



GOVERNING BODY
CONFIRMED MINUTES

Date: 29 March 2023
Clerk to the Corporation
Granville Road
Sheffield, S2 2RL

Venue: Boardroom, City Campus
Tel: 0114 260 2620
Email alison.shillito@sheffcol.ac.uk

Present: John Mothersole (Chair)
Matt Ainsworth
Gill Alton
Gwyn Arnold
Peter Brooks (by videoconference)
Ian Falconer
Angela Foulkes
Sam Giove
Kam Grewal-Joy (by videoconference)
Stephan Hollingshead
Sol Miah (by videoconference)
Saleem Rashid
Amaan Saqlain
Paul Senior
Phil Wymer

In attendance: Martin Harrison, Executive Director Finance (EDF)
Andrew Hartley, Executive Director Commercial and Operations (EDCO)
Mark Pearson, Executive Director Strategy and Systems Improvement (ED SSI)
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to the Governing Body (Clerk)
Paul Simpson, Executive Director People (EDP)
Beth Smith, Executive Assistant, note taker
Jean Harris-Evans, Vice Principal Higher Technical Education (08.50 – 09.00)
Dan Beale, Marketing Manager, (08.50 – 09.00)

Action
by whom by
when

23/1/1 **Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 Governing Body (GB) noted apologies for absence from Holly Anderson (staff governor), Solat Chaudhry, David MacDougall and Chris Vallance (student governor). The meeting was quorate.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Gill Alton, governor, Jean Harris-Evans, and Dan Beale to their first meeting of GB.

22/3/2 **Declaration of interest**

- 2.1 The meeting noted the declarations of the new members and the standing declarations relevant to the meeting business.

FEGP (Finance, Employment and General Purposes) confidential minutes, item 6, and item 10: it was noted that the Clerk had not circulated to elected staff and student governors present (Saleem Rashid, Phil Wymer and Amaan Saqlain) the FEGP confidential minutes nor the reports for Item 10 as they had union roles requiring them to represent staff or students potentially affected by the proposals in those items. The outcome of GB deliberations would be shared with them prior to wider circulation. The elected members agreed to withdraw for item 10.

FEGP Finance update, item 6(k), Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive & Principal and ex-officio governor was a director of Sparks Solutions Limited mentioned in item 6(k). This also applied to senior staff in attendance are directors of Sparks Solutions Ltd referred to in item 6k circulated. The report was for information and it was agreed that no action was required on this declaration.

FEGP confidential minutes, item 6, John Mothersole had declared an interest in a development company that is developing parts of Sheffield City Centre (not Castlegate) and that his son was employed by Turner & Townsend, a consulting company that the college had used to support developing its Estates Strategy. GB noted the declaration and was satisfied that the chair did not have a conflict of interest or loyalty in participating in decision making on the college's Estates Strategy.

Item 4.1 UC Sheffield Re-branding and item 5(b) Higher Education (HE) update, Sam Giove as a senior member of staff of Sheffield Hallam University might be perceived as having a conflict of loyalty when discussing the college's HE brand and development plans. GB noted the declaration but was satisfied that there were no decisions proposed for GB that might be affected by a conflict of loyalty.

Item 8, Governance update, Ian Falconer declared an interest of his spouse who is a non-executive director of Kada Research. It was noted that the Chair had taken action to approve the appointment of Kada Research to conduct an external review of the college's contribution to meeting local skills needs. It was further noted that the appointment had been made following a request for proposals from several providers and Ian had not had any role in the process.

23/1/3 **Minutes of the last meeting**

- 3.1 GB confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14 December 2022.

23/1/4 **Matters Arising and Action Record**

- 4.1 GB received the Action Record and commented on actions not otherwise on the agenda.
- 4.2 **Office for National Statistics (ONS) reclassification**, it was noted that several committees had noted actions to address the impact of reclassification. The following action was agreed:
- ACTION:** produce a short position note of the current actions completed/in progress to respond to reclassification and circulate External Auditor’s Spring Briefing to governors.
- 4.3 GB received the Action Record, agreed that it included all the actions from the December meeting and approved removal of the items marked as ‘completed’ and those agreed as completed in the meeting.

Clerk 26/5/23

4.4 **Launch of UC Sheffield**

Following up a previous action to monitor implementation of the Higher-Level Skills Strategy, Dan Beale, Marketing Manager and Jean Harris-Evans, Vice Principal Higher Education presented the college’s new HE brand. The re-branding was intended to promote the distinctive features of college university-level study and be a basis to promote the offer to college students, schools, and the community.

The brand had been developed to reflect what students said they appreciated about college HE, that they valued their connections to supportive college staff and the local community and the focus on future progression to employment. The new branding would be used in campaigns through traditional and social media to promote university level study open days, prospectus, and case studies. The branding was also being used to create distinctive university learning spaces at City and Hillsborough campuses.

- 4.5 Members received the presentation and the main areas discussed were as follows.
- **Student feedback**, members asked how current students had reacted to the changes. The Vice Principal said that feedback had been positive particularly the upgrading and rebranding of distinctive spaces for higher level students and giving them their own identity in the college had been seen as having a positive impact on the student experience.
 - **Target markets**, the Marketing Manager said that campaigns were focused on encouraging internal progression to technical courses and (externally) adults returning to learning in health, engineering and digital, with new higher technical qualifications due to launch in September 2024.
 - **Growth**, a member asked if growth remained a realistic target given the tough competition in the city. The Chief Executive & Principal said it was a challenging market and the work on the branding and curriculum offer reflected a more distinctive offer with different curriculum and qualifications provided in a fresh style.

ACTION circulate the link to the Students' Union submission to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to all members.

Clerk

28/4/23

23/1/5

Report of the Chair of TLQSE (Teaching, Learning, Quality and Student Experience) Committee

5.1 Gwyn Arnold, acting Chair of TLQSE reported on the meeting held on 1 March 2023.

The main issues highlighted from the meeting were

- **Ofsted feedback** provided robust evidence that the college's policies for improving the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment were being effectively implemented and having a positive impact. Members also welcomed the continued focus on further enhancements and were assured that the college had used the inspection for continuous quality improvement. The rating of Grade 2 provided the college, its new Chair of TLQSE and a new Deputy Principal with a strong platform to strive for excellence.
- **English & maths Improvement Strategy** update had included the results from GCSE re-sits. The results had improved compared to the previous year. The committee would continue its focus on the implementation and impact of this important aspect of the college's provision.
- **Safeguarding**, TLQSE had received a comprehensive report and it had been suggested that all governors would benefit from annual training in safeguarding.
- **Student attendance** continued to be a hot topic, featuring in several of the committee's reports. Following the last meeting, report authors had agreed consolidating data and assurance into one report to make reporting clearer for members.
- **Apprenticeships** continued to address the backlog of learners delayed by Covid disruption. TLQSE was satisfied that the college's actions to drive up timely completion were having a positive impact but the number of apprentices out of time remained a risk to the college
- **Qualification reforms** and the sizeable proportion of the college's future students who would be affected by changes to national funding for Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications would have a significant impact on the college's future curriculum plans. TLQSE recommended a governor deep dive into qualification reform for GB at a future training or strategy event.
- **University-level education** was busy with the college submitting for a silver TEF award and the launch of the UC brand. The chair commended the student video to the whole board.

5.2 GB received the report and approved the updated Admissions Policy.

23/1/6 **TLQSE Committee: reports for information**

- 6.1 GB noted for assurance the following reports that TLQSE considered at its meeting on 1 March 2023.
- HE update including Access and Participation Plan monitoring and progress against the Higher-Level Skills Strategy Plan
 - The college's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission to the Office for Students submitted in January 2023.

23/1/07 **Report of the Chair of FEGP Committee**

7.1 Stephan Hollingshead, Chair of FEGP, presented the draft minutes of the meeting of FEGP Committee on 15 March 2023. The key areas for assurance were the actions being taken to modernize and simplify the college's People policies, progress on transforming the health and safety culture and the college's proactive response to the immediate impact of FE colleges being reclassified as public sector. Risks requiring further scrutiny included the inflationary pressures on current and next year's budgets and the challenges of delivering the estates strategy to enable the college to deliver its strategy.

7.2 GB members discussed the issues arising as follows.

Financial Regulations updates: GB noted that since the last meeting, the committee had reviewed and recommended approval of further updates to the Financial Regulations to reflect the requirements of Managing Public Money.

People Policy reviews: FEGP Committee had approved further changes to the people policies to make them more readable for staff. The committee approved the changes on behalf of GB as they were within its delegated authority.

International work: it was noted that the college was developing an application to reinstate its licence to sponsor overseas students. There were no specific international developments planned but as an active participant in European exchanges through the Turing Scheme and in a European basketball league, it would be useful to be able to sponsor EU and other international students onto college provision. ARAC would monitor compliance with laws and regulations.

- 7.3 GB received the report and approved
- a) Financial Regulations (March 2023)
 - b) Tuition Fee Policy 2023-24
 - c) Staff Travel and Subsistence Policy
 - d) Governors' Expenses Policy.

23/1/08 **FEGP Committee: reports for information**

GB noted for assurance the following reports that FEGP considered at its meeting on 15 March 2023

- a) People update for Term 2
- b) Staff Disciplinary Policy approved on behalf of the GB

- c) Staff Grievance Policy approved on behalf of the GB
- d) Staff Sickness Policy approved on behalf of the GB
- e) Appeal Policy approved on behalf of the GB
- f) Commercial & Business Development update
- g) Finance update including quarterly management accounts.

23/1/09 **Report of Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)**

9.1 Ian Falconer, Chair of ARAC presented the key issues and risks from the meeting of ARAC on 22 March 2023. The main issues discussed at the meeting were

- **Fire Risk Assessment of external walls**, following questions raised by the committee, the college had commissioned further work on ascertaining the current fire rating of the materials used in the cladding systems for the college's higher buildings.
- **Reclassification**, the external auditor had provided a useful briefing to the committee. As previously requested, all members should find this useful
- **Control environment for an outstanding college**, the committee continued to encourage professional services colleagues to be critical of their systems and processes and develop self-improvement initiatives. The committee received a self-assessment of cash handling against best practice and welcomed the improvement actions implemented.
- **Performance of assurance providers**, ARAC reviewed the performance of its current assurance providers and recommended annual reappointment of MacIntyre Hudson, under the current contract, and the reappointment of RSM as Internal Auditors as a direct award under the Crescent Purchasing Consortium Framework.

9.2 GB received the report and approved

- a) re-appointment of RSM LLP as the college's provider of Internal Audit Services for a further period of three years from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2026
- b) re-appointment of MacIntyre Hudson LLP as the college's financial statements' auditor for financial year ending 31/7/2023 (second year of a three-year contract)
- c) updated college Conflict of Interest Policy.

23/1/10 **ARA (Audit and Risk Assurance) Committee: reports for information**

10.1 GB noted for assurance the following reports that ARAC considered at its meeting on 23 November 2022.

- a) Progress report on Internal Audit Plan 2022-23
- b) Strategic Risk Register update 2022-23 and summary.

23/1/11 **Report of the Chair of Search, Remuneration and Governance Committee (SRG)**

11.1 John Mothersole, Chair of SRG, gave an update on search and governance matters arising since the last meeting including the following.

- a) board and link governor roles, following a call by the Chief Executive, all link governor roles had been filled and the Clerk was working to set up introduction meetings for each governor with their linked college manager.
- b) governor search was in progress to fill the vacancy that would arise with the retirement of Gwyn Arnold.
- c) FE Accountability Agreements, the Chair had approved the appointment of a consultant to conduct the external review of the college's contribution to meeting local skills needs. DfE (Department for Education) had granted the college an extension to the submission date for its Annual Accountability Statement so that the final version could use the findings of the review. SRG would still need to approve the draft statement at its May meeting but there would be an opportunity for the whole board to participate in considering the report of the external review and finalizing the Accountability Statement
- d) The governance self-assessment process would be running in April -June. The Chair encouraged members to participate in one-to-one meetings, self-assessment questionnaire and Chair's 360 questionnaire.
- e) Review of implementation of Team Engine would be included in the individual governor review questionnaire
- f) Search for new Governance Professional, it was noted that the Clerk had announced their intention to retire on 31/12/2023. It was commented that the proposed timescale looked challenging given that the Executive Leadership Team was also recruiting a Deputy Principal at the same time.

11.2 GB received the report and endorsed the following.

- **Appointment of Deputy Chief Executive and designation as a senior post**, GB noted the appointment of Andrew Hartley as Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director Commercial and Operations, and that the role was designated as a Senior Post under the Articles of Government. Andrew would commence the Deputy Chief Executive role on 1 April 2023. GB congratulated Andrew on the appointment.
- **Appointment of a Governance Professional**, GB noted the challenging timescale to complete recruitment by the July meeting and resolved to delegate to SRG Committee the detailed arrangements for search and selection. The final decision to appoint the selected candidate was reserved for GB.

23/1/12 **Report of the Chief Executive and Principal**

12.1 The Chief Executive & Principal presented a report covering recent college developments, sector news, equality, diversity & inclusion and health and safety. The update included the following.

Celebrating success, some of the highlights for the college over the Spring Term included successful promotion of new T Levels, UC Sheffield rebranding and the student record label being nominated for an Educate North award.

External engagement the Chief Executive's work on the City Goals project.

ACTION governors asked to complete the City Goals survey and share the survey with their networks.

All

30/4/23

Ofsted inspection of Hillsborough Nursery had resulted in a grade 2. This reflected the hard work of Nursery Manager, Abbey Hayes, and her team in making improvements. Abbey was also now managing City Nursery to ensure the same standards were in place for the benefit of children attending the college's other nursery.

EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) update the college was continuing to work on its equality objectives including improving capacity for supporting good mental health for staff and students, narrowing or removing gaps in performance between different priority groups of students, embedding FREDIE+ values and behaviours to encourage good working relationships and advance equality, supporting Sheffield's ambition to be an anti-racist city and ensuring that estates developments reflect FREDIE+ values and student and staff voices.

H&S update the college had completed implementation of Audiebant alerts at City Campus and this would be implemented at other campuses. The system had been tested but a drill/practice was being planned. The Head of Health & Safety was continuing to raise the awareness of safety to reduce serious incidents. Promoting reporting of near misses was being effective in increasing the number of reports but generating good intelligence to identify and address safety risks.

The Link Governor for Health & Safety commented that he had attended the Health and Safety Stand Down with college managers. The programme had worked well with high attendance and manager engagement. He had spoken with participants who had been positive about the activities and learning in the stand down.

A member asked about an incident reported by local press after a recent basketball game. The Chief Executive said that following a private hire of the Hillsborough Sports Hall, there had been reports of violent behaviour between groups from the two amateur clubs involved. The college had suspended future bookings by the hirer pending receipt of assurances that the club would be taking appropriate action to make clear what behaviour was expected by its members and visitors.

Meeting local skills needs in response to feedback, the college had added Science to the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and

Maths) priority areas in the curriculum strategy. Applications for 2023-24 from young people were tracking above the same point last year. The economic situation meant that adults might find it difficult to return to learning and the college was working on developing a curriculum and delivery model that would be more attractive and accessible to adults.

Curriculum Reform the college was developing its capacity to start delivering T Levels in September 2023. It had been successful in winning some additional funding but the period to complete the work would be very tight. The changes included ensuring that the sustainability agenda was well embedded in existing courses as well as in new green skills.

12.2 GB received the report and thanked the Chief Executive for her fortnightly update that highlighted achievements of students and staff. It was agreed that this would continue to be circulated by email.

12.3 **Progress against the College Strategy 2021-2025 and Key Performance Indicators**

The Executive Director Strategy and Systems Improvement (EDSSI) presented an update on progress on the strategy and the key strategic areas of focus for the second year. Governors noted the progress in Learning, People, Partnerships and Sustainability and the action behind taken to increase the pace in the areas noted as amber.

23/1/13 **Estates Strategy 2022-2025**

13.1 Elected staff governors and the elected student governor withdrew from the meeting. The Chief Executive & Principal and members of the Executive Leadership Team remained in the meeting to present proposals for advancing the Estates Strategy. Appointed members received a strictly confidential report in relation to the college estate. The discussion is recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

13.5 **ACTION**

Set up regular meetings of Estates Strategy Working Group	Clerk	17/4/23
Update the communications and project plan to reflect the comments expressed in the meeting to finalise plans for communication, consultation and stakeholder engagement starting after the local elections	EDCO	5/5/23

13.6 GB approved the proposals in the report, subject to the comments made in the meeting.

23/1/14 **Written resolution**

GB noted that on 6 February 2023, by a written resolution, Governing Body resolved to approve that the Chair of Governing Body might convene a Senior Post Panel under Article 12 of the Instrument and Articles of Government. The panel's role and authority should be:

- i) to review the existing Senior Posts in the Executive Leadership structure
- ii) to consider on behalf of GB, and resolve as appropriate, the proposed separation of the Deputy Chief Executive/Deputy Principal, senior post into two separate roles
- iii) subject to the panel approving role changes, to conduct a fair process for existing Executive Directors to express interest in adding the deputy chief executive role to their existing duties and select the most appropriate candidate.
- iv) The Panel to have delegated authority to designate the new combined Executive Director/Deputy Chief Executive role as a Senior Post.

23/1/15 Application of the Corporation Seal

GB noted that the seal had been applied to an agreement between The Sheffield College and Sheffield City Council for Element 3 funding of High Needs Students 2022-23. The Chair of Governing Body, John Mothersole, and Chief Executive & Principal and governor, Angela Foulkes, witnessed sealing and signed the agreement as a deed on 15 March 2023.

23/1/16 Chair's Action

On 23 February 2023, the Chair approved the appointment of Chris Vallance, The Sheffield College Students' Union HE Officer, as a student governor from date of acceptance to 31 July 2023. [*Post meeting note: the offer was not formally accepted*]

Under specific delegation by GB, on 20 March 2023, the Chair of SRG approved the appointment of Kada Research to conduct an external review of the college's contribution to meeting local skills needs.

The Chair of Governing Body approved the nomination of Martin Harrison for appointment as a trustee of Sheffield College Students' Trust (registered charity 1146396).

The Chair of Governing Body approved the nomination of Mark Pearson for appointment as a director of Sparks Teaching Services Ltd (registered in England 08087248) by the board of directors.

23/1/17 Review of meeting and closing remarks

17.1 Gwyn Arnold's retirement

On behalf of GB, the Chair thanked Gwyn Arnold for her service to the college. He remarked that since her appointment in July 2017, Gwyn had worked tirelessly as a governor, a member of TLQSE and ARAC and vice chair of SRG. Gwyn has also served as Link Governor for Safeguarding and previously as Link Governor for Higher Education. Gwyn had been instrumental in the Task and Finish Group that reviewed governance in 2017/18 and supported the Clerk and previous Chair in updating the committee structure and governance practice. The Chief Executive & Principal commented that the college and GB had benefitted enormously from Gwyn's governorship and

colleagues had appreciated her support as a link governor including assisting the college with its successful application for registration with the Office for Students.

17.2 Comments on the meeting

Most members had accessed papers via Team Engine. It was suggested that the link was recirculated with a prompt to members when “to follow” papers were added to the portal.

23/1/18 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 12 July 2023, 08.30 – 11.00

Wednesday 6 September 2023 8.30 – 11.00 (GB Strategy Event)