



**THE CORNWALL COLLEGE GROUP**

**Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting**

**held on 4 December 2023 at 4pm at St Austell Campus and on Teams**

<b>Governors Present</b>			Jonathan Mashen	JM	
Lee Charnock	LC		Patrick Newberry	PN	(Chair of the Board)
John Evans	JE	(Principal and CEO)	Nik Ramsay-Trease	NRT	
Toby Duffield	TD		Geoff Warring	GW	
Michael Hamblay	MH		Sarah Watts	SW	
Wilf Hudson	WH		Pat Wilde	PW	
Kathryn James	KJ		Ellen Winser	EW	
<b>In Attendance</b>					
Adrian Ford	AF	Group Deputy Principal Group Operations			
Mark Wardle	MW	Group Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality			
Tian Bersey	TB	Clerk to the Governors			

	<b>PRE BOARD SESSION</b> CCMS update and longer term strategic vision presented by Adrian Ford (DPGO) and Tony Marshall (Managing Director of Concorde).	
1	<b>WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> The Chair welcomed Nik Ramsay-Trease to her first Board Meeting as a Student Governor and acknowledged that this would be Karen Burrows' last meeting as she steps down from the role of Governor at the end of her Term of Office. The Governors paid tribute to Karen and thanked her for the huge contribution she had made to the Board and the College Group over 10 years.  Apologies were received from Will Charnley and Penny Mathers. The Chair congratulated Will on the birth of his third child.  There were no further declarations of interest to those contained on the Register of Interests.	
2	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
2.1	<b>Minutes</b> The minutes and confidential minutes of the Board meeting on 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 were agreed to be an accurate reflection of the meeting and were approved by the Board. The confidential minutes of the meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 will come to the next meeting.	
2.2	<b>Matters Arising report</b> The matters arising report was received.  Item 5.1 from the March 2023 meeting: It was proposed and agreed that a presentation on RBS links with the HE and Land Based Strategy should form part of the Strategy Day Agenda in January.	

<p>3</p>	<p><b>STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND CORNWALL COLLEGE STUDENT UNION (CCSU) UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Director of Student Experience joined the meeting and reported that she is in the process of gathering information through an induction survey, learner voice forums and general feedback. The majority of students are feeling safe and supported. It is however important to drill down into the small percentage who reported differently. The majority of students have also reported that their course is helping them for the future but areas of improvement have been identified in terms of career end. Challenges with the curriculum have been addressed quickly. The team is taking a targeted approach to working with students.</p> <p>38 of the 96 CCSU positions have been filled with good engagement from the Bicton and Falmouth campuses this year. The new constitution is currently under consultation and the CCSU wanted a campus focused union with learner voice and courses representatives as an integral part. All chairs and vice chairs will come together before the end of the term.</p> <p>Governors asked if there were courses that have a heavy influence on the CCSU, about marketing strategies and that the CCSU officers didn't lose sight of going to other campuses.</p> <p>The Chair noted the feedback from the students and the CCSU, that it was a good sign of a healthy community and looked forward to hearing more.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p><b>STAFF FORUM UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Director of People and Culture joined the meeting and reported that the staff forum is made up of representatives from every campus, focuses on systems and enables feedback. The Principal and Director of People and Culture attend and it allows them to sense check things, most recently the date when December salaries are paid. It facilitates inter campus problem solving. The introduction of the cascade system of communications from the Executive Leadership Team to staff members has reduced the agenda for staff forum meetings.</p> <p>The staff governors commented that the forum is a handy place to take a question and seek advice from other campuses and that it is a more positive forum than previously. Minutes are available on Insight, the staff intranet. Finding staff to join the forum can be challenging.</p> <p>Action: JN will send Insight link to governors so they can have sight of the minutes.</p>	<p>JN</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>STRATEGY</b> <b>People Strategy</b></p> <p>The Director of People and Culture presented Our People Strategy 2024 – 2027 for approval. She highlighted that the consultation, which included webinars, live teams calls and a staff questionnaire, was supported by Alison Glover. The key areas that were identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay and pay parity</li> <li>• Flexible working and interest in hybrid working</li> <li>• Training: Professional staff would like more training as a team, teachers would like to understand the latest developments in their subject.</li> </ul> <p>The Unions have requested that the equity plan is appended to the strategy.</p> <p>Governors highlighted the interrelatedness and interdependence of the people strategy and equity plan for example in the gender pay gap. They also highlighted the need to avoid working in silos and join up work within and across the College for both learners and staff. The Director of People and Culture will now lead on the Equity Plan and recognises the need to support this.</p> <p>Action: PW, KJ and JN will meet to discuss this further.</p> <p>Governors noted that the strategy will be refreshed every three years and that elements are reliant on government funding.</p>	

	<p>A governor noted the progress made in bringing learner data to the Board and asked if staff data would now follow. The Director of People and Culture outlined the data that existed and how it was currently used.</p> <p>The Board approved the strategy, subject to the above discussion taking place. The Board would like a progress report in 12 months' time.</p> <p><b>CCMS (outcome from pre Board)</b> Following an update and a presentation on the long term vision for Concorde Governors welcomed the impact of the new Managing Director and considered the options for the future.</p> <p>A Governor emphasised the need for the CCMS Board to discuss succession planning and expressed concern about the capacity of the Managing Director to also take on elements of the Director of Business, Innovation and Partnerships' role.</p> <p>Governors agreed to keep the subsidiary; monitor future investment and results and keep the decision under review.</p> <p>The Chair expressed the Board's thanks to all the staff at Concorde for the transformation.</p>	
<p>6 6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p><b>PRINCIPAL AND CE'S REPORT</b></p> <p><b>Principal's Report</b> The Board received the Principal's Report. The Principal highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment has started for a Head of HE and International recognising that the Deputy Principal for Growth is on a fixed term contract.</li> <li>• A call with the Department for Education is scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> December to discuss the outcomes for the Penhaligon Building.</li> <li>• A copy of the FE Commissioners' Report will be shared with governors when it arrives but happy that Fresh Start 2018 has been signed off as complete.</li> <li>• Thanks to governors who attended the Operational Leadership Team Away days. The presentation on meeting industry needs has changed people's thinking.</li> <li>• Pride at the graduation, the launch of the Cornwall College University Centre logo and thanks to the Vice Chair for stepping in to speak.</li> </ul> <p>The Principal also reported that he had contacted the Head of Cornwall Council following the signing of the Devolution Bill to discuss the adult education budget which will move to the Council in 2025.</p> <p><b>Operating Statement</b> The Board reviewed the actions in the Operating Statement which were RAG rated as amber or red.</p> <p>A governor raised the need to have a strategy for working with Cornwall Council.</p> <p>A governor reported that the FE Commissioners had raised that the College did not have a Head of Land based to deliver the land based strategy. Governors recognised that land based activities were 40% of the business and asked who would lead land based activities following the departure of the Deputy Vice Principal for Growth and asked how quickly the land based strategy presented by the Director of Land based Operations could be delivered. The Principal outlined his current thinking on the future structure and detailed the challenges that had been experienced to date in recruiting from the agriculture and agricultural engineering sectors in order to deliver the strategy. Governors discussed and acknowledged the challenges and emphasised the need for a strategist who would have the bandwidth to work through these challenges going forward. The Board agreed to incubate the discussion until the Board Strategy Day in January 2024 and use the day to test plans.</p>	<p>JE/PN</p>

<p>6.3</p>	<p><b>Risk Register Update</b></p> <p>The Board reviewed the Risk Register. The register had also been reviewed at the Operational Leadership Team’s strategy day with some governors in attendance and at the Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>The Group Deputy Principal Group Operations highlighted the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The increased number of high needs students is considered positive but will have an impact on the attainment gap (1.2) unless further mitigations are implemented.</li> <li>• A modest pay award has reduced the staff retention risk (2.1) slightly.</li> <li>• An increase in mitigations for increased mental ill health and poor wellbeing among students. (2.2)</li> <li>• Positive enrolment figures reducing scoring in a number of areas and giving confidence in financial results.</li> </ul> <p>New risks had also been added to the register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk to the College Group if foundation awarding powers are not retained.</li> <li>• Risks surrounding the introduction of an international provision.</li> <li>• The discovery of dry rot in Bicton House.</li> <li>• Risks surrounding the defunding of some qualifications.</li> </ul> <p>The Governors noted plans to reformat the register.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p><b>SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)</b></p> <p>The Board considered the Self Assessment Report. The Deputy Group Principal Curriculum and Quality reported that the majority of governors had been involved in the assessment process and had input. He highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The data available has improved.</li> <li>• The curriculum is assessed to be good. Good is a wide band and have the aspiration to be outstanding, the operating plan picks up actions and each curriculum area has an action plan.</li> <li>• Whilst many English and Maths courses are above the national average, too few learners achieve their qualifications. Additional capacity is being sought to increase consistency.</li> <li>• Foundation Learning requires improvement at Bicton and Stoke and a clear plan is in place for a CAM at both campuses.</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed the definition of high needs learners; using funding effectively; community consultation; use of employer advisory boards and the broader skills that learners need to become effective employees.</p> <p>The Board approved the Self Assessment Report.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p><b>SUBCONTRACTING UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Board reviewed the subcontracting update. The Vice Principal Data, Funding and Compliance joined the meeting and highlighted the following from his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant issues to report</li> <li>• No concerns following the first teaching reviews</li> <li>• Some delays in submitting policies and marking registers but now resolved and will continue to monitor closely</li> <li>• Finances are as expected</li> <li>• The Skills Network have reported a financial loss for last year and will therefore be monitored. A governor noted that 52% of funds had been already paid to them. They provide short online courses.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding update</li> </ul> <p>The Board thanked PR for the report and were reassured by the detail and the monitoring taking place.</p>	
<p>10 10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p><b>ANNUAL REPORTS</b></p> <p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <p>The Board received the Health and Safety Report which had been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>The Deputy Head of Estates, who will now lead on Health and Safety, attended the meeting to answer any questions.</p> <p>The governors were encouraged by increased accident reporting thanks to the training on the new system that had been delivered but also noted that the number of RIDDOR reports remained static.</p> <p>A governor asked about the increase in Bicton and reduction in Stoke RIDDOR reports. It was suggested that following a serious incident at Stoke during the previous year more focus may have been placed on health and safety. The Deputy Head of Estates will follow up. He would like to start benchmarking and compare like for like sites and create a more unified approach and improved understanding of root causes.</p> <p>The Chair thanked MWr for his report.</p> <p>A governor wanted to check that the addition of the Health and Safety remit for the Deputy Head of Estates would not reduce any focus on sustainability at the College. It was confirmed that the strategic lead in both areas would sit with the Deputy Head of Estates and that other roles would pick up the operational aspects.</p> <p><b>Equity</b></p> <p>The Board received the Annual Equity Report</p> <p>The Director of People and Culture reported on the need to develop a clear set of meaningful KPIs to hold to account and report on annually.</p> <p>The governors discussed the plans to develop staff data in Power BI, in order to be able to see the impact of actions on diversity and analyse staff feedback and grievances to monitor equity.</p> <p>A governor highlighted that the Self Assessment Review places the College Group as an important player in seeking to achieve equity in Cornwall and therefore asked if there were aspects missing in the report such as admissions and outreach - reaching prospective learners who don't think the College is for them, and what capacity the College Group wanted to put into this. Examples of community involvement were discussed along with the challenges posed by the deficit of numeracy and literacy.</p> <p>The Governor also highlighted the link to safeguarding and how the College is responding and developing its support.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Director of People and Culture for the report and highlighted the Board's desire to reach out to learners who do not think the College is for them.</p>	<p>MWr</p>
<p>11 11.1.1</p>	<p><b>REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OR SUBSIDIARIES</b></p> <p><b>Finance and Resources Committee Chair report</b></p> <p>The Board received the report from the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee.</p>	

<p>11.1.2</p>	<p><b>Financial Regulations</b>                  The Financial Controller joined the meeting. He outlined for the Board the key changes in the financial regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to the levels where tenders are required following feedback from the internal audit of procurement which highlighted that the levels were lower than the industry average. The tender limit will increase to £75k and orders above £10k will need 3 quotes.</li> <li>• The other updates relate to the ONS reclassification.</li> </ul> <p>A governor noted that following reclassification borrowing powers were now redundant. It was confirmed that borrowing powers had changed but further clarification was needed in this area.</p> <p>The Board approved the Financial Regulations.</p>	<p>MD/AF</p>
<p>11.2.1</p>	<p><b>Audit and Risk Committee Chair report including External Auditors Appointment</b>                  The Board received the report from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. The Board approved the reappointment of Bishop Fleming as financial statements auditors for 2023/24.</p>	
<p>11.2.2</p>	<p><b>Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/2023</b>                  The Board received the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2022/2023 and noted a second level annual audit opinion of an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control with further enhancements identified to ensure it remains adequate and effective. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee emphasised that without the enhancements needed in the area of procurement application the audit opinion would have been the highest level. Outstanding matters are all in progress. Minimal points were raised in the recent report on curriculum planning and budget setting processes. No work has started in the current year but this is in line with agreed timescales.</p> <p><b>External audit findings report relating to the Financial Statements and reporting on regularity, letter of representation</b>                  The Board welcomed Craig Sullivan from Bishop Fleming to the meeting. He reported that he had presented the audit findings to the Audit and Risk Committee. The changes in regulations / new requirements on spending public money had been reviewed. All outstanding matters have been actioned and the audit has been completed. No adjustment has been made for RAAC but a disclosure has been made in the accounts. A going concern review and review of sensitivities in cash flows has been completed. There were minimal audit adjustments and control findings which provides assurance to governors. The auditors gave an unqualified audit opinion.</p>	
<p>11.2.3</p>	<p>The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee reported on a very good audit process following detailed planning and adjusting the timeline. The control points are an extension of that process by asking for all adjustments that are in the direct control of management to be included in the workbook before submission to the auditors. He also highlighted how the pension surplus had been accounted for, recognising the movement due to increased bond rates but not the asset which is in common with the sector.</p> <p>The Chair thanked CS and MD for their work on the audit.</p>	
<p>11.2.4</p>	<p><b>Cornwall College Group Financial Statements 2022/23</b>                  The Board approved the Cornwall College Group Financial Statements for 2022/23 which included the financial statements for Cornwall College, CCMS (2000) Ltd and CCES Ltd.</p>	
<p>11.2.5</p>	<p><b>Audit &amp; Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23</b>                  The Board approved the Audit &amp; Risk Committee Annual Report for 2022/23.</p>	

11.2.6	<p><b>Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire</b> The Board approved the Regularity Self Assessment Questionnaire for 2022/23.</p>	
11.3.1	<p><b>Curriculum and Quality Committee Chair report</b> The C&amp;Q Committee Chair verbally reported that the committee had reviewed and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Self Assessment Review</li> <li>• the 10 year Curriculum Strategy which will be on the agenda for the Board Strategy Day in January 2024</li> <li>• Student outcomes noting improvements at every Campus</li> <li>• Enrolments</li> <li>• Safeguarding matters</li> <li>• the increased number of elected home educated learners</li> </ul>	
11.4.1	<p><b>HE Committee Chair Report</b> The HE Committee Chair verbally reported that the committee had reviewed and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Curriculum Strategy and noted that it involved pausing provision in certain areas and creating new routes in land based</li> <li>• the application to renew Foundation Degree Awarding Powers and gain Bachelor Degree Awarding Powers and indications from the Office for Students were that this would be a desk based exercise</li> <li>• a silver rating from the Teaching Excellence Framework panel, the full report is available to governors on Teams</li> </ul>	
11.5.1	<p><b>Search and Governance Committee Chair Report</b> The November meeting had been cancelled.</p>	
12 12.1  12.2  12.3	<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b> <b>Beyond the Boardroom (BTB)</b> None to report.</p> <p><b>Board appointment</b> The Chair reported that following the search by Peridot Partners a suitable candidate who works for Cormac Ltd had been identified. A resolution would be sent around after the meeting to seek the Board’s approval of the appointment.</p> <p>The Chair has also scheduled a meeting with a prospective candidate who works for a regional firm of architects and a women in construction award winner following a successful interview with PW and WH.</p> <p><b>External Board Review timescale</b> The Chair informed the Board that a scoping meeting would take place on 11<sup>th</sup> December. The review would be conducted by the same person as the last review.</p>	PN / TB
	<p><b>INFORMATION SECTION</b> Minutes of Board Committee meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum and Quality (22/11/2023)</li> <li>• Finance and Resources (13/11/2023)</li> <li>• HE (23/11/2023)</li> </ul>	
13	<p><b>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 31 Jan 2024, Board Strategy Day, followed by a short Board meeting (Board Dinner)</li> <li>▪ 20 March 2024, 4-6pm, following a 2-4pm pre Board</li> <li>▪ 1 May 2024, 4-6pm, Board Strategy Day, followed by a short Board meeting</li> <li>▪ 10 July 2024, 4-6pm, following a 2-4pm pre Board</li> </ul>	