

DRAFT

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday 14th December 2023 at 1500h in FO26 with participation by teams

Present: Michael Priestley (Chair); Elaine Clinton; Claire Dunn; Alison Hampson; Nigel Holliday; Phil Jardine(Vice Chair); Sophie Kelly; Emily-Rose Lane; Val Pallister; Denise Rollo; Lee Todd (until Min No: 106/23); Kirsten Williamson
By teams: Chris Nattress (Principal)

Apologies: Peter Ellwood; Robert Milburn; Professor Jill Stewart

Also present: Karen Wilson (Deputy Principal – from Min No 105/23; Iain Glendinning (Vice Principal); Jane Murray (Clerk)
Eliza Treme-Swales; Gary Martin and Irene Farragher (for Min no 104/23)

99/23 Chair's Address

The Board formally welcomed Iain Glendinning the new Vice Principal to the College and looked forward to working with him.

101/23 Minutes

Resolved – that the minutes held in open session of the 7th December 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

102/23 Declarations of Interest

None received.

103/23 Re-appointment

On the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee, it was

Resolved – that Peter Ellwood be reappointed from 1 January 2024-31 December 2027

104/23 Curriculum Update

EPYP

Assurance was provided to the Board that teachers are coping with the increase in numbers and noted that the improvements to the teaching spaces for this year had assisted in accommodating the learners.

Attendance had improved by 2% over the same point the previous year with weekly attendance meetings being held to monitor performance. It was also noted that while maths attendance still fell short of target, it was up by 6% on the same point last year, attributed to the hard work of curriculum leaders in ensuring that learners were in their maths and English classes. The Board felt that this was encouraging. The Principal noted that a letter

from him was going out to parents of those learners where there were concerns over attendance.

Parent's evenings this week would discuss progress with learners on the basis of their end of term reports.

Curriculum enrichment activity was considered and noted. It was asked how a question about a work placement arising from Governors' participation at parents' evening would be dealt with and assurance offered that this would be passed on to the appropriate contacts within college.

Moving to apprenticeships, it was noted that 297 learners were now onboarded with a remaining 213 learners going through the final stages of the process, which was being reviewed in an attempt to secure efficiencies. It was noted that there were now 51 learners in Carlisle with a further two companies joining the provision.

Weekly reviews were taking place to monitor timely achievements across areas with a specific focus on Health and Social Care and Early Years. It was noted that there had been some really positive End Point Assessments held recently.

An engagement session for employers from the Health and Social Care sector has just been held and it was felt that it had been a very positive exercise, with rich intelligence to help meet their need. A similar exercise was to be held with Early Years.

Work was ongoing with a number of employers (including those who would be working on the A66) to define their requirements for the Apprenticeship Academy 2024 intake. It was anticipated there would be 120 apprenticeships arising with 40 applications secured from learners on the apprenticeship academy launch evening.

It was asked about the capacity at Carlisle to deliver. It was felt that with the delivery models that were in place, that there was sufficient capacity to deliver. In response to questioning, there was scope for growth, but there were also challenges in operating at distance and the right conditions needed to be in place to ensure growth. It was noted that there was not a similar model being operated by anyone else in Carlisle.

Also at Lakes, there were good delivery models in place. Staff recruitment could be an issue, but it was felt that there had been some good recruitment recently, in spite of a local major employer re-opening recruitment which impacted on the labour market locally.

It was asked what work was going on in respect of the visitor economy. Some work to deliver appropriate models was taking place, but reference was also made to the collaborative approach through the LSIF project for the 'talent' hub bringing together the colleges and other providers to deliver for the visitor economy.

In consideration of Higher Education, the Board was reminded that OU accreditation had been secured, leading to the validation of two new degrees using blended delivery models including new virtual reality models. A January intake of 60 this coming year was anticipated, with 30 enrolments in September.

Performance for Higher Education remains strong and above average in most instances. Some work required to be done to improve some satisfaction rates, with the main area of discontent seeming to be about IT issues. This was not to say that this was an IT departmental issue, but issues around software licences and accessibility for example, which better planning might help to solve. It was asked whether this was an issue throughout the College, but felt that it was more to do with high grade industrial software.

Noting the shortage in the county of qualified quantity surveyors, it was asked about Quantity Surveyor learner recruitment and noted that there were currently 8 in Year 1. It was felt that employers were waiting to see how delivery shaped up before committing to a sustainable cohort over the next few years, given the staffing shortage to deliver the course which had been encountered at set up. There was confidence, however, that the course would become a success, which employers were keen to see.

Moving to High Needs, progress was noted and it was asked, if the additional funded places were achieved, what numbers of learners with an EHCP would remain unfunded and this was felt to be around forty. The College would aim to manage this through learning support and would continue to apply for extra places on an annual basis.

In a safeguarding update, it was noted that there were now 22 learners on the safeguarding register, who were being closely monitored, with 53 learners receiving regular counselling. In response to questioning, it was confirmed that this was felt to be normal. Partnership work with a local charity in respect of healthy relationships was noted. Assurance was given that all staff had completed safeguarding and prevent training.

Personal Development activity was received and noted, including feedback from learner engagement.

Eliza Treme-Swailes; Gary Martin and Irene Farragher left the meeting.

105/23 Key Performance Indicators

The Deputy Principal noted healthy recruitment of 16-18 learners, considerably above target at 967. This was likely to see in-year funding of £140,000 approximately. It was asked about the extent of drop out from the start of the year and assurance was given that this would be analysed as it was felt that this was a comparatively high figure.

Assurance was given that there was some thorough analysis being carried out into the Adult Education Budget to build opportunities and maximise the budget. Some partnership work had been developed on which it was hoped to build.

Apprenticeship starts were looking very strong, although some challenges remaining over processing. Nevertheless, ESFA account manager pretty pleased and growth is bucking the trend nationally. Growth evident from the apprenticeships in learning figures. HE recruitment was noted that felt to be strong.

Work placements was an area for monitoring given the turnover in staffing, with a student governor noting that there had been an improvement recently with new staff sorting out some challenges. It was felt that the team were out contacting employers and it was worth noting that while there had been a relaxation on work placement for T-Levels last year, the college had not needed to make use of this for their learners. In response to questioning, it was confirmed that a wide variety of employers were being involved in work placement activity. It was noted by the Board that they felt there had been some innovative practice, such as the external artists engaged in talking to students about their work practice.

16-18 retention rates were looking strong at 98.6%, but one also to monitor to ensure they remained above target.

The Board was reminded of the remodelling of apprenticeship progress to incorporate knowledge, skills and behaviour and the input also required from learners and employers to ensure progress.

It was noted that feedback from parents' evening had been good and this was reinforced by governors who had participated in the evening.

It was asked about the figures for progress with English and maths. The incoming Vice Principal felt that a very accurate picture would not be available until after the mocks in January. Until then, it was noted that progress was against a learner's personal target and not necessarily a grade 4 which would account in some instances of a seemingly high progress measure.

Lee Todd left the meeting

Turning to lead indicators, the Deputy Principal noted a relatively high turnover for apprenticeship staff in spite of making the college an attractive place to work, including addressing pay. Sickness absence had been marginally above the previous year at the start of the year and was now below.

In respect of apprenticeship sign up, the Deputy Principal noted, in response to questioning, that she was reviewing and closely monitoring the sign-up process as she would rather know now of any issues there may be.

It was asked whether it was worth knowing how many had actually got their EPA booked and acknowledged that there were a range of measures being used in improvement planning.

In respect of learner satisfaction surveys, it was asked whether there was the potential for capturing high needs learners' satisfaction levels and it was agreed that this could form part of the learner engagement strategy.

106/23 Equality and Diversity Annual Report

The Deputy Principal presented an annual evaluation of performance against key objectives. It was felt that there were some good news (both staff and learner) stories in there and some rich information. It was asked whether data on the performance of learners in receipt of free school meals could be included for future performance reports.

Resolved – that the Equality and Diversity Annual Report be approved for publication.

107/23 Confidential Session

Resolved –

- 1) To move into confidential Session
- 2) To approve the minutes of the meeting held in confidential session of 7th December 2023.

108/23 Financial Update

The Deputy Principal updated the Board in respect of finance and corporate issues.

109/23 Risk Register

Resolved – that the Risk Register be received and noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 1710h for refreshments

The meeting resumed at 1740h

110/23 Strategic Update

The Principal discussed strategy options with the Board.

The meeting closed at 1810h.