

MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE

TUESDAY 25 APRIL 2023 – 9.30 AM

TO BE HELD AT MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE

PART I

Clerk: Mrs R Clare

Attendance	MS (Chair of the Corporation), MW, JW, JM, EK, CJ, IC, GL, NS, IJ, HR.
Non-Governor Attendance	LR, VH.
Apologies	RCh, JL, RK, MJN and LR.

15/23 Governors were asked to review the website and to contact the Director of Governance if they have any further comments.	Governors
19/23 The Chair of the Corporation requested an update at the Strategic Planning Day that was being held in May 2023 (relating to an update on bank covenant).	ELT
20/23 A new Behaviour Policy will be shared at the Strategic Planning Day that will support the management of attendance. Skill/Will information to also be shared. A strategic conversation has taken place following the CBS Advisory Board meeting and a further update will be provided at the Strategic Planning Day.	ELT

MINUTES

Item 13/23 Title
Welcome and Apologies for Absence
 Members were welcomed to the meeting.
 Apologies for absence were received for R Kay, R Charlton, J Lewis and MJN (Student Governor).
 LR (Student Governor) was not in attendance at the meeting.

The Chair of the Corporation made a presentation to J Walters, as this was her last Corporation meeting. The Chair thanked J Walters for her contribution to the Corporation and wished her well in the future.

New Governor Appointment
 RC (Director of Governance) confirmed that a potential governor had been interviewed by MW, RK and RC. The Director of Governors explained that the potential Governor was a qualified Solicitor and an Associate Lecturer for a University, with experience of being a Chair person of an Open Awards educational charity for the last 8.5 years. The charity acted as a regulatory body for a number of different qualifications, mainly aimed at Adult Education.

The Corporation formally approved the appointment of AH to the Corporation.

14/23 **Declaration of Members' Interest**
There was no declaration of Members' interest.

15/23 **In depth reports**

Presentation on Corporate Services and Learner Engagement and Marketing

The Director of Corporate Services (HF) joined the meeting for this item only to provide an update on the area.

The presentation included roles and responsibilities, an update on the student journey, advertising campaigns from past, present and future, use of social media, school liaison and increase to 48 school engagements (over 9000 students), prospectus from the past, present and future, launch of the new website, Open Events including application numbers to date, keeping warm strategy, what enrolment will look like, Adult Community Courses and Treacle Market presence, corporate changes around the College Estate and new partnerships. HF shared future ideas such as adding student account access to the website and a new family Open Event taking place at Christmas. HF confirmed that interview evenings and enrolment now take place in the Sports Hall and this had been effective and created a real 'buzz' around the campus. The marketing campaign and signage around the local community had been effective and reached a large area. The new branding on the stairs, the history wall and corporate signage had also been added to the estate and were well liked by visitors.

Governors spoke highly of the new website; particularly how efficient and easy it was to navigate and the new corporate look. **Governors were asked to review the website and to contact the Director of Governance if they have any further comments.** Governors recognised the transformation to the College Estate including the appearance, corporate branding and history of Macclesfield College. Governors were impressed with the increase in school engagement and how effective this has been.

Q: Please can governors have a copy of the timetable of events, in order to support the Open Evening events.

HF will share this with RC to be circulated to governors.

Q: Do school visits take place at Macclesfield College?

The College holds a Year 10 taster week and a range of engaging taster sessions are on offer.

Q: Is the Prospectus moving to a digital version?

HF confirmed that a number of colleges have moved to an online digital version to save cost. However, her research had showed that parents still preferred a paper version. Next year, the College will move to a postcard with a QR Code to hand out at Open Events and the year after will look to move to a digital version only. HF has created different guides for parents, students and schools to highlight the different pathways and course options available.

Q: Will you be using google analytics to support the use of social media?

Yes, we have engaged with a company to help analyse the data.

A Member commented that the Arriva bus from Macclesfield to Northwich was being stopped and there may be an opportunity to reach those students.

Q: How do we interact with the parents and is this successful?

Interactions on social media are separated between under 18's and adults. Instagram interactions are targeted by age group and locality. HF has also been targeting Year 9 and 10 interactions through school liaison and this has encouraged earlier years to attend Open Events.

Q: Can you create stronger communication to schools for students to engage earlier, rather than waiting for results.

HF explained that this is done through the school liaison work and creation of the guides for schools, parents and students. The guides also supported schools, parents and students in increasing their knowledge about the different pathways.

Q: It is important for the social media to be organic and for this to be a focus.

It was explained that there is a dedicated resource for social media.

Presentation on Apprenticeships

TC joined the meeting for this item only to provide an update on the apprenticeship provision. TC confirmed the achievement rates for apprentices at 61.5%. (8.1% above the national provider rate of 53.4%). Governors were informed that over 31% of learners achieved a distinction.

There were excellent achievement rates for some sectors including:

- Manufacturing Technology at 88.2%.
- Accounting & Finance at 84.2%.
- Business Management at 76.5%.
- Construction at 74.4%.

TC confirmed that Improvements on Engineering & Construction programmes had impacted on the achievement gap between males and females from -15.6% to +5.4%. Some programmes had been impacted by Covid including Hair and Beauty and Health and Social Care.

TC shared the best-case prediction for achievement this academic year at 68.2%, with the predicted final position at 65%. Governors were informed of the areas for concern and this included the Functional Skills element. The Functional Skills element was proving problematic and damaging to achievement rates.

Q: Are the problems in Childcare due to the reluctance to release apprentices because the settings are short-staffed?

TC confirmed that this was the case but the College had provided additional bootcamps and remote sessions. Members discussed the mindset in industry and the problems with backfilling an apprentice with an agency member of staff and the costs associated to this. Governors recognised that it was important for employers to ringfence their trainees.

TC provided an update on the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework that has replaced the minimum standards. TC confirmed that Macclesfield College is currently 'green' across the dashboard.

Apprenticeship recruitment was currently at 227 new starts this academic year with 711 learners on apprenticeship programmes. Growth areas included Childcare, Teaching Assistant and Construction and Engineering. The financial target was also shared.

Q: Are you comfortable with the financial target set?

December, January and February were quieter and an additional sales person has been difficult to recruit but TC confirmed that she was comfortable with the financial target. The money not used for the sales person has been transferred to non-pay to support engagement with a company to support sales.

TC explained that a number of employers led events have taken place. **The first event was for Engineering and MW (Governor) Chaired the event. The event led to an increase in new clients.**

Q: Do you actively share progression routes?

Yes, we have events to share ambitious pathways at the College and support students in moving from L2 to L3 qualifications.

Mid-Year Report on HR Survey/Happiness Index and Gender Pay Report

HR Survey/Happiness Index

MSS joined the meeting for this item only to provide an update on the Mid-Year Report on the HR Happiness Index survey and Gender Pay Report. MSS confirmed that 75.3% percent completed the survey with the measure for being happy at a positive 7.5 and for engagement a positive 7.4. The happiness was measured by age and the year that the person joined the organisation. Relationships had come out highly in the survey at 7.8 (relationships on their own at 8.4). The full survey showed the results by questions. The questions relating to safety had received a lower response at 7.2. It was explained that a new Behaviour Policy was being launched for September and a research

project had been conducted in this area, this had involved a number of organisations across the educational sector. The new Behaviour Policy will support low level disruption in a small number of areas.

MSS provided a number of new initiatives such as the new Communication Committee and personalised CPD to improve personal growth. MSS confirmed appraisal completion was at 100%. The refer a friend/colleague initiative was proving successful.

Q: Are you happy with the results for working from home arrangements?

MSS confirmed that the results in this area were positive and it had been a positive incentive for recruitment and attracting new members of staff to the organisation. Members of staff across the organisation had attended on site training on a Friday and this had been well attended and conducted with full cooperation. MSS explained that workload balance remains a priority for members of staff but this is across the sector. This Thursday, Andy Cope will be visiting the College to provide the banner for 'Investors in Wellbeing'.

Comments and themes from the survey included workload, pay, CPD and safety. LR explained that the College had been part of research project across three colleges for the DfE linked to workload/inability to recruit. Two members of staff had been shadowed as part of the project.

Q: Are decisions made shared with the whole organisation?

MSS explained that RK provides a weekly all staff briefing that is held in person and this proves a successful way of communicating with all members of staff. The Communication Committee will enhance this further.

Q: How much CPD is there?

There is statutory training through Educare, in addition to one hour mandated training each week, a series of one day training events and five days off timetable for industry updating.

Gender Pay Report

The Gender Pay Report was reviewed by all Members. It was noted that Macclesfield College is number 1 in Cheshire for the mean and median.

Governors would like to thank the members of staff for the detailed and professional presentations. **It was acknowledged that MSS and HF had been key appointments in driving cultural and corporate services for Macclesfield College.**

16/23 **Minutes**

To confirm and approve the Part 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023.

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 7 February 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

17/23 **Matters arising from the meeting held on 7 February 2023**

The actions from the previous minutes were reviewed.

It was explained that the actions relating to the KPI document will be reviewed in line with the next KPI document being produced and will be shared at the Corporation meeting on 4 July 2023.

The actions relating to the College Improvement Plan will be reviewed under item 8i.

A curriculum overview and deep dive will be provided at the Strategic Planning Day on 9 May 2023.

18/23 **Audit Committee**

To receive the minutes of the Audit Committee on 28 March 2023 and note any actions from the meeting

The Audit Committee minutes from the meeting held on 28 March 2023 were received. RC confirmed that an internal audit of Health and Safety had taken place during 2021 to 2022 with 'Limited' assurance. Since then, a new Head of Estates had been appointed and another audit had been carried out in the area. The new Internal Auditors presented the Internal Audit Report for Health and

Safety at the recent Audit Committee meeting, it was confirmed that there had been good progress in the area and 'Adequate' assurance had been provided. The Director of Governance provided the Corporation with a letter from the ESFA dated 29 March 2023, Macclesfield College Financial Statements Review 2021 to 2022. A response to the letter from the Director of Governance to the ESFA was also provided.

The Corporation recognised the positive work undertaken in the area and the improvements to date. It was pleasing to note that the 6 recommendations from the previous Health and Safety Audit had been implemented and suitable controls were in place.

19/23

Business

i. receive the College accounts for the period ended January and February 2023, including Mid-Year Financial Review

The College accounts for the period ended January and February 2023, including the Mid-Year Financial Review were shared in advance of the meeting.

The Director of Finance and Estates (VH) shared the main points from the Mid-Year Financial Review with Governors. This included the following points:

- From the review, income has increased by £64K. staffing costs increased by £122K and non-pay costs have increased by £64K. Therefore, the overall Operating Surplus has reduced by £123K.
- The increased costs are due to the bus tender, agency costs and insurance tender.
- Costs have been mitigated through not appointing to vacancies and pay costs will continue to be monitored.
- Non-pay costs increased slightly due to emergency repair to the estate and T Level Professional Fees for the bid.
- The College will continue to seek to reduce the impact on the surplus position by trying to identify additional savings between now and July 2023, however if this is not achievable the College will breach the loan covenant based on this outturn but will remain financially 'Good.
- It was explained that this was going to be a tight year due to the number of funded learners but the increase in student numbers will place the College in a better position going forward.
- Governors supported the management of the financial position and moving to ELT approval for spend across the College.
- Governors reviewed the financial headlines on page 3 and the total income on page 6.
- It was reported that the College had achieved very well for the AEB and it was the best the College had ever done. The College had been prudent in their approach as the AEB had not been included in the budget due to not hitting the target in previous years.
- VH referred to profiling and there being no concerns in relation to cash flow and this will remain strong by the end of year.

The Corporation discussed the process for reporting the breach of the bank covenant. A Governor aided the discussion and shared her valued experience of dealing with such matters. VH confirmed that there were no issues in repaying the debt. **The Chair of the Corporation requested an update at the Strategic Planning Day that was being held in May 2023.**

Q: Have you had any discussions with the bank yet?

No, we currently do not have a Bank Relationship Manager and the College will be low on the radar in terms of risk. A further update will be provided.

The Chair of the Corporation provided an update from the recent AoC Chairs meeting where it was reported that with the increase in costs and little Government Funding increases the number of

colleges in financial intervention would continue to rise and it was pleasing to see the College had navigated a tight financial year.

Q: How is the AEB being achieved this year?

VH explained that this was a mixed approach with TC leading on Community Provision which is being supported with increased marketing and the curriculum teams driving the AEB. **It was confirmed that there was no planned subcontracting for 2023/24.**

It was reported that the College is slightly behind on Tuition Fees and this will remain a risk.

ii. Update on Capital Bids/projects

An update on Capital Bids and projects was shared in advance of the Corporation meeting. VH explained that the update provided information on current live projects and projects that have recently been completed. It was explained that the College was extremely disappointed with the Transformational Funds allocation. This had impacted on the College Estates Plan that had been previously shared with the Corporation. The College had received £550K from three separate funding avenues but it gave the College no opportunity to invest in the estate. This was disappointing, particularly in relation to the poor category of the Peatfields building.

Q: Where is the IoT up to?

It was explained that the project is continuing to progress. **Planning is currently being assessed and is expected to be approved imminently. The project is planned to begin in September.**

20/23

Teaching and Learning

i. Receive updated College Improvement Plan

The Quality Improvement Plan was shared by the Deputy Principal (LR) in advance of the meeting. The Departmental Plans have been presented by the leads of those areas to LR and the Head of Quality. It was explained that retention is continuing to be monitored. It was reported that 86% of students passed January examinations. 61% of first year Level 3 learners are currently working at or above their ETG. 33% of year 2 BTEC learners are working below their ETG, with the worst performing cohorts being Animal, Sport and Health as identified in the QIP. The attendance figures across the College were shared. It was reported that attendance for 19+ had declined slightly and attendance for 16-18 had increased slightly. Attendance was continuing to be managed. **A new Behaviour Policy will be shared at the Strategic Planning Day that will support the management of attendance.** LR reported that 100% of learners completed placement hours.

Cheshire Business School and the Mindful Monday sessions were being utilised to enhance Leadership and Management across the College. **A strategic conversation has taken place following the CBS Advisory Board meeting and a further update will be provided at the Strategic Planning Day.** The bespoke leadership programmes had proved successful but the membership element had been difficult to grow due to difficulty in recruitment to the sales and marketing role.

LR reported the aims for the final term:

- Drive to final completion.
- Maintain attendance.
- Drive High Target Grades.

Q: Congratulations on the volume of work placements and enrichment activities being completed. It was noted that the QDP results indicate that 81% of study programme learners

agreed that the 'teaching on the course was good'. Are students reporting this in certain curriculum areas or any new areas?

LR explained that the result was an indication of what is also seen through learning walks. This was due to the inability to recruit consistent staff, particularly in construction.

Q: Are there any other inconsistencies that you have seen through learning walks?

There are inconsistencies around marked work and feedback but this has been observed and a support plan has resulted in improvements. Student feedback is continually sought through Student Council feedback and the College displays 'You Said, We Did' posters in every classroom to demonstrate progress.

Q: How many agency staff do we currently have?

LR explained that there were not that many agency staff currently, as a number of staff had been made permanent. It was reported that it had been difficult to recruit to Brick, Business and Construction. VH reported that PTHP and casual members of staff were higher than anticipated, resulting in higher costs. LR reported that there were some good achievements in departments where there was a successful agency member of staff. LR confirmed that there was a new Head of Quality and number of new members of staff that were newly qualified but any areas of concern were being managed.

Q: What is your priority area?

LR reported that Sport remains a priority and although the target in this area won't be met, the aim remains to close as much of the gap as possible.

ii. Destinations

LR provided Governors with the Destinations report in advance of the meeting. It was reported that a larger amount of 16-18 learners had chosen an employment route and this was linked to social drivers.

iii. Report on Learner Progress

LR provided a detailed report on Learner Progress in advance of the meeting.

Retention

Retention for L1 learners and L4 Counselling learners was reported to be lower.

The highest number of withdrawals were in Construction and Sport but this was relative to the size of the cohort.

LR reported on examination outcomes with 426 entries. It was reported that 59 students failed the exam, of which 25 students didn't sit the exam and the remaining were unclassified grades. The unclassified grades were peppered across the curriculum. LR explained that 'Near Pass' is a Pass.

Q: Were there any particular reasons for students not attending the exams?

LR explained that there were a number of reasons but the biggest cohort who missed the exam was due to a snow day and the bus being cancelled.

Progress

LR explained that there were a number of tasks that still needed to be completed. It was reported that Motor Vehicle was currently at 40% completion, as of this morning. Sport is continuing to be managed through robust support plans.

Q: The retention rates reflect the current position but will attendance impact further on the data?

Yes, it will impact but LR confirmed that low attendance of a student did not correlate with a student missing an exam. The College continue to drive the importance of attending examinations and have a number of strategies in place to support increased attendance.

iv. Mid-year Safeguarding Report

The Mid-Year Safeguarding Report was received in advance of the Corporation meeting. **It was explained that the Chair of the Corporation is the Link Governor for Safeguarding and had reviewed the paper in detail at the internal Safeguarding Committee.** It was noted that there are an increasing number of students with needs and increase in complexity. It was confirmed that the number of students with EHCP in Primary Schools were contained within our own reporting and it had been agreed at the internal Safeguarding Committee that the figure would be lifted accordingly.

21/23

Policies

The following policies were reviewed by the Corporation.

- Disciplinary and Capability Procedures for Senior Postholders
- Freedom of Speech Policy
- Lockdown Policy
- Sustainability Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

The policies were approved by the Corporation.

22/23

**Date and time of the next meeting:
Corporation 9 May 2023**

The Strategic Planning Day is taking place at Cranage Hall at 9.45am with an approximate finish at 3.30pm.

23/23

Impact

Governors had found the presentations on Corporate Services, Apprenticeships and Happiness Index Survey to be extremely useful. It was pleasing to note the impact of the Corporate Services developments, including the launch of the new website, improvements to the estate and increase in school partnerships.

A governor commented that he had noted an increase in low level disruptive behaviour during a recent Skills Week. Governors were invited to attend the day to either provide presentations or conduct mock interviews. Governors were thanked for the time they had given to the event. **It was explained that a new Behaviour Policy is being launched for September 2023, following an increase in low level disruption post Covid and students not being college ready. A new 'Will' or a 'Skill' initiative had been introduced in order to improve classroom management. All Teaching staff had received training from Jason Bangbala on challenging poor behaviour and improving classroom management techniques. The new Behaviour Policy and details surrounding the 'Will' or a 'Skill' will be shared with governors in detail at the Strategic Planning Day. Governors offered their support with this.**