

MOULTON COLLEGE

CORPORATION

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on Thursday, 9th November 2023 at Sedgebrook Hall at 1.30pm

Present:	David McVean (Chair)	Independent Governor
	Charles Matts	Independent Governor
	Craig Ablett	Independent Governor
	Ashley Clarkson	Independent Governor
	Pauline Hawkesford	Independent Governor
	Lucille Knapp	Independent Governor
	Prof. Elaine Limond	Independent Governor
	Sue Ijewsky	Independent Governor
	Andy MacCaig	Independent Governor
	Dr Mohamed Saeudy	Independent Governor
	Alastair Thomson	Independent Governor
	Mak Wakeford	Independent Governor
	Prof. Shan Wareing	Independent Governor
	Corrie Harris	Principal
	Michael Knibbs	Staff Governor
	Karen Squires	Staff Governor
	Ivy Knowles	Student Governor
	Megan Smith	Student Governor
 In attendance:	 Faye Williams	 Vice Principal
	Alicia Bruce	Chief Operating Officer
	David Aldridge	Executive Director of Human Resources
	Matt Smith	Executive Director of Skills and Business Development
	 Catherine Duro	 Head of Governance

SECTION A – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS:

23/67 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

23/68 Welcome and New Appointments

All were welcomed to the meeting and thanked for their contributions to the morning's governance development day.

Resolved that the Search and Governance Recommendation to appoint co-optee Craig Ablett as a Corporation Member and independent governor be **approved**.

23/69 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

23/70 Minutes of last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper A)

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

23/71 Actions from last meeting (Agenda item 5, Paper B)

There were no outstanding actions.

SECTION B – TRIANGULATION - STUDENT AND STAFF VOICE (Agenda Item 6)

23/72 Student Governor Feedback:

Students gave verbal feedback on the start of the academic year. They **informed** governors that their programmes and student experience felt more **rounded**, and they had had a more **confident** start to the year than they had experienced last year and felt **comfortable** at college.

Governors **agreed** to keep timetable gaps under review and asked that the timings of evening access to IT for residents be confirmed. The balance between giving students access and ensuring their **wellbeing** and rest time was discussed.

23/73 Staff Governor Feedback:

The Governors received feedback that communications with staff had improved and CPD was being positively received. The shared desire to work increasingly cross team, college wide in CPD and development sessions was shared and **supported**.

Efficiency issues remained with IT, which had also been discussed at the Finance and Resources Committee. Governors understood an IT development plan was evolving and **impressed** on the need for open communication with all staff regarding these planned **improvements**.

Further feedback was received, **informing** Governors that SLT has been excellent at living an open-door policy, receiving feedback, and creating a positive working environment. Staff vacancies and recruitment remained a pressure on some staff teams, which was in some places affecting morale.

It was **asked** how much the staff body know of governance; video introductions and biographies were proposed. The Yamma workplace social media communication platform was explained, which will be introduced along with collaborative CPD to strengthen cross college team culture.

Physical resource planning is being built into the curriculum planning process to support teaching and learning.

The use of AI, and ensuring authentic assessment was **questioned**. The benefits of AI were debated, and engaging students in the development of AI practices across the college was **encouraged**.

23/74 Link Governor Feedback (Agenda item 7)

Feedback was received from the Link Governor for Quality and SEND. Governors heard that a recent meeting with some students from entry to L3 had been very **positive**. They had spoken positively about the induction they had received; they did not enjoy English and maths but knew what was expected of them, they were being taught to think for themselves which they appreciated, would like less basic practicals. One SEND learner when asked what they were doing at college replied that they were 'learning to be an adult, which they were really enjoying, the college, staff and everyone were friendly and willing to help them.' Other students commented that they were aware of staff shortages but did not feel their learning had been affected.

The English and maths PMB meeting had **reassured** the link governor that whilst the culture had not changed yet there was evidence that it was moving, with strong leadership, in the right direction.

The Safeguarding Link Governor fed back on a lengthy meeting she had held with the safeguarding team. She reported that **all aspects were strong**, linking multi-agency work, strong firewalls and the filtering and monitoring seemed to be working well. The six staff with outstanding KCSIE confirmation were being called to meetings with management to resolve the gap.

The Health and Safety Link Governor fed back on the health and safety committee meeting he had attended. It was well attended and comprehensive.

All governors were **encouraged** to link and triangulate, through learning walks and PMB meetings, even if not their specialism a fresh perspective was appreciated.

SECTION C – PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

23/75 Operating Plan and KPIs (Agenda item 8, Paper C)

The Principal's update was received and questions were invited.

A governor **asked** what the risk was of an Ofsted visit this year. Governors were **assured** that Moulton was a good college and Ofsted was not a risk, a visit was not expected this academic year, but likely next. A shadow visit from a consultant was proposed to undertake a gap analysis against the inspection framework.

A governor **asked** what happened if the DFE did not approve the debt refinancing. Governors were **assured** that after many extensive meetings, and many versions of financial remodelling following their feedback their approval was now expected, though need to go through due process. If it was refused for any reason, or not successful in a reasonable time frame then the bank would instead be approached, but this would come at a significant financial cost, which would impact for a number of years.

Resolved: that the principal's update be accepted

SECTION D – CORPORATION MATTERS

23/76 Risk Management Review (Agenda item 10, Paper D)

The Strategic Risk Management review was received, and the Corporation **assured** it had been scrutinised by the Finance and Resources Committee earlier in the week.

Governors were **informed** that IT was moving forwards, external resource was engaged to support this and was prioritising student experience, and cyber security.

As sustainability had been the focus of the development day, it was **asked** if a risk around delivering sustainability should be recorded. There was a **lengthy discussion**. It was **agreed** this would be considered in the next comprehensive review of the risk register. It was not currently a risk to delivering the agreed strategic plan, which this risk register was in place to address,

All **agreed** the next governor's development day would focus on a review of the risk register, scoring methodology and risks included. **(Action CD)**

SECTION E – COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL

23/77 Audit Committee (Agenda item 10, Paper E)

The summary report from the Audit Committee was received.

The question regarding carbon emissions was answered, and governors **understood** it would be required from 2025. A baseline needs to be created this year and presented to governors for review. **(Action MS)**

All **supported** insurance cover being competed on the open market.

23/78 TLA Committee (Agenda item 11 & 12, Paper F)

The summary report from the TLA Committee was received.

Governors were **reminded** that his early meeting was to look back at the previous year. Governors **took comfort** from the **vigorous challenge** evidenced on the KCSIE response rate.

Thanks were given to the team for the delivery of an improved achievement rate.

Governors **enthusiastically supported** the focus on HE on the curriculum plan, to provide a whole learning journey, to learners joining Moulton College.

The recommended annual reports were received and **questions invited**.

A governor **asked** if we could compare our complaints report with other colleges, governors were **advised** that Moulton had been told recently that it was the best at collecting this data, which makes it difficult to benchmark against others.

A second question was asked to **establish** if complaints were known at school level, the TLA Chair **assured** those present that it was known and had been **discussed** in the committee meeting.

The EDI report was **recognised** as a good report. Governors **reflected** that they had come a long way as a governing body in recent years, and now had far **greater diversity** around the table. Governors sought more information from their members though, to **assess and understand** how inclusive the board was. One governor shared their own details with the meeting and suggested that their inclusion and membership should be celebrated: as an LGBTQ+ member, with learning difficulties and a physical impairment.

A governor EDI survey would be circulated, with the outcome to feed into the wider EDI action plan **(Action – CD)**

Resolved that:

1. The Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report 2022-23 be approved,
2. The Equality and Diversity and Inclusion ANNUAL Report be approved,
3. The Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions report be received.

The five policies recommended by the TLA Committee were received and questions invited.

Resolved that:

1. The Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy be approved,
2. The Student Bursary & Discretionary Bursary & Loan Fund Policy be approved,
3. The Safeguarding Policy be approved,
4. The Prevent Policy be approved,
5. The Child on Child Abuse Policy be approved.

23/79 Finance and Resources Committee (Agenda item 13, Paper G)

The summary report, and attachments, from the Finance and Resources Committee were received.

Governors were **reassured** that progress was being made on IT Development.

The potential delay in the signing off the accounts was **discussed at length**. Details of the conversations that had taken place with the bank and the negotiations with the DfE were shared.

Governors were **assured** that the college remained a going concern. The challenge was in delivering a financial model that worked for the future, enabling investment in the student experience.

A governor **asked** if there was any risk in not signing or publishing the accounts by the 31 December. It was **explained** that the ESFA would be forced to send a letter of non-compliance with their regulations, but that they understood the mitigations and would be accepting of these.

It was **asked** what the timeline was to complete the negotiations and be in a position to sign off the accounts. The absolute deadline was confirmed as the 17th March, meetings were scheduled in December, so the COO **remained confident** they would be complete before the end of February.

Resolved that:

1. by unanimous agreement, the signing of the accounts be delayed until up to the end of February.
2. The Fees and charges for 2024-25 be approved,
3. The Sustainability Annual Report be approved,
4. Health and Safety Annual Report 2022-23 be approved.

SECTION F – GOVERNANCE

23/80 Search and Governance Committee (Agenda item 14)

The recommendations from the Search and Governance Committee were shared and discussed with the Corporation.

Resolved that:

1. Craig Ablett be appointed as a full independent governor of the Corporation
2. Resignation be accepted from Noel Inge
3. Rosie Brown be removed from her position as a co-opted governor
4. IAAG be disbanded and Charles Lochrane retired as a co-opted governor

5. Pauline Prow be appointed as a co-opted governor to the Finance and Resources and Search Governance Committees.
6. The standing orders be amended to state that *members will not serve more than two successive 4 years terms except in exceptional circumstances*
7. Three amendments be made to the terms of reference
 - a. A minimum quoracy of 3 for F&R, S&G and Remuneration Committees
 - b. Health and Safety be moved from Finance and Resources to Audit
 - c. *Enhancing the student experience to ensure it has a positive impact on all students.* be amended to *Monitoring and reviewing the way student experience is enhanced to ensure it has a positive impact on all students.*
8. Craig Ablett be appointed to the Audit Committee rather than the Finance and Resources Committee, as Health and Safety Link Governor.
9. Karen Squires as staff governor moves from the audit committee to the finance and resources committee.
10. with the addition of the 7th pillar – Moulton Principles – the new AoC Code of Governance be adopted.

23/81 Formal Record (Agenda item 15)

The Corporation **received notice** that the College seal had been applied to the Deed of Adherence and Land Promotion & Sales Agreement documents for Barwood (6th July 2023), following written resolution to approve the same.

Resolved that the approval, by written resolution, of the Internal and External Audit Plans be **ratified**.

23/82 Policies (Agenda item 16)

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was received. Questions were invited A governor asked where students were able to access the policies affecting them. This would be confirmed. **(Action - CD)**

Resolved that: the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy be approved.

SECTION G – CLOSING ITEMS

23/83 Any other business (Agenda item 17)

A summary of the morning's governance development session was received to be noted.

A full morning of governor development was **summarised**. The focus had been on Moulton's role in a Sustainable Future. Governors had begun by receiving a presentation from the link governor, sharing knowledge, and facts from the external perspective around the challenge facing all organisations to deliver a more sustainable future. This was followed by presentations from each member of SLT detailing where the college is currently positioned regarding sustainability.

This was followed by a **lengthy discussion and debate**, formed around the five key areas of: Curriculum, Finance, Estates, Partnerships and Staffing

The key points of discussion that arose, and areas for follow up were:

1. **Define** sustainability for Moulton College;

2. Agree a common language, **communication** and promotion and marketing (internal and external);
3. Carbon literacy **training** packages are freely available, a package should be agreed and promoted;
4. **Curriculum** needs to agree subject specific units, personal development, and engrained underpinning – existing inclusion should be championed;
5. A '**one change**' initiative should be initiated to deliver quick wins across the estates and resources;
6. A change in **culture**, values and behaviours was needed;
7. **Lifelong learning** impact for students, stakeholders, employers, alumni, and parents who should all be encouraged to engage in the college culture and ongoing learning around sustainability;
8. **Measurable KPI's** were needed to monitor impact, feedback on external measures, set targets, shape actions, and manage expectations
9. The College should lead on the initiation of **Northamptonshire COP**
10. Awards, **celebration**, green ambassador, and a sustainability logo would be beneficial.

A task and finish group was to be formed to progress this activity into a formal strand of governance. **(Action – CD)**

23/84 Date of next meeting (Agenda item 18)

Thursday 14th December 2023 at 9.30 am.

All members of staff and student governors left the meeting before the confidential part began.

Meeting closed 3.25