

Corporation Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 14 December 2023 – 3.00pm – 5.55pm Committee Room, Askham Bryan College, York

The pack of meeting papers was circulated in advance of the meeting for Governors to read.

20 Present

Tazambal Ali – Staff Governor
Linda Haigh (LH), via Teams (to 5.15pm)
Rhys Holding (RH) – Student Governor
Annabel Jelley (AJ)
Dominique Lendhill (DLe) – Staff Governor, (to 5.00 pm)
Martin Moorhouse (MM) – Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee
Graeme Osborn (GO) – Corporation Vice Chair/Chair of Quality and Standards Committee
Matthew Parkin (MP)
James Sadler (JS)
Trevor Shaw (TS) – Chair of Audit Committee
Tim Whitaker (TW) – Principal/Chief Executive Officer/Accounting Officer.

With over seven members present, the meeting was confirmed as quorate. It was resolved that, in the absence of M Ververs, Graeme Osborn chair the meeting. Graeme Osborn accordingly took the chair and declared the meeting open. The Chair reported that proper notice of the meeting had been given.

In attendance

Emma Barber (EB) – Chief Finance Officer,
Laura Black (LB) – Vice Principal,
Lynne Griffin – Executive Director People Services,
Alison Horsley (AH) minute taker,
Sharon Sheppard (SS) - Vice Principal.
Clare Williams – Vice Principal

Judith Clapham (JC) – Director of Governance/Clerk to the Corporation and Chris Moss (CM) were not in attendance.

The meeting was observed by Julie Dougill as part of the External Governance Review. Julie was welcomed to the meeting by the Chair and the members introduced themselves.

21 Apologies

Acceptance of apologies for absence:

David Lynch (DL), Haddy Njie (HN), Tracy Lightfoot (TL) Siam Sudphum (SSu) – SU President/Student Governor, Maureen Vevers (MV),

22 Declarations of Interest

Consideration was given to the Declarations of Interest Register and members asked for any new declarations.

There were no changes to the Declarations of Interest impacting on the College as detailed in the register, none of which it was agreed amongst those present precluded anyone.

Those thought relevant are listed below:

- TW, GO and MM as Directors of ABC College Co Ltd and ABC Enterprises Ltd.
- TW as a Landex Director and Director of National Land-based College.
- AJ as a consultant in the sector and Project Manager for the Strategic Development Fund which the College is part of, work on behalf of Hambleton District Council relating to the new educational facility at Northallerton (campus@northallerton), work for Higher York (college is a member) on the York Skills Strategy implementation and for the West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce in preparation for the Local Skills Improvement Plan and also work in relation to the Local Skills Improvement Fund.
- MM as an Elvington Parish Councillor.
- LH as Finance and Procurement Director at South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service with possible links to the College from public service training, Princes Trust.

The Chair reminded the Members that the College was also an exempt charity and that all transactions must be compliant with all obligations under applicable charity law.

Members agreed that aspects of the minute 25 should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

23 Minutes from the Last Meeting (19 October 2023)

Resolved: The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising from the minutes/Actions schedule

The Action Schedule was updated.

24 Chair's Report

Not to this meeting due to the absence of the chair because of illness.

25 Chief Executive's Report

Consideration was given to the Chief Executive's Report, of which TW provided an overview of content, with detail as in the report.

The update focused on a review of the last calendar year, an update on key activity since the last Corporation meeting, including external engagement, College leadership, the three priorities: high quality education, growing income and developing our culture.

Of note –

- There had been a complete review of student recruitment and the College was confident that this ongoing work would resolve the identified issues with the expectation that recruitment would improve as a result. Further update was given in a confidential session with independent governors.
- The agreed pay award of 6.5% had been accepted after consultation with the Unions and this, together with the February (23) 2.5% award, equated to a 9% pay rise within the calendar year, plus an unconsolidated bonus.
- The College won the Green Gown Awards Digital Futures category.

Recruitment of Students Update

The Chief Executive/Principal reported that issues had been identified within the student recruitment process.

The Vice Principal highlighted the immediate actions to rectify identified issues within the recruitment process, including both before and after application, communication with applicants and their parents, and schools' engagement activity with the associated short and medium term workstreams.

Further discussion occurred. An Independent Governor asked for assurance on the level and type of engagement with schools. The Chief Executive/Principal reported that engagement at Key Stage 2 was very strong, there was now a duty on secondary schools to ensure their pupils engaged with further education providers.

The Chair of Audit Committee stated that applications went up in 23/24 and offers were much higher than in 22/23 and asked if there was a different policy. The Vice Principal stated that this data was applications

and not applicants which meant it was possible that multiple applications had been received from one student. The data had now been streamlined to show applicants.

It was noted that a further confidential session for independent governors related to student recruitment would be held at the end of the meeting.

Investors in People Staff Survey Outcomes 2023

Consideration was given to the Investors in People Staff Survey Outcomes report. 68% of colleagues completed the survey which was a significant improvement in response rates. There was improvement across all nine categories, with key areas of focus in developing our culture and embedding values, addressing pay, improving communication, developing our leaders and managers and addressing staff engagement from the start through better induction processes. There were some very positive comments in the report on the impact of the restructure of curriculum management. There was an increase in the number of staff who agreed that the College was a good place to work in comparison to the previous year. The implementation of the Staff Forum had been positively received by staff, with all outcomes and actions published. 25% of staff had been nominated through the staff recognition scheme and had received an award. It was noted, however, that it was important to build on the significant progress made. It was proposed that this be a special focus topic at the Away Day (strategy day).

26 Student Union Update

The Vice Principal reported that apologies had been submitted by Siam Sudphum, but he had provided an update in terms of the student experience.

Student experience - Student Council meetings were a forum at which students were able to advise on the activities they would like to take place. Due to the ongoing cost of living crisis a lot of the planned activities were either free or low cost. The Residential Manager and Student Experience Leader worked closely with the students to facilitate the requested activities. Thanks were recorded to DL.

Student voice – there was good attendance at both FE and HE Student Council meetings this academic year. Most students were positive about how inclusive the College was. HE Student Council talked about inclusivity and their involvement in college plans in terms of policies and procedures, student experience, travel. The Student Governor agreed that it had been a positive experience this academic year.

27 Staff Update

The Head of IT advised Governors that new College email addresses, log on details and Wi-Fi access codes would be sent to them week commencing 8 January. Use of personal email addresses would cease.

from the end of January. Full instructions and support would be given to Governors during this process.

- 28 Strategy Update – New Key Corporate Measures and targets Update**
The Chief Executive/Principal presented a slightly updated paper which had been amended to take account of a further SLT discussion eg addition of destination, operating position % for budget, accountability reflection in July and it was noted that there will be a change to the table numbers at the bottom.

Corporation had undertaken a twilight session to contribute to the review and the proposed document was the result of the discussions presented to the Corporation for final approval. It was acknowledged that further revision may be required in the future. Work would continue to establish a 'live' dashboard for the Key Corporate Measures that is akin to the dashboard used by college leaders and managers (Annex 1), likely to be 2025 for delivery. It was hoped that this could be available to Corporation members via the Team.

Recommended updated Key Corporation Measures were as follows.

Strategic Theme 1

- Attendance and Retention for FE, HE and Apps, as continuous in-year key measurements that would be updated as necessary.
- Achievement rates for 16-18, Apprentices and pass for HE, as well as positive progression to be reported once a year (normally in September).

Strategic Theme 2

- Overall Student Satisfaction – All FE Students to be monitored 3 times per year.
- "I feel the College is inclusive to all kinds of people" to be monitored 3 times per year.
- Higher Education "Teaching on my course" to be reported once a year, normally in September.

Strategic Theme 3

Public perception of college survey – the Google reviews of the Wildlife Park would be used as the measure.

- Employer Satisfaction "likely to recommend the College" to be reported once a year normally in September.

Strategic Theme 4

- Overall Staff Satisfaction - annual measure with pulse surveys to be reported on an adhoc basis.
- Streamlined Energy and Carbon Report (SECR) prepared by the College under The Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability

Partnership (Energy and Carbon Report Regulations 2018) that encompass March 2019 Environmental Reporting Guidelines.

- Finance Dashboard which was contained within the management accounts.

Additional measures – generic to overall College performance

- Progress against curriculum plan recruitment and income targets to be reported on continual basis.
- Delivery against Accountability Agreement, specifically objectives A-G, annual report to July Corporation meeting. There is no requirement to report this to the ESFA, only that they be reviewed and published on the website.

The Chair of F&GP Committee asked if the annual measures could be included for review at each meeting for completion.

The Chair of Audit Committee was concerned that changing the KPIs would not allow consistent comparison with historic data. An Independent Governor asked for assurance that the college was able to measure carbon reduction. The Chief Executive/Principal reported that this was covered extensively in the SECR which was published on the website. An F&GP Committee Co-optee reported that discussion had taken place at F&GP surrounding the farm offsetting carbon emissions from the College. An Independent Governor asked for a more detailed plan that clearly showed progress against reducing. The Chair of F&GP Committee thought that Corporation should have a more detailed oversight. **Action; EB, LH, MM to progress this.**

Resolved: the Key Corporate Measures and Targets paper would be amended in terms of the comments made at this meeting. The Chief Executive/Principal to work with appropriate committee Chairs to amend. It would be circulated again for approval after the Christmas break.
ACTION

29

Special Focus Topic – relevant for Corporation/questions

Karen Rae from Armstrong Watson, External Auditors, joined the meeting at 4.30pm via Teams, to present their findings to Corporation. This had been a very clean and unmodified audit and was testament to the hard work of the Finance Team.

Letters of representation had been issued and they had been through the Audit Committee.

Consideration was given to

- Armstrong Watson External Audit Management and Governors' Report 2022/23
- Going Concern Assessment
- Askham Bryan College Financial Statements 2022/23

- Askham Bryan College Company Ltd Financial Statements 2022/23
- Askham Bryan College Enterprises Ltd Financial Statements 2022/23
- Letter of Support between Askham Bryan College and Askham Bryan College Company Ltd (already signed by the Corporation Chair as previously agreed and approved by the Department for Education)
- Letter of Representation – Askham Bryan College Regularity
- Letter of Representation – Askham Bryan College Audit
- Letter of Representation – Askham Bryan College Company Ltd and Askham Bryan College Enterprises Ltd

Resolved: Following recommendation from the F&GP Committee, Audit Committee and College Company Directors and final scrutiny the Corporation approved 2022/23 financial statements for

Askham Bryan College and;
Askham Bryan College Company Ltd
Askham Bryan College Enterprises Ltd

Plus submission of the of financial statements to the ESFA by the deadline of 31 December 2023.

Corporation approval was also given to the Letters of Representation.

K Rae left the meeting at 4.42 pm

30 Finance and Management Accounts

Consideration was given to the key messages from the Finance and General Purposes Committee held 28 November 2023, as included in the meeting pack, which the Chair of F&GP Committee reported on. The twilight session that had taken place was very helpful and would be repeated.

Recommendation: Approve the revised F&GP Committee Terms of Reference with recognition of the ONS reclassification and monitoring post implementation reviews.

- Committee considered change in student numbers and possible impact on the residential strategy and master planning.
- P3 management accounts dashboard helpful summary (pg 3 of accounts). Financial health good. It was thought it would be helpful to include forecasting and potential impacts on the dashboard, as suggested by MP as Finance Link Governor, eg milk price impact. KPI needs to reflect the key financial risks in year so a base level, mid-level and stretch level moving forward. It was noted that the covenant position with the banks shows a breach for Santander at the end of the year and Lloyds due to the level of spending in August, the bank credit

departments are being consulted. The level of provision for vacancies was noted and is being managed.

Recommendation: It was noted that following F&GP that the Corporation via electronic voting (and prior to this meeting) had approved the AoC Pay Recommendations for 2023/24 of 6.5% for all staff, backdated to 1 September 2023.

- Provision has been made in the financial statements for the historic pension position based on the present understanding. The position will not change prior to the signing of the financial statements.
- HESES23 return submitted 10th Nov. OfS recurrent grant calculation tool removed, but predicted to be lower grant in 24-25 due to 7% decrease in students in 23-24.
- Capital update as for College Company. Nothing new to report from CDOG.

Recommendation: Capital Expenditure Policy 2023 – 2025, Financial Regulations 2023 – 2024 (updated), Student Payment and Collections Policy 2023 – 2024 – with amendment, Sustainability Statement 2023 – 2024 – (governance oversight to be added to next year's version).

Committee considered the sustainability update showing what has been happening in year as on the College website, with the climate action strategy moving towards net zero and based on 21/22 as the baseline data, there has been a 9% reduction in CO₂eo.

- Committee had joint briefing session with external auditors who worked through their audit findings. No material issues or audit adjustments, so a clean audit and thanks extended to the staff involved.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the revised F&GP Committee Terms of Reference, acknowledged it had approved the AoC Pay Recommendations for 2023/24 of a consolidated uplift in pay of 6.5% for all staff, backdated to 1 September 2023 and approved the Capital Expenditure Policy 2023 – 2025, Financial Regulations 2023 – 2024 (updated), Student Payment and Collections Policy 2023 – 2024 – with amendment, Sustainability Statement 2023 – 2024 – (governance oversight to be added to next year's version).

The Chief Finance Officer reported that the main risk in the accounts was the achievement of the adult education budget. There would be another twilight session in February to go through the accounts.

The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

31 Audit Committee 28 November 2023 inc Risk Register and Audit Committee Annual Report

Consideration was given to the key messages from the Audit Committee Meeting held 28 November 2023, as included in the meeting pack, which the Chair of Audit Committee reported on.

Key messages for Corporation

1. Committee had met in joint session with the Finance and General Purposes Committee to be briefed on the Financial Statements for 2022/23 and associated papers, and to question the External Auditors and Chief Finance Officer on the contents thereof. The two Committees then split to conduct their own deliberations. The Audit Committee were pleased with the financial statements, thanking the external Auditors for their work, asking the Chief Finance Officer to congratulate her team for a job well done.
2. Committee noted the letter of approval from the Department for Education for a letter of support for Askham Bryan College Company Ltd and the letter of assurance from our Accounting Officer to the External Auditors in connection with their assurance report on regularity within the college.
3. **Recommendation:** The following documents are recommended to Corporation for approval:-
 The External Auditors Final Management and Governors' Report for the year ended 31st July 2023
 The Finance Director's Going Concern Assessment
 The Askham Bryan College Company Ltd letter of support subject also to the agreement of the Directors of the two College Company, the Askham Bryan College Company Ltd. Financial Statements 2022/23, the Askham Bryan College Enterprises Ltd Financial Statements 2022/23 and the Letter of Representation for the two college companies are recommended for approval. The Committee also recommended, the Askham Bryan College Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st July 2023, that is the Consolidated Accounts, and the Letter of Representation for the College.
 The Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23 confirming the College has Adequate and effective risk management
4. **Recommendation:** The draft Audit Committee Annual Report was reviewed and following a couple of minor changes (shown in red) agreed and is recommended for approval by Corporation.
5. The Internal Audit Strategy and draft plan was reviewed and following clarification that the Audit relating to Wellbeing is staff related rather than student related, and that it would be carried out by a specialist supplier, was agreed as previously recommended to Corporation for approval.
6. Progress on the implementation of Audit recommendations was reviewed and noted.
7. **Recommendation:** The Strategic Risk Register was reviewed, the committee particularly welcomed the action plans relating to the two

risks that were significantly above Risk Appetite and continuing sight of the minutes of the Risk Management Committee which demonstrate the robustness of the process. The committee recommends the latest version of the Risk Register for approval.

8. The policy and procedures report which demonstrated further progress being made was reviewed and noted. An action taken to look at security of AI in IT platforms. The Committee received an update on GDPR and Cyber Essential.
9. The OfS Regularity Spreadsheet was reviewed and it was noted all items falling under the Audit Committee are currently green.
10. The Committee were updated on progress relating to the Historic Pensions issue and the Internal Audit Tender where work is progressing on both.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the Audit Committee Annual Report and the Strategic Risk Register with action plans for risk 8 and 10.

32 Q&S Committee 20 November 2023 Quality/FE update and HE update for anything since Q&S Committee

Consideration was given to the key messages from the Quality and Standards Committee held 20 November 2023, as included in the meeting pack, which the Chair of Q&S Committee reported on.

Key messages for Corporation:

- Corporation measures and targets are being further refined and will be presented to Corporation. Being mindful of capacity, the focus is on high quality teaching and learning and embedding the quality processes and concentrating on retention and achievement (inc high grades) as discussed at the last Corporation meeting. Using the dashboard to drive change.
- Looking at student application process and conversions.
- Further work to be undertaken on the impact of qualification reforms.
- Students feeling safe at 96%. Student satisfaction dipped, but has increased again. The importance of surveys being robust and representative was recognised.
- Reviewing SU and student attendance/voice at meetings.
Student Destination data recognised as needing to be more consistent - currently look at internal progression and intended destinations.
- The Committee considered the Safeguarding Annual Report.
Safeguarding was reviewed during the recent Ofsted inspection, Areas for Development in 2023-2024 include full implementation of the new filtering and monitoring systems and development of associated guidance for staff and students and implementation of the new Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan to reflect new DfE guidance.
- Consideration was given to the Complaints Annual Report which had seen an increase in number and those upheld. It was thought that building relationships, eg with parents could only improve the position

moving forward. Communication about college policy and decisions relating to students are the key areas to improve.

- Consideration was given to the Student Disciplinary Annual Report, noting there was an increase. With the introduction of the Progress Tutor model there is more interventions and encouragement for students to take ownership for their behaviour and attitude, setting of SMART targets and an understanding how attendance affects achievement and this is resulting in a positive response. The Disciplinary and Support for Continuing Studies Policies and Procedures have been combined in to one Positive Behaviour Policy, which has a focus on a trauma informed approach and understanding 'why' when managing behavioural issues.

The Committee received a report relating to the Q&S Committee Terms of Reference 2.1 To advise the Corporation on the educational character of the College, ensuring appropriate and effective procedures are in place to review and monitor (i) the curriculum offer and curriculum changes, and (ii) the analysis of market needs and the adjustment of the curriculum and its delivery to anticipate and respond to the needs of students and employers. (Intent). The Committee were assured that analysis of market needs and adjustments of the curriculum was in place, as recently demonstrated at the recent Ofsted inspection to achieve a strong contribution to meeting skills need and also endorsed through the FEC process.

- Recommendation of numerous policies and procedures as been through HEAB and policy and procedures group (attached separately) including Complaints Policy and Procedure, Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Freedom of Speech Code of Practice.
- The Quality of Education report was noted. Concern was expressed regarding the amount of red. It was expected to get better as CAMS and processes become more embedded and the culture performance management improves.
- HE Data dashboard being developed with MIS as current data reporting is a challenge. It was noted that specific actions are driving improvements. Thanks were expressed to IG at his last meeting.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the policies and procedures as been through HEAB and policy and procedures group, including Complaints Policy and Procedure, Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Freedom of Speech Code of Practice. – approved and thanks to everyone who worked on the policies and procedures due to the volume of work involved. Thanks were given to CW for the production of the annual safeguarding report.

33 Governor activities/training, visits Governor Recruitment

The Student Governor reported that he had attended the national festival of student governors event 13 and 14 November which was a networking opportunity with colleges and universities that had been very useful.

The Residential Manager attended an online staff governor conference 7 December.

The Chair of Q&S Committee stated that he had attended a couple of AoC Conferences. It was noted that TL and GO had conducted a joint Governor Departmental briefing of ENMA.

LH – attended Governor Departmental briefings on Digital Skills Academy and Agriculture and Engineering.

MP shared that he had hosted a farm visit as part of the High Ground Rural Weeks Programme. He had also conducted a Governor Departmental briefing of the Finance Department.

A video was shared that MP had produced in conjunction with the English and Maths Department to help students to understand the importance of Maths and English in the work place. SS reported that Maths and English attendance had increased significantly this year.

The Vice Chair of Corporation stated that he had a conversation with SH regarding him becoming a Corporation member and recommended that he meet with the Committee the end of January, but to expediate it so he can also attend the Q&S Committee in February, put in a recommendation that if the Committee are in agreement, he join as a full Corporation member and member of the Q&S Committee.

Resolved: To appoint SH as a member of the Q&S Committee, if Search and Governance are in agreement when they meet in January.

Linda Haigh left the meeting at 5.15pm.

34 College Company Meeting 27 November 2023

Consideration was given to the key messages from the College Company Meeting held 27 November in the Animal Management building, which the Chair of F&GP Committee reported on:

- **Recommendation:** The Directors recommended to Corporation the approval and signing of the 2022/23 subsidiaries financial statements for Askham Bryan College Company Ltd and Askham Bryan College Enterprises Ltd at the 14 December 2023 meeting of Corporation, to ensure submission of the reports to the ESFA by the deadline of 31 December 2023.

Approved.

35 Policies and Procedures

In addition to those policies and procedures approved from Committees, the Corporation were asked to consider and approve the Health and Safety Policy, Health and Safety Statement and Modern Slavery Statement.

Resolved: The Health and Safety Policy and Statement and Modern Slavery Statement were approved.

36 Confidential Items

Members agreed that part of minute 25 should be classified as confidential

37 Any Other Business

There were no further items related to Safeguarding, EDI, Health and Safety to bring to the attention of Corporation not elsewhere on the agenda.

An Independent Governor asked for an update on devolution and the AEB preparations being made by the College. The Chief Executive/Principal reported that the College was involved with and fully engaged in discussions. It had been reported that the devolved authority had given assurance that the AEB would remain unchanged for at least two years to ensure stability.

JC to work with staff governors on developing the staff update item for future meetings. ACTION

38 Date and time of next meeting

14 March 2024, Away Day.

Date Action Raised	Minute No	Action required	Responsible	Deadline
Current				
14/12/23	28	Provide detail on how reducing carbon emissions.	EB, LH, MM	
14/12/23	28	Amend the Key Corporate Measures and Targets paper and circulate to Committees in the new year.	TW	14/03
14/12/23	37	Work with staff governors on developing the staff update item for future meetings.	JC	05/24
Pending				
22/07/19	100	Corporation members to undertake cyber security training during the board portal process. 14/12 Taz will provide an update at the meeting on access to Teams so training will also be put in place alongside	JC/Governors	07/22
19/10/23	7	Self Assessment Report and QiP to be submitted to Ofsted by 31 January 2024. 14/12 pending but will happen.	TW	31/1/24
19/10/23	13	Appoint Vice Chairs of Committees. 14/12 ongoing so move to pending	JC with Committee Chairs	31/12/23
Cleared				
19/10/23	10	Arrange Corporate Measures and Targets twilight session with Governors and circulate draft document for discussion. 14/12 Done so clear	JC/IG	31/10/23

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 14 December 2023 and agree to them being made public on the Askham Bryan website.

Signed
Chair

Date