

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting held
Thursday 13 March 2025 – 9.30am-10.25am**

**Peter Sowerby Building Training Room, The Yorkshire Arboretum, Castle Howard, York
YO60 7BY**

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

The meeting was followed by the Corporation Away Day, with a focus on the College Master Plan and new Strategy.

39. Present

Linda Haigh (LH)
Annabel Jelley (AJ)
Dominique Lendhill (DLe) – Staff Governor
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)
Trevor Shaw (TS) – Chair of Audit Committee
Maureen Vevers (MV) – Chair of Corporation and meeting
Tim Whitaker (TW) – Principal/Chief Executive Officer/Accounting Officer

With over seven members present, the meeting was confirmed as quorate. It was resolved that Maureen Vevers chair the meeting. Maureen Vevers accordingly took the chair and declared the meeting open. The Chair reported that proper notice of the meeting had been given.

In attendance

Stephanie Burrell (SBu) – Boardroom Apprentice
Judith Clapham (JC) – Director of Governance/Clerk to the Corporation
Sharon Sheppard (SS) - Vice Principal
Sofia McGreavy (SM) – Director of People Services
Clare Williams (CB) – Vice Principal
Emma Barbary (EB) – Chief Finance Officer
Paddy Harrop (PH) – Shadow Governor
Bruce Humphrey (BH) – Co-optee Quality and Standards Committee

40. Apologies

Acceptance of apologies for absence from Rhys Holding (RH) – Student Governor, Kailum Farmery (KF) – Student Governor/SU President
James Sadler (JS), Tracy Lightfoot (TL), Chris Moss (CM) – Co-optee Audit Committee and Tazambal Ali (TA) – Staff Governor.

41. 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 and Vice Chair of Landex.
- 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. AJ additionally stated she is doing some work with York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, plus with the East Midlands Combined Authority.
- 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, King's Trust.
- GO declared a new interest as Chair of Yorkshire Bach Choir from 31 January 2025.

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 minutes 44, 49, 50 and 51 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.

42. Minutes from the Last Meeting (12 December 2024)

Resolved: The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record including the Confidential Minutes following an amendment to minute numbering for AOB, on page 11, fifth bullet point to complete the sentence and also for minute 28 to ensure is clear where referring to 23/24 data and 24/25.

Matters Arising from the minutes/Actions schedule

The Action Schedule was updated.

43 Chair's Report

The Chair of Corporation stated that she had carried out the Chief Executive's and Director of Governance appraisals. The external work

happening at the College is encouraging and would be good for the strategy to build on this. The FE Commissioner Annual Report was noted.

44 Chief Executive's Report

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

The Chief Executive highlighted:

- That he had been to the Landex Conference and the Assistant Principal's had presented a session regarding the Educator Programme which was very well received.
- The Conference was attended by the Skills Minister who gave an engaging session and announced she would be visiting Askham Bryan College 24 April. The FE Commissioner was also present and was complimentary regarding the College.
- CW was welcomed back to her first Corporation meeting since being back in her role.
- There is a lot of capital work on campus, including the Teaching Block. Thanks were given to the Director of Estates and his team, the Assistant Principal and Head of IT.

45. Student Union Update

The Staff Governor gave the Student Union Update reporting that a range of activities have been organised including LGBTQ+ and Black History Month getting good engagement in the canteen. The SU President runs a Karaoke group on a Thursday evening. Considering how can improve the bar area for the benefit of students. The Spring Ball will happen in April with a sit down meal and fair rides. There has been a UCAB meeting for residential students and working with Aramark on providing more variety in the shop.

The Chair of Corporation asked how the students are generally. It was noted that student behaviour this year has been a challenge. Lanyard compliance is improving as all staff are working on it.

Student Governor Update

There was no Student Governor Update to this meeting.

46. Staff Update

The Director of People Services and OD stated that there have been three staff forums covering a wide range of subjects and addressing and resolving any issues that are possible. Still working on better engagement from the centres. Also bringing in different people to hear from the staff, eg estates and IT. A common theme is communication.

47. Strategy Update – Key Corporate Measures and targets Update including student recruitment

It was noted that the Key Corporate Measures and targets update including student recruitment and funding dashboard were included in the CEO Report.

48. Special Focus Topic – relevant for Corporation/questions

Consideration was given to the Gender Pay Gap Report. It was noted it is in a different format in line with legal requirements. It was noted that the mean pay gap for 23/24 was -4.23%, compared to 4.96% for 24/25. The Chair of Corporation asked if in the College we are looking at it in a more holistic way. It was noted it is being considered in the EDI group and there are wider discussions within staff, not just male and female split, but ethnicity for example.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the Gender Pay Gap Report for publication on the website.

49. Finance and General Purposes Committee 24 February 2025, P5 Management Accounts, CDOG, Capital Expenditure Update

Consideration was given to the Finance and General Purposes Committee key messages with recommendations resolved. The Chair of Committee highlighted that an action he has asked for is a regular item on the agenda as to what funds are committed.

- **Recommendation/Resolved:** That the Financial Regulations (including role title changes since the meeting), Modern Slavery Statement Reserves Policy (with additional clarity since the meeting at paragraphs 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 regarding FEC benchmarks and cash days) and Procurement Policy be approved.

There was nothing further to report on the management accounts and it was noted that Master planning was part of the Away Day.

50. Audit Committee 25 February 2025 inc Risk Register

Consideration was given to the Audit Committee key messages and the Strategic Risk Register as follows:

- Follow Up audit has a weak assurance, due to the number of previous audit recommendations either partially complete or not started. Appendix included with an update on each and Committee assured process and message the Committee want to convey is to understand the reason for non completion and if any support can be given.
- HR Recruitment Practices has a substantial assurance. It was noted that there are no high recommendations, 3 medium (staff induction process, recruitment and selection policy, personnel files) and 3 low (mandatory training, signed contracts, notification to unsuccessful applicants), plus areas of good practice and from benchmarking from other audits was slightly higher.
- Annual Health and Safety Report noted.

- Audit Committee proposed the Corporation accept the revised Strategic Risk Register.
- Cyber Essentials accreditation achieved.
- The Chair of Audit Committee reported that the mandatory training figures are being looked in to.
- No concerns OfS regulatory spreadsheet.
- No reported fraud, irregularities, impropriety or whistleblowing incidences or overseas expenses (except student curriculum trips).
- **Recommendation/Resolved:** The Audit Committee proposed the Corporation accept the revised Strategic Risk Register.

51. Q&S Committee 24 February 2025/FE update and HE update for anything since Q&S Committee, plus OfS spreadsheet

Consideration was given to the Q&S Committee key messages, Self Assessment Report and QULP as follows:

- Student attendance is an area of concern and below the College set Minimum Level Performance, with a high volume of at risk students due to attendance. Action plans are in place to address.
- The College Accountability Agreement is being reviewed and will come through Committees/Corporation with a deadline of 30 June.
- Student Voice Survey results considered. QDP conduct the survey which has seen an increase in responses. Areas for development Learning Support and English and Maths and them understanding what they are being asked. Embedding English and Maths continues as a priority. There is planned work to better understand the responses from pregnant students and BAME students, which are not as positive.
- **Recommendation/Resolved:** That the Corporation approve the Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy 2024-2026.
- OfS E6 condition and staff training being addressed.
- Adult Skills Fund continues to be a challenge, but action plans in place to mitigate.
- New HE data dashboard launched, enabling better oversight of trends and issues. The Chair of Committee stated it looks great.
- HEAB met - student engagement at Committee level improved, but has now dropped off again so need to look at what asking students and how engage with them.
- New academic regulations for ABC courses and streamlining documents, but no regulatory changes and maintaining standards.
- APP was approved without amendment and these have been published. Most of the work is on track. Thanks were given to YFD and the team.
- All Foundation Degrees are due to be revalidated ready for September 2027.
- Nothing to note from the OfS Regulatory spreadsheet.

Ofsted have a consultation out around the new inspection regime. It was noted that there are now five proposed grades and will be a reporting card, which will likely result in lots of sub categories. There is a focus on

inclusion and support and using data and a push on staff wellbeing and workload modelling.

52. Governor activities/training, visits, Governor Recruitment/Chairs' Committee 6 February 2025/25/26 Corporation/Committee Dates/Chair and Vice Chair appointments

Consideration was given to the proposed dates for Corporation/Committee for 2025/26. It was noted that the College Company dates had been reviewed so happen prior to Corporation meetings and continue with the November meeting, but not October.
Resolved: The Corporation approved the Corporation/Committee dates for 2025/26.

The Chair of F&GP Committee asked if when do the York campus tour Governors see the commercial facilities. ACTION

It was noted from the Chairs' Committee that:

- TS to contact PH. JC to forward email trail.
 - EDI and SEND links vacant.
 - Governor recruitment for HR skills, Quality and Standards, Banking.
 - **Recommendation/Resolved:** change Standing Orders to include Vice Chair.
 - **Recommendation/Resolved:** change process for appointment of Chair so there is a secret ballot for affirmation.
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- Consider having an Alumni Open Day.
 - Proposed to undertake a full site tour including the wider estate as part of the July Corporation meeting at the beginning or end.

Recommendation/Resolved: It is proposed that Maureen Vevers continue in her role as Chair of the Corporation until 31 July 2025. A vote for the two nominations will take place at the 19 May Corporation meeting to enable full consideration.

53. College Company – No Meeting

It was noted that there had not been a College Company Meeting.

54. Policies and Procedures

Resolved: Having been through Policies and Procedures group, the following policies and procedures were given consideration and approved:

- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure 2024 - 2026
- Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure 2025 - 2027
- Financial Regulations 2024 – 2025
- Reserves Policy 2025 – 2026
- Modern Slavery Statement 2024 – 2025

55. Confidential Items

Members agreed that aspects of the minutes 44, 49, 50 and 51 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.

56. 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.

David Reeve, Co-optee Audit Committee joined the meeting.

57. Date and time of next meeting

19 May 2025

10 July 2025

Date Action Raised	Minute No	Action required	Responsible	Deadline
Current				
13/3/25	52	Cover commercial facilities when Governors do the York campus tour.	TW	07/25-10/25
Pending				
17/10/24	9	Organise a twilight session to demonstrate the Governor dashboard.	JC/SS	New Year
Cleared				
17/10/24	14	Consult with Governors on curriculum/corporate area briefings in this year. 13/3 Done. Clear.	JC/AH	New Year
20/05/24	65	Produce a programme for staff update section at Corporation meetings. 12/12 Employee Forum now in place. Clear.	DLe/TA/JC	10/24
14/3/24	48	In the Gender Pay Gap Report state how if remove casual/part time staff it affects the outcomes. 13/3 Clear.	LG	'25

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 13 March 2025 and agree to them being made public on the Askham Bryan website.

Signed
Chair

Date