

## Corporation Board

Monday 25 March 2024 17:00-19:00 at the National Fluid Power Centre (NFPC)

<b>Attendees:</b>	Janet Pryke (Chair); Jason Austin (CEO); Katie Asgari (Staff Governor); Heather Barnett; Sharon Blackburn; Stephen Bulley; Margaret Cobb; Donna Clifford; Shirley Collier; Sally Gillborn; Daniel Gregory; David Grimes; Paul Lomas; Debbie Marshall; Ian Sutherland; Aimee Wilson; Jennifer Worsdale
<b>In attendance:</b>	Tracey Mace-Akroyd (Deputy CEO); Phil Curtis (Executive Director Finance and Estates); Jane Hartog (Executive Director Marketing, HR and OD); Cath Mollart (Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Corporate Services); Sarah Connerty (interim governance advisor and notetaker)

	Item	Time
1	<p><b>Welcome, introductions and apologies</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting and thanked John Savage and the NFPC for hosting the meeting.</p> <p>There were welcomes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ian Ashman – External Governance Reviewer</li> <li>• the new Staff Governor Ian Sutherland</li> </ul> <p>Apologies were received from Stephen Bulley and Aimee Wilson did not attend the meeting.</p>	
2	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>Jennifer Worsdale declared an interest in item 14 – Chair recruitment.</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2024</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>	
4	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>The interim governance advisor noted that the majority of items are included on the agenda or are in progress to be reported to the next Board meeting in May. Actions for update:</p> <p><b>Action 4</b> – feedback from the Annual Strategic Review meeting on the 11 March 2024 – the Principal and CEO noted that the meeting had gone well and a draft letter with the opportunity to comment has been received and will be circulated post meeting. There was a discussion about meeting learner and labour market needs within South Yorkshire and North Nottinghamshire and the Group’s actions and involvement around Duty to Review, LSIP/LSIF, Accountability and Devolution discussions with the Mayoral Combined Authorities. Headlines included:</p> <p><b>Strengths and opportunities</b></p>	Gov advisor

- *National Priorities – the college’s curriculum offer is dynamically linked to the local employment market/need and is designed to meet the changing environment with strong links with employers and ERBs*
- *Strategic partnerships with employers such as local NHS trusts – The college are working with local NHS trusts to meet skills gaps in the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw region. This work will initially focus on adult learners/provision but in time it will bring in other age groups/funding streams as the programme develops.*
- *The college has a strong set T Level programmes with successful delivery. The college formally joined the South Yorkshire IoT in March 2024, as part of the South Yorkshire IoT the college will be offering new pathways to HTQs. The Dearne Valley campus is undergoing significant investment and redevelopment and, working in partnership with local employers will be offering new innovative Digital programmes at the site. The college’s North Nottinghamshire campus will be offering new programmes in Digital and Green skills from September 2024.*
- *The college are continuing to develop their learning programmes in line with South Yorkshire MCAs strategic plan to meet adult skills need across the region. This involves working collaboratively with the other South Yorkshire GFEs to deliver key programmes such as LSIP, HTQs, IoT and NEETs across the region.*

**Current top challenges**

- *Student attendance is improving but still not at a level the college are aiming for. Additional resource has been invested to improve attendance aimed at providing more support for those learners who have lower attendance alongside improved mental health support provided.*
- *Challenge remains for the college at their vacant/surplus Dinnington site. The college have a number of options available and are in discussion with Rotherham Council regarding future High Needs provision.*
- *Defunding of Qualifications – The main areas impacted by defunding will be on the college’s Public Services provision, however the college have introduced T Levels in Digital/Early Years routes to mitigate this defunding impact. The college acknowledge this is unlikely to cover the gap left in defunded Public Services programmes. Curriculum planning for 2024/25 is underway and future gaps will be addressed as part of this process.*
- *Work with SYMCA continues however there remain concerns around the authorities 3-year Adult Skills Fund allocation strategy going forwards and the upcoming publication of their revised skills strategy. There were issues around SYMCA’s in year growth process in 2022/23 and how late announcements were made, however it is hoped the process will be more timely for the current funding year.*
- *Staff recruitment remains challenging for the college, especially for recruitment of maths tutors. The college are developing a revised remuneration package to enhance their employment offer for this*

	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>sector.</i></p> <p>The DfE’s Head of Area and FEC Advisor (Mike Firth and Jo Pretty) were pleased about the attendance data which they noted as doing well against the national average with the demographics of the Group.</p> <p>The DP and CEO noted that through collaboration with other colleges all are averaging 8-10% below the vocational national average for E&amp;M.</p> <p>The Board asked if any other challenges were identified and the Chair reported that there weren’t and it was agreed that the Group are self aware of the challenges and opportunities they face. The DP and CEO explained that there is a termly exchange of information with the DfE around key areas such as apprenticeships and T Levels that happens outside of this process.</p> <p><b>Action 4</b> - The Group were informed they were moving out of PIMS on the 15 February and this was reported to the Board</p> <p><b>Action 7</b> – Principal and CEO to update on the latest position from the AoC around the next pay offer – the Principal and CEO reported that he had attended an AoC meeting where there was a national discussion around the pay offer. All agreed that AoC should continue as a body to negotiate, whilst individual colleges will need to consider their local and individual positions.</p>	
5	<p><b>Student Governors report</b></p> <p>The Student Governor provided an update to the Board which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Face Facts Research on HE.</b></li> </ul> <p>Four students, including the Student Governor, were asked to create pre-tasks and attend a focus group around HE, progression and the external and internal factors which had contributed to their current learning pathway. The Student Governor had asked for direct feedback on the research, this will come directly from Face Facts Research to the Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student Union (NNC Campus)</b></li> </ul> <p>The Student Union at North Notts College is focused on providing learners with the best quality experience possible. Feedback forms are being circulated to collect feedback from learners on what they would like to see from the SU. This data will be collected and implemented by the NNC SU and shown as part of a progression update on the Student Union in the May 2024 Student Governor report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aramark</b></li> </ul> <p>Aramark is a new system implemented to rebuild the reputation of food served as well as relationships with staff and students. With this system's implementation, there have been feedback forms provided to students across all three campuses to gather information on improvements necessary to provide an excellent standard of quality throughout. The Aramark feedback form will be collected and presented within the May 2024 Student Governor report.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Student Governor noting it is really refreshing to hear the student voice and receive a Student Governor report.</p> <p>The Board asked about engagement with the SU. The Student Governor noted that students are being asked if they would be interested in taking up</p>	

	<p>one of the three roles left to try and build up the team. The SU has been very stagnant due to timetabling of the two key people running it so there is limited time to meet and work on SU issues. It was agreed that a progression plan going forward for the SU would be useful.</p> <p>The Board asked if there is interaction with colleagues from the three other campuses and the Student Governor reported that this is the aim, but it is not happening now. The Board noted that the original plan was to have one SU across all campuses.</p> <p>The ED Finance and Estates noted that Aramark are keen to work with students to improve their offer and would welcome a body of students providing them with input.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> It was agreed that the Student Governor would meet with the ED Finance and Estates (around Aramark and feedback) and the Director of Safeguarding and Student Support (around SU across the campuses).</p>	<p>Student governor/ Deputy Principal/ ED Finance and Estates</p>
<p>6</p>	<p><b>External Governance Review – findings and recommendations</b></p> <p>Ian Ashman, the external governance reviewer (the reviewer), provided an overview of the EGR process, engagement with the Board, how the information was gathered and thanked colleagues for their support as the engagements have helped to deliver a stronger report.</p> <p>The reviewer noted that it was good to see the Board starting the meeting with the student voice this evening.</p> <p>The review concludes that, when judged against the Excellent Governance criteria, the effectiveness of Governance at the Group is good, with good capability and capacity to improve further. The main area for development is continuing and increasing the focus around quality and employer responsiveness. Enhancing the governor links scheme to give another source of evidence, continuing to improve meeting papers and looking at the cycle and meetings schedule will free up space on agendas for teaching, learning and employer responsiveness items and lead to even better discussions and decision making.</p> <p>The Board considered the report, and the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness of governance is good in the report and one governor noted that there is a big range within good and asked what the reviewers steer is within that good judgement. The reviewer noted that if the report was using the Ofsted analogy there are many aspects that are a high 2 and aspects that are a low 2 which are areas included in the recommendations. There is nothing that would fall into a 3. The aim of the recommendations is to move governance to outstanding. In the Ofsted criteria on excellent governance, it is about challenging and driving improvements on the basis of a good understanding and evidence. More focus on the curriculum and hearing the student voice and using the link scheme to triangulate can all be areas of focus. The Board is already doing all of these things and it is a question of emphasis. There has been a lot to do to get the Group into a stable condition and through the PIMs process and this has had to be the Board’s priority so now there is opportunity and room for this focus</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report does not identify any significant weaknesses but does identify several areas for further development, and most of these relate to enhanced focus on teaching and learning</li> <li>• There are a couple of areas around compliance and being more explicit about the educational character. There are several areas that the interim governance advisor is already taking forward</li> <li>• It was agreed that 25 recommendations is a lot, and these can be prioritised by the Search and Governance Committee. The reviewer will provide a suggested format for this next stage of the process</li> <li>• There was a discussion about the Part B recommendations and governance impact and one governor asked for a view on how best to measure impact and is it about mapping against the governance code. The reviewer noted that the key judgement is how well teaching is improving, success rates rising, and meeting the skills needs of employers and the community. Those outcomes give the real measures of success. There are areas that will help judge the governance itself and these are included in the Code</li> <li>• There should be a view about whether the governing body is clued up about their local environment and the skills needs of local employers. Right across the country the need for more sustainable skills is something that employers really want colleges to focus on. There is evidence that the college is thinking about this. It is about how you engage with employers. A few governors could take a lead on employer engagement to learn and know what local employers are saying.</li> <li>• One governor asked how we manage the process after this point and ensure there will be discussions. The Chair noted that this will come to the next Search and Governance Committee for discussion and part of the Board meetings going forward will review progress against the recommendations</li> <li>• The DP and CEO noted that with 25 recommendations it doesn't suggest that governance is good. For Ofsted the Group received reasonable contribution in the skills outcome and good for quality. There are some quite strong words used in the report and the Board needs to be mindful of who is the reader. In terms of impact looking at where the Group was in 2019 to now there is a clear impact of governance. It is important to find ways to make the Board even better but the language used means different things to different people so this could be a risk and the DP and CEO asked that it is absolutely clear in the report around the use of language and clear about the Board's ambitions. <b>ACTION:</b> The Chair asked Exec to review the report with their own area in mind and suggest any updates to the language. The aim is not to dilute the meaning of the report just the articulation</li> <li>• The reviewer emphasised that this is a confidential report to the Board and will not go into the public domain. A short summary will be</li> </ul>	<p>Exec/ Reviewer</p>
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	<p>published for the website which will not dilute the meaning of the report just the articulation</p> <p>The Chair thanked the reviewer on behalf of the Board for all the work on the External Governance Review. (Ian Ashman departs:17.51)</p> <p>The Chair noted that there had been an earlier review of the report by the Search and Governance Committee and a lot of the wording has been changed in response to governor comments. It is important that it gives a clear view of where we are as a Group.</p> <p>The DP and CEO reported that Ofsted found governance very strong. It was agreed that there is nothing in the report that is a surprise or unexpected.</p> <p>The next steps are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement on which recommendations should be implemented</li> <li>• Detailed action plan with priorities and timescales to be produced</li> <li>• Search and Governance Committee to have oversight of the plan and the timetable</li> <li>• S&amp;G Committee to consider the suggestions for training and development</li> <li>• A summary of the EGR to be published on the website.</li> </ul>	
7	<p><b>Principal and CEO report</b></p> <p>The Principal and CEO provided the Board with an update which included:</p> <p><b>Success stories</b> – the Group has been nominated for the 2024 VTCT (Vocational Training Charitable Trust) Excellence awards in the College of the Year Award and Student of the Year category, a finalist in the WorldSkills UK excellence at work UK EDI Heroes Awards 2024 and the Sheffield Hallam University Inspirational Student Award 2024 inspirational individual</p> <p>Governors are welcome to attend the SHU award ceremony.</p> <p><b>Enrolment Data</b></p> <p>Current application data is strong with 1997 on Study Programmes and an overall growth of 533. This is 26% up for NNC and 28% up for Rotherham and 18% down for DVC. The gap at DVC has lessened since the last meeting. The challenge now for the Group is accommodation and staffing.</p> <p>It was noted that these are applications not enrolments but it is a positive picture and when the curriculum plan concludes in May the Group will start to look at staffing.</p> <p>One governor noted that HE is still a worry. There is a HE strategy group and research results are due in soon. The new Sheffield Hallam University Vice Chancellor attended the business breakfast launch and met with the Principal and CEO to discuss new opportunities.</p> <p><b>Apprenticeship Accountability Framework– March 2024</b> – the apprenticeship QAR is now 50% and on track and is in line with the thresholds outlined in the Apprenticeship Training Provider Accountability Framework and specification</p> <p><b>College Financial Handbook</b> – this was released last week, included in the governor briefing, and will come to the Finance and Resources Committee on 2 May 2024 for discussion</p>	

	<p><b>Accountability Statement</b> – the proposal is to hold a session with governors on the 18 April 2024 at the Governor Development Session to support the drafting of this year’s Statement. The session will include stakeholder feedback including feedback from the South Yorkshire governor stakeholder engagement group, a stakeholder matrix identifying impact and college best practice pilots which are due to be released from the DfE. The Principal and CEO noted that a recent visit to Hull College had included a discussion about the accountability statements and Duty to Review as the college had been part of the pilot scheme. The DP and CEO attended the recent AoC webinar on accountability statements. The feedback is that statements should be short and pithy and aligned and linked to a college’s other strategic documents. A meeting is taking place next week with stakeholders, including the Doncaster Chamber, and having governors involved going forward would be excellent. <b>ACTION:</b> an invite to be sent out to governors to the next meeting with stakeholders</p> <p><b>Retford Educational Centre</b> – there was a meeting last week, but all parties did not attend. The Board asked how much post 16 students the Centre brings in and it was confirmed at around 60-70, this includes school links as it is a day service. At this stage there is not much detail to report but it is a potential opportunity area.</p> <p><b>March Governor Briefing</b> – governors fed back that the briefings are useful and should continue. The Board also receives the weekly staff briefings.</p> <p><b>Business Breakfast BCR</b> – this was a joint launch with the Chamber and was a good event with lots of staff attending and engaging with businesses and work opportunities coming out of it.</p> <p><b>Institute of Technology launch</b> – the South Yorkshire IoT launch took place last Friday and the Group is now an official member. The next step is to bring in student numbers.</p> <p><b>DVC Growth Plan</b> – the Group has acted on the declining numbers at DVC and is using an external source for market research. The Group has reduced the deficit and work is needed on commercial opportunities going forward.</p> <p><b>Apprenticeship Awards</b> – this was a fantastic evening, and thanks go to all the teams for organising.</p> <p><b>Strategic Indicators</b> The KPIs have been shared and considered at the Finance and Resources Committee and the Quality and Standards Committee. There are no proposed changes to the Innovation and Growth KPIs. A lot of work has been done by the ED Strategic Planning and Corporate Services in this area and the focus will continue to be on these KPIs for this year across the Group. The Principal and CEO shared a document containing all KPIs. <b>ACTION:</b> Governors were asked to consider any further changes and send through to the Principal and CEO by close of Thursday.</p>	
8.1	<p><b>Audit and Risk Committee Chair report of the meeting held on 20 February 2024</b></p> <p>The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee reported that the Committee focus for this meeting was around risk and they received the Annual report, Risk Management policy and risk appetite and risk register. The Committee were</p>	

	<p>content with the progress being made. An internal audit on risk management is due in May to provide independent assurance.</p> <p>The Committee will have an agenda item on deep dives as a standing item going forward and Board members are welcome to suggest a topic.</p> <p>The ED Finance and Estates reported that the Skills Funding Agency have been in touch about the AEB subcontracted audit and proposed a review of actions. This would ensure that the next audit would not be due until 2026.</p> <p>An action from the Board was to receive an update on the control framework in place at the Group and the Committee received a verbal report with a report coming to the next meeting.</p> <p>The audit closing letter from the Office for Students (OfS) has been received which provides independent assurances on the Group’s processes around HE. The Committee received a progress report from the internal auditors. There have been no reports this year to date and the Committee expects to receive reports in both May and June. The ED Finance and Estates confirmed that the draft reports for payroll and procurement are received.</p> <p>There was a discussion at the Committee around how governors are given assurance around compliance across the Group and this will be included in the risk register with named staff against areas.</p> <p>The Board reviewed the risk register and the ED Finance and Estates reported that it is being used by more staff across the Group and Committees receive relevant extracts for monitoring.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Board considered and approved the updated Risk Management Policy and risk appetite statement</p>	
8.2	<p><b>Finance and Resources Committee</b></p> <p><b>Committee Chair’s report of the meeting held on 12 March 2024</b></p> <p>The Finance and Resources Committee chair noted that the Committee continues to broaden the scope of the meeting and for this meeting there were two major sections on people and IT.</p> <p>The Group is making good progress on the people area following the strategy day. There is a HR strategy on a page as a high level plan, and the paper that went to the strategy day is the detail of what will happen through 2024.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the KPIs. It is an intermediate area as the HR system iTrent is not yet giving the teams what they need in terms of reporting and KPIs will improve when this is in place. The next stage is linking KPIs to the learner experience.</p> <p>The ED Marketing, HR and OD explained that the team are working with IT. The HR packages have been bought and it is now about interlinking them with the current iTrent system. It is a work in progress and when in place will provide more up to date and accurate data.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the KPIs for turnover and sickness are realistic in terms of the current data and timeframe.</p> <p>The Committee received an update on the IT department. Progress is being made in three key areas – infrastructure, structure and getting the best and value for money out of what is implemented. The ED Strategic Planning and Corporate Services noted that detailed updates have been provided to Finance and Resources Committee and Audit and Risk Committee and the Group has commissioned an external audit of the infrastructure of IT. The</p>	



draft report has been received which highlights some concerns about operational management and a plan is being implemented to expedite progress in the next couple of weeks.

The ED Finance and Estates provided an update including:

**Finance**

- Overall, there are no significant shifts in EBITDA and profitability
- The funding statement has been received with an increase of £3.6m for next year. This includes the requirement for increased English and maths funding changes, pay awards and £400k of additional pension costs. Curriculum planning is in progress
- The first report on bank covenants has been returned to the bank and the Group is compliant with its covenants including the updated Managing Public Money (MPM) and incorporated changes around the loan
- AEB is on track
- There was a proposal around treasury management to address surplus cash and the Committee want to have more comfort around the cashflow before taking forward a proposal to the Board

**Estates**

- The Group is still on track with the £15m in capital funding with £10m committed to date. There is a re organising of costs around priority areas such as roofing
- Options are being looked at for Dinnington. A contact through the Chamber will provide support alongside LocatED to ensure the Group is looking at the best value options

**KPIs**

The ED Finance and Estates reported that there has been lots of feedback received. The Chair agreed to presenting the original set of KPIs to the Board and continuing to work on through the year.

The Board considered the report, and the following discussions took place:

- One governor noted that she had provided feedback on the finance KPIs, and it is all about governors being clear on the baseline
- KPIs have got to be clear, easy to record and maintain
- Don't have KPIs for the sake of it
- One governor felt that the HR KPIs are a basic list. There are eight areas in the strategy and only five KPIs and proposed that there are more KPIs for monitoring
- The HR on a page is a positive step forward and appreciated
- One governor asked about the position with performance related pay (PRP). The ED Marketing, HR and Estates explained that work had been carried out around PRP for English and maths teachers, but UCU do not agree in principle with PRP, so alternatives are being considered around awarding bonus payments. It is not about rewarding all staff, but those that are performing well. This is a work in progress. One governor noted that PRP is a political and decisive issue which

	<p>deserves governor involvement and asked the Chair to consider this so the Board can support if necessary and provide a collective view to stand behind the Group. The ED Marketing, HR and OD noted that PRP is no longer a consideration due to UCU's position.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Board considered and approved the Finance and HR KPIs noting that further work will be done around KPIs at the Committees</p>	
8.3	<p><b>Quality and Standards Committee</b>  <b>Committee Chair's report</b> of the meeting held on 20 March 2024  The Quality and Standards Committee Chair provided an update on items considered at the meeting including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding assurance that the Group has the right processes in place for safeguarding, including compliance with the new guidelines around Prevent</li> <li>• Congratulations to the team for successfully achieving re accreditation in Investors in Inclusion</li> <li>• A new campaign <a href="#">My Time</a> was launched which is about engaging learners of all ages with a focus on HE</li> <li>• Applications for T levels are up</li> <li>• The new approach to English and maths was discussed and the implications of the new funding guidance around E&amp;M was considered and the Group are already looking at this. Plans for further recruitment and initiatives to use vocational teachers to contextualise the paths students are on to improve motivation and allow full utilisation of vocational tutors are underway</li> <li>• There was a presentation on curriculum planning by the VP Curriculum and forecasts for 2024-5 and budgeting</li> <li>• Applications and Enrolments show no changes since the last report in January 2024 with 16-18 applications continuing to be strong and HE applications still low</li> <li>• The final Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) strategy was reviewed and includes the feedback provided by governors</li> <li>• The QIP was reviewed. Attendance has gone up in all categories</li> <li>• Colleagues reported on the Study Programme, Adults, Apprenticeships, HE and English and maths</li> <li>• It was agreed that the Apprenticeship Task and Finish Group would convene one final meeting and going forward this work would continue as part of the Committee agenda</li> <li>• Governors will be invited to join colleagues on learning walks this year and a full programme of governor engagement will be rolled out next year</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Board considered and approved the Quality of Education KPIs noting minor updates will follow</p>	
9	<p><b>Admissions Policy</b> (action 9)  The ED Marketing, HR and OD noted that the Board asked for a review of the policy to ensure it is concise and clear and subcontracted learners are included and it will be cross referenced with the Subcontracting policy. All</p>	

	<p>these updates have taken place and policy has been through impact assessment.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Board approved the Admissions Policy</p>	
10	<p><b>National Fluid Power Centre (NFPC) minutes from 26 February 2024</b></p> <p>The Board noted the minutes.</p>	
11	<p><b>Committee minutes</b> are available on the drive for information</p> <p>The Board noted the Committee minutes.</p>	
12	<p><b>Any other items of urgent business</b></p> <p>There were no items raised.</p>	
13	<p><b>Date of next meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monday 20 May 2024 venue tbc</li> <li>• Monday 8 July 2024 venue tbc</li> </ul> <p>All meetings start at 17:00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Board development session</b> – Thursday 18 April 17.00-19.00</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The Principal and CEO proposed a session around local employers/meeting local needs/Duty to review as part of the preparation for the Annual Accountability statement and this was agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Board strategy day</b> – Tuesday 18 June 2024 13.00-18.00</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The Principal and CEO proposed deferring the strategy day and utilising at a later date for the development of the new strategy and when the new Chair is in role. It was confirmed that this would not adversely impact on Board business and this was agreed.</p> <p>(Heather Barnett departs: 19.12)</p>	<p>Exec Interim gov advisor</p>
14	<p><b>Appointment of Chair</b></p> <p>The Selection Panel chair provided an overview of the process to date which has involved collegiate discussions from panel colleagues. The Search and Governance Committee wanted to have a fair and transparent process and one of the fundamental areas was to change the Instruments and Articles of Government to allow for external advert of the Chair role. The recruitment of a new Chair is an opportunity for the Board and the Group. The Panel made amendments to the role profile which were approved by the Search and Governance Committee and the advert went out. There is one application. Instead of shortlisting the Panel discussed pausing the process and feel it would be in the best interests to have more than one applicant to have a field to shortlist and that in order to achieve this it would require a paid recruitment service. To date there has been an advert on the website. The Panel Chair asked the Board if it should attempt to elicit a few more applications with a competitive field or continue with the process and shortlist at this point. It was noted that the current applicant has been given a clear message on the current position and will remain in the process. (Shirley Collier departs 18:55)</p> <p>The Board considered the update from the panel and there was a detailed discussion including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A question about why the process would be extended</li> <li>• Senior appointments is an absolute process rather than a relative role and it is not a numbers game</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the panel consider the benchmark number of applicants would be</li> <li>• A view that if there are good internal candidates that can do the job then external candidates need to be significantly better</li> <li>• Personal development and succession planning is an important part of the governor role. The succession from Vice Chair to Chair is an established part of this succession planning</li> <li>• The ED Marketing, HR and OD noted that for any appointment the criteria for selection is against the job description and person spec and not a comparison to other people and if the candidate meets this in shortlisting they should be interviewed</li> <li>• There was a good process in place with a paid for AoC advertisement, an extensive cascade through LinkedIn and an advert on the Group's website</li> <li>• There are specific criteria for the role which would attract a limited pool of candidates and it is a difficult role to recruit to because of the responsibility, time commitment and voluntary position</li> <li>• One of the panel members reported that the panel had a discussion prior to shortlisting. The view was that a bigger field to give an opportunity to test the market should be put in place. There were some questions about the adequacy of the process, had it gone far and wide enough and was it a thorough process to attract people with the right skills. The panel had agreed that they would like to see more people interviewed to identify the best person for the role. The employer representative was very much of a view that there needed to be more people to see</li> <li>• In response to the process the ED Marketing, HR and OD noted that the link to the advert of the Group's vacancies page did not immediately link to the Chair advert, but it was available, and this is not uncommon in recruitment. The LinkedIn advert worked well and was shared widely. The AoC advert would have specifically targeted an FE audience. One governor noted that in a google search it comes up first</li> <li>• There was a discussion about what an external agency could bring and it was noted that the main addition would be being active on the phone and speaking to potential applicants</li> <li>• The Principal and CEO noted that he had widely shared the role when out in the community and at FE events. Ian Sackree, who previously worked in recruitment, had shared the advert with his contacts on LinkedIn. There was one person who was interested but not at the present time because of other commitments</li> <li>• There was a discussion about the risk of losing the current candidate and how the halt to the current process would have impacted them</li> <li>• The interim governance advisor noted that the Panel chair had asked for initial details on external recruitment agencies to support the Board discussion. One agency had been contacted and costs would be £8500 for a full search and recruitment and £7500 for a search only.</li> </ul>	
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	<p>There is the opportunity to apply for a DfE funded recruitment search through Peridot Partners and evidence is required <i>that the Board is having difficulty recruiting to the Chair role</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One governor noted that going out to an agency may not meet the Panel’s expectations when recruiting to a Chair role</li> <li>• It was agreed that there had been a thorough process to appoint the best person for the role and there is one applicant</li> </ul> <p>The Board considered all the comments received and the view of the Panel. The Chair asked for a vote on whether to extend the process and use an external recruitment agency. There was one vote in favour and the remainder of the Board voted to move ahead with the current timelines and shortlist. The Board agreed that if this process was not successful then the interim governance advisor should proceed with an application to the DfE for a funded recruitment campaign.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The selection panel to proceed with shortlisting.</p>	Selection panel
<i>Staff and Student Governors and Exec to depart for the confidential items.</i>		
15	<p><b>Director of Governance recruitment</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Board approved the appointment of Sarah Connerty as Director of Governance effective from 15 April 2024.</p> <p><i>[Terms and conditions confidential]</i></p>	
16	<p><b>Confidential (commercial) minutes from the meeting held on 5 February 2024</b></p> <p>There were no minutes for this meeting.</p>	
17	<p><b>Confidential (private) minutes from the meeting held on 5 February 2024</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Board approved the minutes as a true and accurate record</p>	

Meeting closed: 19:30