

HARTLEPOOL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Governors held on Wednesday 5th July 2023 at 5.15pm in Conference Room 4

Members Present:	Mr S Irvine [Chair]	Ms A Bolton
	Mr D Hankey	Mrs S Flender-Bradley
	Mrs L Thornton	Mr H Hasnain

Also present:	Mr D Williams [Assistant Principal]
	Mr S Hope [Assistant Principal]
	Mrs K Dales [Head of Governance]
	Ms N Bown [HR Admin Assistant – observing]

1	Apologies for Absence Apologies received from S Shaheen, S Robinson, A Horne, M Roberts and G Riches.
2	Declarations of Interest No new declarations of interest to report. The Chair referred to his interests as previously declared.
3	Minutes of previous meetings – 11th May 2023 The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as a true record.
4	Matter arising and action points All actions were complete with the exception of 6.3 Student Council discussion regarding the Meet the Governors action points. This will be taken to the Student Council in the new Academic year and reported back.
5	Committee minutes Curriculum & Standards 28 th February 2023 Finance & General Purposes 3 rd May 2023 The minutes were noted by members.
6	Principal / Chief Executive's Report
	Strategic items
6.1	Local Skills Improvement Plan DH introduced the item and explained that plans have been developed across the North East and the two that are relevant to the College are attached – Tees Valley and North East. Both plans are with the government for final sign off but the College is in a good position curriculum wise in terms of responding to the priorities. LT asked if the College would have its own action plan. SH responded that ultimately the Accountability Statement would be the document to do that but that for this first year the timing is slightly out. AB asked if the Colleges Strategy aligns to these documents or does it need refreshing. SH responded that it does cover the majority of the priorities with the only potential gap being digital which the College is reviewing. HH commented that the major economic areas have not changed much and that there are no surprises. DH agreed. SI summarised saying that the College will await final sign off and noted that the Accountability Statement in 12 months' time will completely demonstrate the Colleges alignment with the LSIP. The Board noted the documents.

6.2	Hartlepool Development Corporation DH introduced the report and told the Board that the Tees Valley Mayor is setting up two development corporations, one of which is in Hartlepool. The Masterplan is attached to the papers and the College is referenced within it. The College is not represented on the Board, although two private training providers are and there is not a lot of clarity about the remit and powers that it holds. HH asked when there will be more clarity about its remit. DH responded that he was not sure but that the Board could invite them to present to the Board at its next meeting. The Board agreed to extend an invitation to the Mayor.
6.3	DfE Accountability Statement SH introduced the item and told the Board that the information contained in the document had been pulled from the Strategic Plan, Skills Statement presented to Ofsted and the College's sub-strategies. The final few pages show the action plan which will be monitored by Curriculum & Standards. The Board approved the document and noted that it will be uploaded to DfE by 31 st July.
6.4	Ofsted report Confidential – see separate minutes.
6.5	Wider sector updates The Board received sector updates from RSM (External Auditors) and AOC. DH noted that most issues raised in the RSM report are covered on the College's risk register. The Board received the paper.
6.6	Lobbying DH informed the Board that he had been trying to use his position to highlight the impact of political decisions on the College's staff and students. Attached to the papers are three blogs and a document relating to an All Party Parliamentary Group focussed on the cost of living for students studying in FE. The Board noted the paper.
Operational items	
6.7	2022/23 academic performance & predicted achievement SH presented the report and the update shows a predicted achievement of 89% but there are health warnings with that due to the increased volume of courses that are end loaded on examinations in many areas. SH stated that he was more confident in the predictions for apprenticeships which stand at 71%. SI asked what the pressure was like for staff and students. SH responded that they are very high and that there are a few problems with adults dropping out and not completing the course. Time is also running out for some apprentices who cannot get an End Point Assessment date and there is a risk that some may fall into 2023/24 rather than showing in this academic year. HH asked when final results would be in. SH responded by end August 2023.
6.8	QIP SH introduced the report and stated that nothing had changed since the last meeting. The Board received the report.
6.9	Stakeholder update DH introduced the report which gives a full update on the recent engagement with the College's stakeholders since the last Board meeting. SI commended the report saying that it demonstrates the breadth of the work going on. The Board received the report.

7	Finance/Estates Items
7.1	2022/23 financial performance Confidential (see separate minutes).
7.2	Budget for 2023/24 Confidential (see separate minutes).
7.3	Capital Update Confidential (see separate minutes).
7.4	Financial Regulations Confidential (see separate minutes). DH introduced the document stating that the changes related to ensuring compliance with the ONS reclassification and that further changes may be required once the Financial Handbook is released. The Board approved the document.
7.5	Risk Register DW presented the Risk Register to the Board stated that only the two risks related to Exeter Street had been amended. HH asked what would happen if Exeter Street is further delayed beyond December 2023. SH responded that the College has contingency plans in place for up to February 2024. LT asked if students had been informed as it would impact on their expectations and college experience. SH confirmed that they have been fully informed. SI noted that the Development Corporation is not on the risk register. DH responded that the risks were not fully understood and it is not something that the College can control. It was agreed to keep this under review going forward. AB noted that the risk around potential union relations is not explicitly on the risk register. SH responded that the College will know better in a couple of weeks' time after unions have consulted members as to whether this was a real risk to the College. A discussion took place and it was agreed that SH and DW would review this and amend the risk register as appropriate.
7.6	Health & Safety Policy The Board approved the policy.
7.7	Subcontracting Policy DW introduced the item and stated that the policy had not yet been updated as the recent Internal Audit report had included recommendations for a Subcontractor Framework to be put in place and this would need to be included in the policy. Work is ongoing and the policy will be brought back to the next meeting. DW assured that Board that the audit was positive and the required certificates for Tees Valley Combined Authority and ESFA had been released. The Board noted the audit reports.
7.8	Subcontracting arrangements for 2022/23 and 2023/24 (proposed) The Board approved the proposed arrangements.
7.9	Fees policy DW introduced the paper which has been amended for known changes to the funding rules, but Tees Valley Combined Authority have not yet released there versions so there may be further changes. The Board approved the policy.

7.10	Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy DW stated that there were no changes to the policy but that it required Board approval. The Board approved the policy.
8	Corporation items
8.1	2023/24 Meeting Dates LT stated that the March Strategy day was in the Easter holidays and that it might be better to move it to ensure better attendance. This was agreed. The Board noted the dates.
8.2	Matrix showing compliance with AoC Code of Good Governance (self-assessment) KD presented the report which was broadly similar to the previous year's self-assessment. SI noted that there needed to be a performance review for the Chair and asked KD to pull together a proposal. KD also reminded the Board that there needed to be an External Review of governance but it had been difficult getting three quotes from companies as many of the companies on the DfE provider list have stopped doing them. Two quotes had been received and it was agreed that the College would work with Stone King to carry out the review, preferably in the first term of the new academic year. KD is liaising with Stone King. The Board approved the self-assessment and the appointment of Stone King to carry out the External review.
9	Use of Seal There had been no use of the seal.
10	Designation of confidential Items 6.4 and 7.1 – 7.3
11	Any other business SH asked for the Board to delegate responsibility to himself and KD to source and recruit new student governors. The Board agreed.
12	Date of next Board meeting – Wednesday 12th October 2023 at 5.15pm

Chair

Action Points from meeting held on 11th May 2023

	Action	Responsible	Date Due by
6.3	The Meet the Governors action plan to be discussed at Student Council and outcomes fed back to the next Board meeting	S Hope	December 2023

Action points from meeting held on 5th July 2023

	Action	Responsible	Date Due by
6.2	Invite Tees Valley Mayor to come to a future Board to discuss the Hartlepool Development Corporation	D Hankey	December 2023
7.6	Review the Risk Register following feedback from the unions on the proposed pay award	D Williams/ S Hope	August 2023
8.1	Change the date of the March 2023 Strategy Day in order to avoid Easter holidays	K Dales	July 2023