £1m in additional pay cost for potential additional non-recurrent payments to all staff at the end of the financial year;
 - (ii) to spend an additional £500k on equipment purchases, prioritising planned expenditure on ICT devices; and
 - (iii) to undertake an estimated £250k of additional repair and maintenance work to the College's facilities and infrastructure.

Further details for implementation of each was in the Paper and were explained; all were approved. **(Action 3JW)** The full financial plan resulting from the associated actions had been attached. It comprised a comprehensive narrative supplemented by tabulated and graphical information, which was closely scrutinised and approved. **(Action 4JW)**

- b. Management Accounts. The management accounts up to January 2024 (R06) were noted; the comprehensive document comprised a narrative informed by graphical and tabulated detail, which was explained and considered. Key Performance indicators (KPI) had been tabulated and were noted. Income and expenditure variances were explained, including those relating to apprenticeships, previously considered 16-18 income and pay costs. The EBITDA was projected at £1,954k with an operating surplus of £1.490k. The cash balance was £18,081k. Recommendations from the Task & Finish Group (TFG) regarding the pay structure would be brought to the next Corporation meeting. The accounts were received.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (See Register 38/23 below.)

34/23 ENROLMENT 2023/24

Enrolment detail funding target dates (R04 – December and R06 – February) had now passed and all necessary data had been submitted and, as of 5 December 2023:

- a. there were 4,439 (2022 - 3,896) full time students on roll - a 14% increase, including an increase of 571 16-18 allocation eligible students and the positive implications for increased funding had been fully examined and welcomed;
- b. challenges with T-Level recruitment, reported at the last meeting, had continued and there were now 38/121 on roll – the consequent clawback had been netted off by DfE against the College's In Year Growth funding;
- c. adult enrolments continued throughout the year and was currently 1486 (19+) a pattern similar to last year;
- d. apprentices on programme showed 440 reduced from 477 at the last meeting. Recruitment was below but retention was ahead of previous years, the latter at almost 81%; and
- e. HNC/D stood at 74 (2022 – 78) with 11 part-time and a modestly increased related income was forecast.

The information was received and noted.

35/23 LEARNER DATA MONITORING

The Learner Data Monitoring comprised comprehensive data tables, each complemented by listed informative main bullet points; data was analytically challenged, discussed and received. Overall retention showed a slight improvement on last year at 98.5% with a small variation between age profiles; this indicates an end of year potential to 95%, matching 2022/23. Overall attendance, at 86.4% was similar to last year reflecting the focus on keeping students engaged in learning for example, the weekly tracking of monitoring and intervention by curriculum teams and reported each week to the APs. Attendance at both English and Maths (EAM) had reduced from last year, possibly through two shorter GCSE sessions delivery; however, both subjects had improved over 2021/22. Planning for GCSE exams was underway with an expectation of 1700 Maths and 1400 English entries. Additional “missed learning” support was provided as weekly “acceleration sessions” to be bolstered by a comprehensive Easter revision offer. Progress Data tables were then considered and discussed. Comparing progress made by current students to that made by last year’s cohort allowed monitoring of post covid variations during return to standard awarding organisation assessment strategies. Comparisons across the two years show more at or above target students and thus fewer on amber and red ratings, particularly at Levels 2 (L2) and L3. programmes. Support for red or amber rated students, identified at curriculum monitoring meetings was explained. Members took assurance from the information which was noted.

The information was received and noted.

36/23 GOVERNANCE

There were Governance items for consideration;

a. Ends of Terms.

- (i) Helen Scott end of term had been on 06.02.24, she had indicated that she would resign from the Corporation at the end of this school year, accordingly her term was extended until 27 June 2024. **(Action 5RD)** It would therefore be necessary to appoint a successor as Corporation Chair; a full canvass of Members had recently identified Anne-Marie Kilday as the nominee. The election would be held at the June 27 Corporation meeting. **(Action 6RD)**
- (ii) Phillip Hilton had offered his resignation as Vice-Chair, effective at the end of this meeting and that was regretfully accepted **(Action 7RD)**; he would depart the Corporation at the end of this academic Year. A full canvass of Members had recently identified Rod Wood as the nominated replacement and that was unanimously approved. **(Action 8RD)**

The Chair recorded sincere thanks to Phillip for his long and extremely valued tenure as Vice-Chair. His service to the Corporation had been beyond reproach and his loyalty was exemplified by his insistence on remaining a Corporation Member until year end.

- b. Skills Audit. Members were thanked for their timely completion of the individual Skills Analysis forms; the consolidated results had been considered by the Governance Committee (12/23) and would inform future recruitment and training.
- c. Business Plan. The Business Plan was proceeding as planned and no amendments were necessary. **(Action 9RD)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified (Register at 38/23 below)

37/23 URGENT BUSINESS AND NEXT MEETING

a. There had been no Urgent Business requested.

b. The next meeting would be held at 1700 on 11 May 2024.

The information was received.

38/23 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full action.		Resp	By
Action 1	30/23a. Last minutes (14.12.23) were confirmed.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	31/23b. Neus Garrock appointed to Corporation.		
Action 3	33/23a. Enabling actions approved.	DPFCA	
Action 4	33/23a. Amended Financial Plan approved.		
Action 5	36/23a(i). HS term of office extended to 27.06.24	Clerk	27.06.24
Action 6	36/23a(i). Election for new Chair at final mtg 2023/34.		
Action 7	36/23a(ii). PH resignation as Vice-Chair accepted.		
Action 8	36/23a(ii). RW unanimously approved as Vice-Chair.		
Action 9	36/23b. Corp Business Plan confirmed.		
			wie