

**Minutes of the meeting of the Northampton College Corporation  
held at 1200 hours on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025 via Teams**

**Present:** Rod Wood (RW) (Chair), Paul Beers (PB), Laura Crandley (LC), Jason Lancaster (JL) (Principal and CEO), Paul Nutter (PN), Alric Pagon (AP), Mark Robbins (MR), David Bailey (DB), Kay Sellick(KS), Lynn Drinkald LD), Alexandra Owen (AO). David Bailey (DB)

**In attendance:** John Kirk (Clerk), Jan Hutt (JH)(Vice Principal, People and Organisational Development), Joanne Philpott (JP) (Deputy Principal Curriculum Success and Quality), Julian Wood (JW) (Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Affairs) and Rav Garcha (RG) (Interim Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Affairs)

<b>C.25.1</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>RW welcomed everyone to this additional meeting and explained the primary purpose was to consider the pay review.</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> were received from Anne-Marie Kilday, Julie Teckman, Neus Garriock. The meeting was declared quorate.</p>
<b>C.25.2</b>	<p><b>Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda</b></p> <p>None</p>
<b>C.25.3</b>	<p><b>Minutes of meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b></p> <p>The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record</p> <p>Part 1 JW noted a correction to the minutes in <b>103/24</b> to be amended accordingly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The £500k estimate relates to full year costs not the costs from April to July (which are estimated at c.170k).</li> <li>2. There is no direct relationship between these costs and the current year underspend (the full year cost would only apply in 25/26).</li> </ol> <p>Part 2 Approved</p> <p>Part 3 Approved</p>
<b>C.25.4</b>	<p><b>Outstanding actions</b></p> <p>There were no outstanding actions</p>
<b>C.25.5</b>	<p><b>Pay Review</b></p> <p>JL introduced the objectives, rationale and basis of the pay review, to ensure long-term success for the college in recruiting and rewarding staff in a competitive market, to achieve the best outcomes for students and the community and to address equal pay for equal work considerations.</p>

JH thanked the Task & Finish Group for the time and expertise throughout the project. The move away from automatic increments does not mean they will not be paid but allows future flexibility should finances not permit such increases. Equal pay has been fundamental to re-evaluating and reviewing all roles and job descriptions.

The proposals in the review would enable the college to be competitive in business support roles, and within the school sector, hence the separate pay scales for teaching and non-teaching posts.

The detailed Equality Impact Assessment showed initial discrepancies between physical and mental disability, which have since been addressed. Assessment of senior leadership roles of curriculum managers and upward showed the college pay is above the median, which is encouraging.

The underlying criteria was to establish an equitable framework for both shorter and longer term, allowing the college to compete in recruiting and retaining the best staff in order fulfil our obligations to students and the community.

PB asked about not aligning to the national Living Wage Foundation (NLW), and Gender Pay Gap being reduced but still at 8%.

JH noted that colleges that had adopted the NLW agreement found it to be unaffordable in subsequent years, and the unavoidable withdrawal from it caused considerable disruption and industrial action, largely because it is unpredictable.

JH The Gender Pay Gap is affected by numerous factors, including that many of the lower paid staff are predominantly female, such as catering staff and teaching assistants. Many prefer zero-hours contracts as they allow for flexible working patterns.

RW also noted that the college, in his experience elsewhere, is better on gender pay many other colleges.

AO agreed that NLW has caused considerable problems at her university, and is best avoided.

LC asked about increments up the pay scale on length of service not being automatic, noting that her experience of automated increases have been problematic.

JH noted that point of pay increments and cost of living increases have been moved from August to January. The intention is to continue to pay increments as long as the financial situation continues to permit. Discussions with unions on this have been positive.

JW explained that the uncertainty caused by lagged funding means that the practical benefit is to be cautious until the actual income is known, at which point increments and raises can be implemented as finances allow.

RW asked JW to introduce the Financial Paper

JW explained that the £2 million contingency against the pay award last year was made before the financial outcome of the pay review was known. The modelling showed costs of the first year was £1.7m. In year 2 this increases to £2m, which is still affordable, with the flexibility on increments providing adequate security.

	<p>Moving the implementation date from August to January means a reduced cost in each financial year, giving further confidence for future years, as the full cost is not in Year 1. This will allow the payment of an additional non-consolidated pay award for all staff.</p> <p>MR asked for clarity on the deferral part of the pay costs in each year.          JW explained that as the pay review would be implemented from Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, the cost in Year 1 would be seven out of twelve months, with the remainder paid in year 2. The cost in Year 3 would be £3 million, but the Jan 1<sup>st</sup> implementation would mean five months would be pushed back into the following financial year, so the additional cost is being deferred by 5 months in each year.          MR also asked about the Financial Health Rating, given the impact on EBITDA. JW confirmed that the rating would remain at Outstanding, assuming all things remained the same in the illustrative calculations.</p> <p>DB asked about the how an “early warning” system for payroll issues would work, and how quickly the Corporation would be made aware, given that circumstances and factors can change rapidly and with potentially catastrophic impact.          JH Noted that one of the KPIs built in for 2024/25 aims to measure the impact on recruitment and retention of staff and that the College intends to report this more frequently.          JW Noted monthly management accounts always come to Corporation meetings with a full review at the end of the financial year, and a further review before the pay award in January where the award of increments is no longer automatic, but is discretionary.</p> <p><b>It was resolved to approve the Pay Review Proposals</b></p> <p>JL expressly thanked both Jan Hutt and Julian Wood and their respective teams for their hard work in completing this considerable volume of work as well as the support of governors in supporting and guiding the project.          RW also expressed his thanks to all involved in delivery of this huge project.</p> <p>JH noted that there is now an enormous amount of work to implement the pay review in generating and checking the necessary paperwork for every member of staff, which will mean the effective shut down of the HR department from 10<sup>th</sup> February for at least two weeks.</p>
<p><b>C.25.6</b></p>	<p><b>Additional Payments to Staff</b></p> <p>As a result of the January implementation of the pay review, the college proposes to implement an additional, non-consolidated in-year payment to staff. This would, overall, be in-line with the originally budgeted implementation cost of the pay review and would support the motivation of staff given the delayed implementation.</p> <p><b>It was resolved to approve the non-consolidated lump sum payment to staff.</b></p>
<p><b>C.25.7</b></p>	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 5.pm Boardroom</p>

**C.25.8 Any Othe Business: Procurement of bus passes.**

JW This is a regular expenditure which is mostly recouped through students buying their bus passes from the College. It requires board approval as the invoice exceeds the personal £250k limit allowed in the financial regulations for the CEO,

Though the outlay is around £1m, the net cost is less than £100k.

**The Board approved the payment of this invoice and future invoices in this year.**

The meeting closed at 13.05