

MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE

TUESDAY 4 JULY 2023 – 9.30 AM

VELOCITY

PART I

Clerk: Mrs R Clare

Attendance	MS (Chair of the Corporation), MW, IC, GL, AH, IJ, HT, RK, EK, NS, CJ, JL
Non-Governor attendance	VH
Apologies	RCh, JM, MJN, LR

Action	Responsibility
32/23 A Member confirmed that the Health and Safety audit was remote and questioned whether this should be taken place in person. VH confirmed that she will look for this to be done in person going forward and was a legacy from the pandemic.	VH

MINUTES

- Item 26/23 Title**
Welcome and Apologies for Absence
 The Chair welcomed Members to the final Corporation meeting of the academic year.

 Apologies for absence were received for R Charlton and J Mairs. The two student governors were not in attendance at the meeting.

 The Deputy Principal was not in attendance at the meeting.
- 27/23 Declaration of Members' Interest**
 There were no declarations of Members' interest.
- 28/23 Minutes**
 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 were approved as an accurate record.
- 29/23 Matters arising from the meeting held on 13 June 2023**
 The actions from the meeting held on 13 June 2023 were reviewed.

Governors thanked TC for her detailed report and requested further time to explore LSIP/LEP/stakeholder engagement at the next Strategic Planning Day.	This is scheduled for the Strategic Planning Day.
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The Director of Governance explained that she was conducting a search for an additional Member of the Corporation with Teaching and Learning experience.

This action has been completed and an update will be provided under the item Governance arrangements.

- **Future Governance arrangements**

The Director of Governance provided a full written report on Governance arrangements for 2023/24.

The Chair of the Corporation had given notice of his retirement upon review of his term of office as Chair of the Corporation in May 2024. The Chair of the Corporation last meeting will be 30 April 2024. C Johns will be recommended to be the new Chair of the Corporation and she will shadow the Chair of the Corporation over the next 10 months. C Johns has excellent experience and skill set as a qualified Chartered Accountant, with a career spanning over 23 years in the public and private sectors. As the Audit Code of Practice stipulates that the Chair of the Corporation can not be a Member of the Audit Committee, C Johns will relinquish her role on the Audit Committee. C Johns will become Chair of the Search and Governance Committee and a Member of the Remuneration Committee.

The Director of Governance confirmed that S Horseman had resigned from the Audit Committee, following discussion surrounding low attendance due to increasing work commitments. The Director of Governance thanked S Horseman for her commitment and contribution to the Audit Committee. She had been a real asset to the Audit Committee. The Director of Governance had also contacted another member of the Audit Committee in relation to their attendance. With this in mind, three interviews are scheduled to take place with potential new Audit Committee Members, one of which will also be offered a position on the Corporation upon a successful interview. The potential new governors have outstanding experience and skill set and will be a great addition to the Corporation.

M Wright has indicated that he would like to remain as Vice Chair of the Corporation upon successful review in May 2024. This will provide previous experience and knowledge of Macclesfield College to the new Chair of the Corporation.

A Hunter has confirmed that he would be interested in a Vice Chair position in the future and will be provided with opportunities to shadow the Vice Chair during 2024/25. From September 2024, A Hunter will become Chair of the Remuneration Committee to gain further insight into the work of Macclesfield College and the Corporation.

A successful search has taken place for an additional Member of the Corporation with Teaching and Learning experience. G Crossman will be recommended to be appointed as a Member of the Corporation. G Crossman has a fantastic skill set and is steeped in Quality of Teaching and Learning and will also become the Safeguarding Link Governor.

Resolution: To appoint G Crossman as a Member of the Corporation - approved.

Resolution: To appoint C Johns as Chair of the Corporation designate from September 2024, to become Chair of the Corporation in May 2024, upon the retirement of the current Chair of the Corporation – approved.

Resolution: To review the term off office of M Wright as Vice Chair of the Corporation in May 2024 and upon successful review, appoint M Wright for a further term as Vice Chair of the Corporation – approved.

Resolution: To appoint G Bristow as a Member of the Corporation and Audit Committee. To appoint I Lees as a Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee - approved.

- **Governors to approve a resolution in which they agree to dissolve the Sponsorship Agreement in place with The Macclesfield Academy, when The Macclesfield Academy joins The Sir John Brunner Foundation.**

Following approval at the Regional School's Commissioner meeting for The Macclesfield Academy to join The Sir John Brunner Foundation, the Corporation of Macclesfield College had been requested to dissolve the existing Sponsorship Agreement with The Macclesfield Academy.

Resolution: The Corporation of Macclesfield College voted unanimously to dissolve the Sponsorship Agreement with The Macclesfield Academy, when the Macclesfield Academy joins The Sir John Brunner Foundation.

30/23 Presentations

i. receive report on Staff Survey

MSS joined the meeting for this item only to present the Staff Survey results on the 'New Way of Working and Operational Efficiency Model'. A detailed report was provided on the rationale and structure for the way of working and the benefits of the model for both members of staff and students. The model supported recruitment, attraction and retention. The most recent Staff Survey was conducted in June 2023 and received a 94.9% in favour of continuation of the 'New Way of Working and Operational Efficiency Model'. The Principal explained that she had received interest from a number of other colleges in relation to the way of working.

Q: What financial benefits are there?

The Director of Finance and Estates explained that the benefits included savings for student transport and energy costs. The estates team had also found the Friday on site to be productive. The Principal explained that the way of working supported sustainability and reduced the College carbon footprint. The compact student timetables supported positive behaviour.

Resolution:

The New Way of Working and Operational Efficiency Model was recommended for approval for a further 12-month period. The recommendation was unanimously approved by the Corporation.

ii. receive report on Employer Survey

TCC joined the meeting to present the Employer Survey. The College no longer used the QDP survey but designed its own survey with more appropriate questions in relation to the employer and the apprenticeship provision. TC reported that 56 employers responded to the survey providing a compliance rate of 18%. The positives from the survey and the responses that required further analysis were shared. The actions taken in relation to the survey were shared with the Corporation.

Q: What is your best- and worst-case estimate for end of year apprenticeship figures?

TC confirmed the best case is 64%. This would be 12% above national rate and 3% increase on the previous year and the worst case would be 42%.

Q: Is it the small companies or the large companies that are difficult to engage with?

TC reported that it was a mixture and that relationships were being managed.

Q: Is the recruitment of employers still strong?

Yes, it is still strong.

iii. receive report on Student Survey

The report on Learner Voice was provided in advance of the meeting. A number of questions were raised in relation to the report:

Q: Why has the College moved to an internally designed survey to capture Exit feedback?

The College has made use of an external company (QDP) for a number of years to issue and collate both learner voice and staff voice. A decision was made at the beginning of the year to gather staff voice through The Happiness Index. As a consequence, it meant that the College was paying a reasonable sum of money to issue three surveys per year. As a result of ongoing developments of the Itslearning system, it was decided that the College would undertake a series of pilot questionnaires using this system. This would also allow the College to undertake more regular 'snapshot' questionnaires based on themes which were utilised effectively during the COVID-19 shut down and gave more timely feedback on learner experiences.

Q: Given that there will be no external benchmarking data (with the move to an internal system) how is College performance going to be compared against other Providers?

Given that not all colleges use QDP and the unreliability of the data submitted, the College remains focused on its own performance rather than comparisons to others.

Q: Does the College also intend to use this system for the induction and mid-year surveys?

The College intends to use the internal system for the induction and mid-year surveys. It will review the processes for issuing the questionnaire.

Q: How will the internal system produce similar excellent features as QDP? For example:

- **Being able to quickly identify strengths and weaknesses.**
- **Being able to get a top-level report and see the 'big picture', as well as drill down to curriculum level, course level, etc (slice and dice data accordingly).**
- **Distance travelled reports which provide key evidence of the impact of your actions on the target group.**

The internal system will give the same information as QDP in terms of being able to quickly identify strengths and weaknesses (the data can be captured instantly rather than waiting for the questionnaire to close). The Deputy Principal explained the review of the functionality and the ability to see the data at top level and cut this across curriculum areas. The College will be able to measure distance travelled in terms of percentages dis/agreed for repeat questions.

The following questions were raised in relation to the Exit Survey.

Q: In relation to the responses being limited.

- **How many FT learners responded to the Exit Survey?**
- **How many FT learners responded to the Exit Survey last year?**
- **Why have responses been limited and what is being done to improve this?**
- **No strengths or weaknesses have been provided for this survey – what are they?**
- **What impact has this Exit Survey had on improving the learner experience?**

The survey was issued via an email link to all students rather than being managed within a classroom setting. It was issued later than planned due to MIS problems and as such, curriculum teams were not afforded time to chase completion. Further questionnaires will be issued within timetabled sessions.

Only 86 learners completed the FT exit survey as opposed to 734 last year. Improvements will be seen when the questionnaires are owned in timetabled sessions.

Positive feedback was given to the following questions:

I am achieving what I set out to do – 87%.

The digital learning materials are well organised and available when I need them – 86%.

I am helped to develop my own ideas and work on my own – 84%.

Less positive responses were given for the following questions:

Work experience done through the college has been useful to me – 60%.

I am well informed about what I can do after my study programme – 67%.

The survey responses will be addressed as part of the college-wide quality improvement plan with a revised approach to progression planning and careers workshops.

Q: In relation to “Responses can only be viewed as a ‘whole cohort’ -

- **What do you mean by a ‘whole cohort’?**
- **What are the limitations of only being able to view this as a whole cohort?**

The questionnaire was issued to the whole continuing FT learner cohort. For the pilot, the college could only see the responses as a whole cohort. This does not enable us to see variances by curriculum area. Due to the low response rate, it is likely that some curriculum areas had a nil return. For the induction survey, the College will be able to cut the data by department and then again by course.

31/23 KPIs 2022/23

The KPI document for 2022/23 was shared in advance of the meeting. The following headline information was shared:

- The KPIs for Strategic Objective 1 were as reported through the Financial Management Accounts.

- The number of lesson observations completed was 94%.
- Achievement will be shared at year-end.
- The Retention rates were reported to be the following 91.1% for all ages, 90.6% for 16-18, 92.2% for 19+ and 100% for HE. This was reported to be in line with the national landscape.
- Apprenticeship achievement will be provided at year-end.
- Attendance figures were reported to be 80.4% for 16-18, 84% for 19+, 70.1% for GCSE English and 71.7% for GCSE Maths. This was in line with the school attendance being reported locally.
- Sickness levels were reported to be 2.55%.
- Staff survey engagement was reported to be 76.3% and weekly communication meetings and new way of working were impacting positively on staff engagement.
- Appraisal completion was reported to be 97.9%.
- Staff utilisation was reported to be 94.3%.
- The financial information for Strategic Objective 5 is shared within the financial reporting for item 8 on the agenda.
- The Director of Governance shared Corporation attendance at 71%. It was explained that this would be 76% without the student governors. There had been two governors whose attendance had impacted the overall figure.

Q: How many teaching staff do you have on capabilities?

There is currently under 10 members of staff on capabilities. Probation periods are now passed by ELT and there is a robust system with the skill/will system being introduced.

A question was directed to the Teaching Governor on how they found the skills/will system.

The Teacher Governor confirmed that training had been supportive and helped managers to manage effectively with the fundamentals of classroom management being improved across the organisation.

Q: What was examination attendance like?

The Principal confirmed that examination attendance was increased by 10% upon last year and hopefully this will result in a positive outturn.

Q: In relation to line 10: Retention ALL.

Last year retention dropped by 2.5% between now and the final return.

Are you expecting a similar decline this year?

What is your anticipated best- and worst-case scenario for achievement?

The retention rate from the KPI document will decline marginally as data is validated.

The College is working on a worst case of 80% for FT learners. This is however, dependent upon a number of exam results across a range of provision and the outcomes of GCSE exams.

Q: In relation to Line 4a: HE enrolments.

Actual 22/23 YTD is 28. I raised this with CD in the last meeting and was informed that there are 52 students. However, it is still showing 28.

The College currently has 52 learners enrolled on HE programmes. These learners are either funded through a loan, are employer sponsored, independent fee-paying or are undertaking a qualification as part of an apprenticeship. The 28 that appear on the KPI document are those that are funded through a loan arrangement only. The quality assurance documentation refers to all learners.

Q: In relation to Lines 28 & 29: English and maths.

Actual 22/23 YTD is green. It is below target so why is it green?

The lines have been highlighted green on account of the fact that the attendance rate shows an improvement on the attendance rates at the same point last academic year. The final column has been highlighted red as it still remains under the college target.

The Chair of the Corporation confirmed that he had attended the Art Exhibition and the work being showcased was outstanding.

Resolution: The KPI document was approved by the Corporation.

32/23 Audit Committee

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023.

Members should note the formal recommendations made under the Audit Committee minutes. They are invited to:

i. approve the Audit needs assessment – the Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 – 2024/25 including the Internal Audit Strategy

Resolution: The Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 – 2024/25 was approved.

ii. approve the External Audit Plan

Resolution: The External Audit Plan was approved.

The Chair of the Audit Committee reported that during the Cyber Security improvements to passwords was flagged and the IT Team are currently exploring this. The Director of Finance and Estates had raised the timeliness of the closing meetings with the internal auditors and this has been improved. The top-level risks continue to be managed effectively.

Q: Do you have a penetration report for Cyber Security?

Yes.

Q: Do you have Cyber Insurance?

Yes.

A Member confirmed that the Health and Safety audit was remote and questioned whether this should be taken place in person. VH confirmed that she will look for this to be done in person going forward and was a legacy from the pandemic.

33/23 Business

i. receive the College accounts for the period ended May 2023

The Director of Finance Estates shared the management accounts for the period ended May 2023. The headlines on page 3 of the report were shared. It was explained at the previous meeting that the College was in between Good and Requires Improvement for the financial grade. There was £100K difference between the two grades. The year-end position will not be known until 31 July 2023, however based on the assumptions made, the College position could change from Good to Requires Improvement. The apprenticeship target is still being worked on; however, it is likely that the College will end the year on the financial grade Requires Improvement. The EBITDA (surplus) is impacting the position. The financial position in August will quickly change back to a strong Good, so the grading of Requires Improvement will just be the year-end position.

Q: Has the College heard from Allied Irish Bank?

No, however the information for the bank covenant has been submitted.

ii. Forecast Financial outturn 2022/23, Budget 2023/24 and Plan 2024/25

The Director Finance and Estates presented the commentary for the three-year College Financial Plan to 31 July 2025. It was explained that there was a large spreadsheet that would be submitted alongside the commentary to the ESFA. The following main points from the plan were shared with governors:

- For 2022/23 the plan was modelled with Requires Improvement.
- The introduction shows the College position for 2023/24 and the context of changes since the last financial plan.
- The KPIs are RAG rated based on the ESFA requirements.
- For 2024/25 the pay costs are at 65% and RAG rated amber. This is due to A level provision being explored and it being more expensive, driving increased costs.

- For 2024/25 the forecast has remained the same with the College taking a prudent approach in case the growth does not materialise.
- The apprenticeship target is £3.0M.
- The AEB has remained the same as the college is expecting to deliver this in full.
- For 2024/25 the subcontracting has been removed.
- Included in the budget is the 5% pay increase for all members of staff, including a non-consolidated payment of £500. The following year a 1% pay increase is included.
- The pension rate is currently unknown but savings may need to be mitigated to cover the costs.
- The cash flow remains stable throughout the duration of the plan.
- The cash days is at 25 throughout the duration of the plan.
- The capital money including the IoT is included, in addition to the £666K for the last round of the T-level works.
- On page 7 the risks and factors are shared which include the apprenticeship income, pension rate, cost of living, ONS reclassification, inflation and bank covenant.
- The figures in this plan will not change before being submitted to the ESFA, except for the new T Level works which need to be modelled through the plan.

The Corporation thanked the Director of the Finance and Estates for her detailed report.

Resolution: The Corporation approved Forecast Financial Outturn 2020/23, Budget 2023/24, Plan 2024/25 and Supporting Commentary to the CFFR

iii. Debt write off

The Director of Finance and Estates explained that as outlined in the Financial Regulations (4.5 the collection of debts), all requests to write-off debts over £1,000 must be referred in writing to the Principal and Chief Executive. Requests to write-off debts in excess of £10,000 must be approved by the Corporation (This applies to individual debts and to a group of debts where the total exceeds the thresholds outlined above).

At the Audit Committee meeting in November 2018, it was agreed that an annual report would be submitted to corporation detailing all debts to be written off, regardless of value, for which corporation approval would be sought.

For 2022/23 there are 10 debts which require approval for write off. All of these debts are fully covered by the bad debt provision within the college accounts. They are all student debts. In line with the college's Tuition Fee Policy, the learners were liable for the fees and the college pursued the collection of these debts via the debt collection agency used by the College.

Governors were asked to approve the total debt of £14,300.80.

Resolution: The Corporation approved the debt of £14,300.80.

34/23 Policies

The following policies were approved by the Corporation:

- Grievance Policy for Senior Postholders 2023-25
- IT Acceptable Use Policy – Social Media 2023-24
- Paternity Leave and Parent Leave Policy 2023-24
- Discretionary Learner Support Fund – Students aged 16-18 years 2023-24
- Discretionary Learner Support Fund – Students aged 19+ years 2023-24
- Advanced Learning Loan Bursary 2023-24

35/23 Date and time of the next meeting

Ofsted Preparation meeting 10 October 2023, at 9.30am

The Director of Governance confirmed the Ofsted Preparation Group will be M Sharples, C Johns, G Lagan and G Crossman. Only the attendees listed will be required to attend this meeting.

Strategic Planning morning and Corporation 17 October 2023, at 9.30am

This will be the first Corporation meeting of the academic year.

Impact of the meeting

Governors thanked V Hayhoe for the detailed financial reporting and prudent approach to the year-end financial position which was communicated openly and transparently.

Signed by the Chair of the Corporation: