



OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2022  
**EXTERNAL REVIEW OF  
GOVERNANCE**  
**MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Background to the External Review of Governance

Macclesfield College is a general Further Education College primarily serving East Cheshire.

The College received its last full Ofsted inspection in 2017, achieving a 'Good' outcome.

The College was the subject of FE Commissioner intervention in late 2018 following an assessment of 'inadequate' financial health. The FE Commissioner, in his published report dated March 2019, recommended that the Corporation should ensure that mechanisms are in place to provide closer scrutiny of the financial position and challenge of any forecast variances, but highlighted the strength and capacity of governors to lead financial recovery, with the support of the experienced and able Director of Governance. Subsequently, the College has improved its financial strength so that it is currently self-assessing its financial health as 'Good'.

The Corporation self-assesses its performance annually, most recently in summer 2022, and grades itself as 'Good'. It also commissioned an internal audit of key governance processes in May 2022, which returned the highest opinion of substantial assurance with no recommendations.

The Corporation agreed to commission an external review of governance in autumn 2022. The Review was undertaken in October 2022 and included a review of key documentation, a number of discussions with the Director of Governance, observation of a Corporation meeting, group meetings with key governors and members of the Senior Leadership Team, and a short follow-up questionnaire. The review took account of the feedback received from the self-assessment and the internal audit report. Full details of the scope of the review and the activities undertaken are contained in Appendix 1. The scope meets the requirements of the Department for Education Guide on External Governance Reviews in Further Education and the Post-16 Education and Skills Act. Background on Rockborn and the External Reviewer, Melissa Drayson, are provided in Appendix 2.

## Macclesfield College governance structure

The College Corporation operates a 'Carver'- style model, with the full governing body supported by an Audit Committee, a Search & Governance Committee and a Remuneration Committee. The Corporation is scheduled to meet six times a year, the Audit Committee meets termly, and the Search & Governance and Remuneration Committees meet once a year. In 2021-22 there were also strategy days in October and February, and a resources day in May. There are no task & finish groups or working groups.

Macclesfield College has been the principal sponsor of Macclesfield Academy, an 11-16 secondary school, since 2011. College governors are represented on the school's governing body.

In May 2022, Macclesfield College launched the Cheshire Business School, with the involvement of representatives from the Corporation. The College is also a partner in the Cheshire and Warrington Institute of Technology, still in development at the time of writing.

## **Composition of the Corporation**

The Corporation currently has 18 governors serving, comprising 13 ‘external’ governors, the Principal and Chief Executive, two staff governors and two recently appointed student governors. Four external governors, the staff governors and the student governors have served for less than a year.

## **2. THE ROLE AND DUTIES OF CHARITY TRUSTEES AND FE GOVERNORS**

### **2.1 Overall compliance**

Governors have a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities and receive expert advice from the Director of Governance. Statutory duties are set out in the Instrument and Articles of Government, which were last reviewed in 2021. There are an up-to-date set of governance policy documents, including Standing Orders, a Scheme of Delegation, a Code of Conduct and Committee Terms of Reference.

Governors undertake an annual review of their entries on the Register of Interests and are asked to declare any new interests at each meeting. The Register of Interests is published on the college website.

The role, responsibilities and expectations of governors are set out in a role description. All new governors are provided with an induction into their role by the Director of Governance. New governors are also required to sign the Governor Code of Conduct and abide by it for the duration of their appointment. The induction process for new governors was commended in the Internal Audit of Governance as a particular strength.

The Director of Governance undertakes a review of compliance against the Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance annually. Recent reviews have concluded that the Corporation complies with all provisions of the Code. This conclusion is supported by this review.

### **2.2 Key Statutory Duties and Responsibilities**

#### **a) Determination of the Educational Character, Mission and Vision of the Institution**

The Corporation plays a fundamental and prominent role in driving college strategy and monitoring its achievement, most recently at its strategy day on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The strategy is underpinned by a set of Key Performance Indicators, progress against which is reported to each Corporation meeting.

The risk register has recently been reviewed to focus, in the words of governors, on those top-level risks that will “stop the strategy from being achieved”.

Of particular note are the shared vision behind new initiatives such as the Cheshire Business School and the Institute of Technology, and the CEO Round Table, along with the understanding of how these contribute to the new statutory duties on FE Corporations within the Post-16 Education and Skills Act 22. There is a clear timeline for the development of the college curriculum, based on feedback from employers, with a further governor curriculum workshop scheduled for January/February 2023.

### **b) Quality of teaching, learning and the student experience**

Curriculum, quality and the student experience have a strong focus at Corporation meetings. A 'deep dive' approach has been taken, whereby different managers attend to give presentations on their area of specialism.

At the meeting that was observed, presentations were given on achievement for 16-19, 19+, apprenticeships and Higher Education students. Governors confirmed that the student outcomes had been anticipated in previous reports, were better than the regional averages, and that they would quickly revert to normal. There was strong support and challenge from several governors, and a high level of awareness and support for meeting the wellbeing needs of students to enable them to achieve to their full potential. A clear follow-up action was agreed, to bring an interim report to the next Corporation on progress on the priority actions.

The Lead Governor for Teaching & Learning is an experienced educator who plays a fundamental role in providing assurance around the quality of teaching, learning and the student experience to the wider governing body. She confirmed the "unrelenting focus on teaching and learning at Corporation level".

The Lead Governor meets regularly with the Deputy Principal to discuss and monitor key issues ahead of governor meetings and undertakes learning walks and other activities to meet staff and students and to triangulate management reports. The focus of these visits is determined by the Lead Governor, who specifically asks to see 'the good and the bad'. Both governors and managers appreciate the culture of transparency, support and rigorous challenge that this relationship brings.

The Learning Walk approach also enables the Lead Governor to identify the impact of Corporation decisions. This was particularly evident, in the past year, in terms of student behaviour and the implementation and extension of the Aspirations Academy.

Governors are engaged in the validation of the College Self-Assessment Report and the Quality Improvement Plan is monitored at each Corporation meeting.

### **c) Ensuring the efficient and effective use of resources, the solvency of the institution and safeguarding assets**

All reporting and discussion relating to financial and resource issues take place at full Corporation meetings as it is considered important that non-financial governors have a clear understanding of finance. The Corporation has overseen the College's financial recovery and it is now in a steady state financially, which helps to ensure that the balance between resource-based and quality-focused discussion at meetings is achieved.

Governors and the Director of Governance were clear that, should an unforeseen adverse financial situation arise, this would be dealt with in the first instance by calling a single-issue Special Corporation meeting.

It was not possible to observe a detailed discussion of financial issues at the Corporation meeting, but governor oversight of finance was tested in the one-to-one and group meetings held with governors, senior staff and the Director of Governance.

Financial health is good. However, the need to have close monthly oversight remains and was tested as part of the review. Management accounts are reported to each Corporation meeting. The timing and frequency of Corporation meetings in 2021-22, however, meant that there were some months with no meeting to report into. The option was discussed of emailing management accounts in between meetings. However, scrutiny is provided frequently and systematically at a fortnightly meeting of the quadripartite of Chair and Vice Chair, the Principal and Deputy Principal, and the Director of Governance. Assurance was given that the quadripartite meetings schedule would provide an early alert of any variances to the budget and that these would be brought to the attention of the full Corporation.

The Corporation also has a Lead Finance Governor role, which has recently been taken up by a new governor. The Lead Governor meets with the Deputy Principal and provides a further level of assurance.

The Corporation is involved at an early stage in the budget-setting process, with a resources day scheduled in May to allow space for discussion.

The Corporation has a well-functioning and effective Audit Committee, chaired by an experienced governor. Additional audit and finance experience has been added to the Committee through the appointment of co-opted members. As with other aspects of governance, both governors and managers appreciate their open and honest relationship based on trust, support and appropriate challenge. Recent Internal Audits have provided high levels of assurance. The Committee charges management with ensuring that audit recommendations are followed up immediately and monitored closely. Oversight of risk management is a key responsibility of this committee, including oversight of the recent review of the risk register to reduce it to a small number of strategic risks.

#### **d) Senior postholders**

The Corporation has adopted the AoC Code for Remuneration of Senior Staff and produces an annual report in accordance with the Code. The Remuneration Committee meets annually to review senior postholder performance against a set of agreed objectives and to make recommendations to the Corporation on pay.

The designated senior postholders are the Principal, one Deputy Principal and the Director of Governance.

#### **e) Other areas**

This review confirms that:

- **Safeguarding** is a priority for the Corporation. The Chair is the Lead Governor for Safeguarding, SEND and Equality & Diversity. Governors have received recent training on safeguarding and Prevent. Termly reports are brought to the Corporation to monitor the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.

- The Corporation receives reports on **Health & Safety** (including Annual Report to the October meeting), and has appointed a Health & Safety link governor who attends internal meetings and provides an additional layer of assurance to governors.

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#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to ensure ongoing and systematic oversight of finance in order to provide an early warning system of any variances from the budget and forecast.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP, RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

Considerable effort has been made to refresh the membership of the Corporation in the last two years, resulting in the appointment of seven new external governors. A variety of approaches has been used to recruit governors, including advertising, the use of recruitment agencies, and building on existing relationships with local partners. Governors now cite, as a key strength, the broad and diverse set of skills on the Corporation that enable oversight, support and challenge. There are no major skills gaps in key areas, and many governors bring a broad portfolio of skills and experience. The Director of Governance uses the following question as a benchmark to inform recruitment: “if we had to re-form the committees, would we have the skills to do so?”

The Director of Governance refreshes the skills audit annually and produces a summary that is used to inform future recruitment and the deployment of governors to different roles; either as Lead Governors, committee members or representatives of the Corporation on college-owned enterprises such as the Cheshire Business School.

A further benefit to the Corporation is the close links that many governors have with major local employers in the private and public sector.

The Chair has recently been reappointed for a further two-year term. His role in determining the positive culture of the Corporation, leading effective meetings and working with the Principal and senior team to drive improvement has been vital. The Vice Chair also brings a wealth of experience and knowledge and has played a key role in consolidating the effectiveness of the Audit Committee. Consideration has already been given to succession planning for both positions, through the strengthening of committee chair, lead and link governor roles. As part of its continuing discussions on succession, the Corporation fully recognises the need to ensure future skills needs are met and the positive culture preserved.

Governors recognise the need to broaden Corporation diversity in terms of ethnicity and culture. There are a growing number of students from different racial backgrounds travelling from Greater Manchester to attend the sports academy, and the need is recognised to be alert to their specific needs at all levels of the College, including at governor level.

The Corporation has extremely strong links with local business, public services and economic forums and might consider using its networks to identify potential governors

with the skills required from different backgrounds. As there are no current vacancies, an associate governor role would be helpful to introduce potential governors to the Corporation.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Continue with succession planning for the Chair and Vice Chair, with a focus on ensuring continuity of skills and preservation of the positive Corporation culture. Ensure there is a generous timescale for recruitment and the handover process. A year is recommended.
3. Continue to prioritise increasing the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Corporation. An associate governor role would be helpful to introduce and familiarise potential governors at times when there are no vacancies.

## **4. GOVERNANCE PROCESSES AND PRACTICES**

Governance processes are robust, established and are managed effectively by the Director of Governance. This conclusion reflects the findings of the Internal Audit (May 2022).

The close-working triumvirate of Chair, Principal and Clerk ensures effective communication at all stages of preparation for a meeting, and allows flexibility to accommodate any unforeseen developments, changes in circumstances or new information needs.

Agendas are set and papers are distributed in a timely fashion via a Board Portal system. Agenda items reflect an annual work plan and care is taken to ensure that actions from previous meetings are tracked through. The follow-through of actions was highlighted as a strength in the internal audit of governance.

Minutes are detailed and reflect discussion and challenge from governors. Some minor recommendations to enhance clarity for external readers are provided in Appendix 2.

A verbal 'Matters Arising' update from the previous meeting is given at each meeting and recorded in a table at the top of each set of minutes. This helps to provide governors with assurance that actions have been completed. The alternative of a written Matters Arising report was discussed as part of the review. In agreement with governors, this had been removed with the verbal update being preferred as a more dynamic form of reporting. The Director of Governance and governors feel it enables wider discussion and participation from both the Executive Team and governors.

Governors consider paperwork to be of a good standard but there are inconsistencies in the use of the standard cover sheet; the purpose of which should be to provide an 'at a glance' summary of headline issues, recommendations, and advice to governors on what is required of them. It is recommended that the standard cover sheet should be utilised consistently for key Corporation reports.



Information for some items is provided through presentations, rather than written reports. This was at the request of governors who consider that this approach stimulates discussion and keeps the meeting fresh.

The meeting observed ran closely to time. Governors' feedback indicates that meetings are well chaired, ensuring that time is spent on the highest priority areas, and that all governors have an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

The Corporation reviewed its Articles in 2021 and decided not to include written/electronic resolution provision for the time being. However, legal advisers, as part of the review, provided the wording for the written resolution provision to be introduced upon the agreement of the Corporation. Whilst a physical meeting is undoubtedly the best decision-making vehicle, written resolutions are a useful tool for seeking approval of non-contentious or routine matters that do not require discussion when it is not possible to convene a Special Corporation meeting at short notice.

The review of the governance webpages confirms that the Corporation is fulfilling its responsibility to provide public access to minutes and other Corporation records. It is understood that the website is in the process of being updated and that some minor technical glitches will be resolved as part of this.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3 Ensure consistent use of the Executive Summary Cover Sheets, especially for lengthy Corporation papers.
- 4 Keep under review the option to include 'written resolution' wording within the Instrument and Articles and Standing Orders, with clear guidelines on appropriate use.

## 5. GOVERNANCE CULTURE, WORKING RELATIONSHIPS AND DYNAMICS

The culture of the Macclesfield College Corporation is a key strength. At its heart is the effective triumvirate between Director of Governance, Chair and Principal who prioritise regular and open communication. This is also seen in the relationships between other governors, including Lead Governors and Committee Chairs, and members of the college Senior Management Team. These relationships are consistently described as 'honest', 'transparent', and based on trust rather than 'them and us'. Governors reflect that this culture can also be seen at other levels in the organisation.

The Chair has played a pivotal role in setting the 'tone' of the Corporation, encouraging contributions from all other governors, undertaking regular one-to-one conversations and 'temperature testing' on different issues. Challenge is welcomed and accommodated, and difference of opinion around the boardroom table is well managed.

Governors feed back that the positive culture means that they enjoy being a governor and are proud to be part of the Macclesfield College community. There is recognition, however, of the need to work proactively to preserve the strongest elements of current culture in the face of governor turnover, and the future departure of key individuals.

The recruitment of two new student governors has been welcomed and their contributions to the October Corporation meeting was commended. Governors consider it important to continue to engage the student governors in Corporation life as the year progresses.

## **6. THE IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE**

The Chair, Director of Governance and wider Corporation are conscious of the need to demonstrate the impact of governance. Impact is evaluated during the year in a range of ways:

- A standing agenda item at the end of each Corporation meeting, inviting feedback from governors which is then minuted.
- Through annual governor self-assessment. Responses to the 2022 survey indicate that all governors agree with the statement: “Members can talk about the impact the Corporation has made on the outcomes for students”.

The Director of Governance prepares an impact plan which is linked to the strategic plan, and which sets out evidence of the individual or collective impact of governors during the year, along with next steps or actions to enhance impact.

During conversations with the Director of Governance and governors, they were able to clearly identify where governance has driven improvement and innovative practice. The development of the Aspirations Academy to deal with student wellbeing and behavioural issues following the pandemic was cited as a key example.

## **7. THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF THE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE**

The Director of Governance is a highly regarded, experienced member of the governance team whose expertise is recognised by her colleagues. She has experience as a governance professional in education for over 15 years in a range of education settings from single primary and secondary Schools to a large multi-academy trust. She was involved in the first single Academy Conversion following ‘Outstanding’ gradings. All education settings that the Director of Governance has worked with have been graded either ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.

The Director of Governance is a crucial part of the triumvirate with the Chair and Principal and attends Executive Leadership Team meetings regularly. She has a degree in communications and uses this to ensure consistent communication with all governors and between all parties involved in college governance.

College leaders value and respect the independent status of the Director of Governance and she is confident that she would be able to exercise this independence where appropriate.

The Director of Governance came to the role with a Level 4 Clerking qualification from the National College and completion of the National Governors Association's National Clerks Development Programme. Subsequently, the College has supported the Director of Governance with her professional development, and she has recently completed the ETF/Oxford Said Governors Professionals Strategic Leadership Programme. She meets regularly with governance professionals within her region as well as colleagues from the Oxford Said programme.

## 8. GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT

The Corporation operates a Governor Engagement Scheme, which sets out link and lead governor roles in a number of key strategic and operational areas:

- Health & Safety
- Finance
- Leadership & Management
- Quality of Teaching & Learning (QTL)
- Safeguarding, SEND and Equality & Diversity

Role descriptions set the proposed intent, implementation and impact of each position.

In addition, all governors are invited and encouraged to participate in regular stakeholder fora, including the Student Council meeting and the CEO Round Table (key external stakeholders). Two governors not assigned to roles attended the Aspirations Academy. The aim is to encourage a spread of engagement from different governors.

All governors have regular opportunities to meet staff, including at the 'speed dating' exercise that was organised before the October Corporation meeting.

The Lead Governor for QTL is clear about the benefits of the learning walks undertaken as part of her role.

Governors complete learning walks for a range of objectives. For example, the Health & Safety Link Governor completes a learning walk and speaks to students about feeling safe on the college site, access and designated areas. Leadership & Management governors complete learning walks with Assistant Principals. Chair, Vice Chair and two governors not assigned to roles attended Aspirations Academy. A number of governors attended the launch of Cheshire Business School.

Lead governor reports and other engagement activities are reported back to each Corporation and are considered to be effective tools to triangulate management information and inform decision-making.

## 9. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

There is evidence of strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) at Corporation level. EDI runs as a thread through the college values, public values statement, and student and staff codes of conduct.

The Equality & Diversity Policy was last approved by Corporation in September 2022 and is published on the website.

The Corporation receives an annual EDI report which covers both HR and student profiles against local demography, including information on achievement gaps. This was last presented at the April 2022 meeting. The minutes record questions from governors.

The Chair of Governors is the Equality Link governor and attends college EDI group meetings. As reflected in section 2 of this report, diversifying the Board membership has been identified as a priority.

## 10. SUMMARY OF KEY STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Key strengths

- Governors are aware of their statutory roles and responsibilities and comply with all provisions within the Code of Conduct.
- Governors lead on college strategy and have a clear vision for the College and its students.
- The Corporation has an ‘unrelenting focus’ on the quality of teaching, learning and the student experience. There are clear examples of where governance has had an impact on driving improvement to quality and the student experience.
- Under the Corporation’s stewardship, financial health has improved to ‘Good’.
- The broad and diverse set of skills on the Corporation enable oversight, support and challenge. Governors also have strong links to local businesses and community.
- There are rigorous and effective governance processes, which are supported by a strong triumvirate between the Principal, Chair and Director of Governance.
- The Chair has established a positive Corporation culture based on open communication, support and challenge. Governors enjoy their role and are proud of being part of the college.
- The Director of Governance is experienced, qualified and effective and is highly valued in her role by governors and staff.

- Relationships between governors and senior managers at all levels are strong, based on regular communication, honesty, transparency and trust. Governors are confident that the information that they receive is accurate and robust.
- Governors have regular opportunities to engage with college life, staff, students and external stakeholders through lead governor roles, attendance at events, meetings and fora. Engagement activities are reported back at Corporation meetings and are used to triangulate management reports.

## Recommendations

1. Continue to ensure continuous oversight of financial position between Corporation meetings through quadripartite meetings and lead governor activities.
2. Continue with succession planning for the Chair and Vice Chair, with a focus on ensuring continuity of skills and preservation of the positive Corporation culture. Ensure there is a generous timescale for recruitment and handover processes, with a year recommended.
3. Prioritise increasing the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds on the Corporation. An associate member position might be helpful to introduce new people to the Corporation.
4. Consistent use of the cover sheet for Corporation reports to ensure that governors can see key issues, risks, and recommendations 'at a glance'.
5. In future, consider the addition of 'written resolution' wording into Instrument and Articles and Standing Orders.
6. Continue to develop a broad range of opportunities to all governors to engage with college life, and with external stakeholders.

## SCOPE OF AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The following scope was agreed with the Macclesfield Corporation. It takes full account of the DfE guidance on External Reviews of Further Education Governance, published in May 2022.

### Scope

- Discharge of roles and duties as charity trustees and FE governors
- Board culture
- Impact of governance
- Strategy
- Equality & diversity
- Governor membership, recruitment and induction
- Governance professional experience, and interaction between Board and Executive Team
- Review board's interaction with students and other stakeholders

In agreement with the College, the scope took into account the outcomes of the Internal Audit of Governance undertaken in May 2022 and the Corporation's own self-assessment undertaken in August/September 2022.

### Methodology and timeline

The review comprised the following activities:

- Initial conversations with the Chair, Director of Governance and CEO/Principal to determine the focus of the review (14<sup>th</sup> September, 3<sup>rd</sup> October)
- A desk-based review of governance policies and procedures, board membership profile, committee terms of reference, board papers, schedule of business, governance self-evaluation activities, audit reports, website and other relevant documentation (20<sup>th</sup> September to 12<sup>th</sup> October)
- Tracking the progress of Corporation meeting from agenda-setting, production and distribution of papers and observation of the meeting (20<sup>th</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> October)
- Follow-up meeting with Director of Governance (31<sup>st</sup> October)
- An online governor questionnaire exploring individual views on the performance of the Board and governors' own contributions (21<sup>st</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> November)
- Meetings with key members of the Executive Team and Board (18<sup>th</sup> October)
- Presentation of findings to Corporation (6<sup>th</sup> December)
- Written report and recommendations (16<sup>th</sup> December)

### ABOUT ROCKBORN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

**Rockborn Management Consultants (RMC)** are experienced education management consultants who tailor-make services to your organisation's needs.

We offer specialist, professional and pragmatic management solutions that range from helping you develop your strategic options, to providing expert advice and guidance on a wide range of organisational HR and change issues.

We have extensive experience of the sector and have an exceptional track record with regard to supporting boards and senior teams.

We take a personal approach to working with you and undertaking governance reviews. We do not have a 'one size fits all' approach and offer a bespoke review that meets your requirements and ensures sustainable improvement. This involves:

- Getting to know the organisation so we understand your values and culture to ensure proposed solutions will work in your context
- Building relationships and providing a high-quality, personal and reliable service
- Being available when you need us
- Ensuring we use our extensive expertise and knowledge, and those of our associates, to provide you with the very best advice and guidance
- Ensuring we add value - we will not replicate your existing governance self-assessment activities but will aim to complement them
- Ensuring that qualified and personable experts work alongside you, not 'inspecting' you
- And a real belief that, if you get the fundamentals right, the rest will follow.

### THE REVIEW TEAM

#### **Lead Reviewer: Melissa Drayson**

Melissa is a seasoned governance professional with a strong sense of what a good board looks like. Her governance experience has been gained primarily within the FE sector, where she has supported eight different college boards of governors over 20 years. She also has a working knowledge of academy, charity, and corporate governance. She has supported three separate FE colleges through merger and has undertaken several board reviews in her capacity as clerk.

As a consultant and trainer, Melissa has advised a range of educational institutions on their governance, from primary schools to universities. She currently works with the AoC delivering induction training and mentoring to new governance professionals as part of the ETF Governance Professionals Development Programme.

Melissa holds the ICSA (Chartered Governance Institute) Professional Diploma in Corporate Governance and is a part-qualified Chartered Company Secretary.

For 11 years, Melissa ran the induction training service for new governors in Sussex colleges. She also runs courses in minute writing and other committee skills for public sector workers.

**Company Director: Peter Ryder**

A highly respected and successful former college Principal (Leeds College of Technology and Tameside College) and previous Chair and then Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Colleges Group (a partnership of 10 Further Education colleges covering all boroughs across Greater Manchester), Chair of West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges and member of the AoC's Board, representing all colleges in the North West of England.

Now an independent FE consultant, Peter has been supporting and advising colleges since the announcement of the Area Based Review process in 2015.

Peter has extensive expertise in many areas including strategic reviews/option appraisals, working with boards, merger project management, college turnarounds and change management.

Peter has experience across a broad range of strategic assignments including the support of five colleges with strategic option appraisals, advising boards on their options, holding workshops with governors to evaluate future strategy, directly involved in two college mergers in an executive role, project-managed a further six college merger processes, and most recently provided post-merger project management support to a college which merged with a college group, doubling the size of the organisation overnight and making it the third largest college in England.



## Housekeeping issues picked up during the review

### Website:

- Ensure that links take visitors to the correct pages
- Consider profiles for all governors or a list of current governors

### Minutes:

- Provide designations (e.g., staff governor) and job titles against names
- Highlight decisions and resolutions for easy reference

Working with education providers to improve  
strategic and operational performance

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