



THE CORNWALL COLLEGE GROUP

Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Friday 21 March at 10am at the St Austell Campus

Governors Present

Patrick Newberry	PN	Chair	Jonathan Mashen	JM
Rob Bosworth	RB	Principal & CE	Glayne Price	GP
Will Charnley	WC		Nik Ramsay Trease	NRT
Lee Charnock	LC		Mark Rands	MR
Laurina Fox Smith	LFS		Geoff Warring	GW
Michael Hambly	MH		Sarah Watts	SW
Josephine John	JJ		Pat Wilde	PW Vice Chair
Tom Mainwaring	TME			
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In Attendance

Mark Wardle	MW	Group Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality
Tian Bersey	TB	Clerk to Governors
Rory Mason	RM	Vice Principal Quality of Education for item 4.2
Mathew Davies	MD	Finance Director (Interim) for item 4.3
Jayne Ninnies	JN	Director of People & Culture for item 6.6.2
Lisa Pill	LP	Director of Estates and Capital for item 8

1	WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and celebrated the team efforts to achieve the outstanding Ofsted result.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Kathryn James and Ellen Winsor. The Board sent its best wishes to Kathryn.</p> <p>There were no further interests to declare.</p>	
2	MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING Minutes <p>The minutes and confidential minutes of the Board meetings on 11 December 2024 and 31 January 2025 were agreed to be an accurate reflection of the meetings and were approved by the Board.</p>	
2.1		
2.2	Matters Arising report <p>The Board received the Matters Arising Report noting that all matters were either complete or on the agenda.</p>	
3	CHAIR'S UPDATE Meeting with Truro & Penwith College <p>The Chair reported on discussions at a recent meeting with the Principal and Chair of Truro and Penwith College and in particular a proposal to move from a curriculum split between the two colleges to a place based approach. A governor suggested that it would be useful to hear more about the differentiation and cross over between the two colleges as the place base approach developed.</p>	

	<p>South West Institute of Technology (SWIoT)</p> <p>The Chair reported that he had used Chair's powers to withdraw the College from the SWIoT. Having been prohibited from joining when it was set up the College had hoped to gain benefits including access to funding and partnerships by joining but had received none. With the next invoice due imminently it was considered prudent to withdraw. The Board were asked to formally ratify the decision which was agreed.</p> <p>The Chair reflected on the difficult paradox between Ofsted outstanding and the current cash flow challenges.</p>	
4	<p>OPERATIONAL MATTERS</p>	
4.1	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>The Principal highlighted the following from his written report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The feedback from the publication of the Ofsted report has been overwhelming. This will be collated and shared. It is important to maintain integrity and focus promotion on 'your outstanding local college' rather than any comparison to other colleges. ▪ The College is trying to fund growth and green shoots are emerging. Apprenticeship and full cost income are improving. Application numbers are tracking well in all but HE where there is a gap to fill. The Ofsted result will have further impact. <p>The Principal also reported on the development of a new risk register working with the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee which will be presented at the away days.</p> <p>The Principal reported that a number of subscriptions have drifted and are being reviewed to assess impact. A governor noted that this is probably a hangover from the pre social media era. The Principal emphasised the work being done to review spending and to drive the culture and effective use of resources at every level of the organisation. This was welcomed and supported by governors.</p> <p>Further confidential discussions are recorded in the confidential minutes.</p>	
4.2	<p>OFSTED Presentation</p> <p>Governors received a presentation from the Group Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality and the Vice Principal Quality of Education on detailed feedback from the Ofsted inspectors. They emphasised the historic achievement for the College and benchmarked the grade nationally and in the South West.</p> <p>They reported more than usual references to governors in the final report recognising use of skills and experience and support to improve weaker areas. The Chair paid tribute to the Vice Chair and Chair of Curriculum and Quality for their contributions to the governor meetings with Ofsted and the Vice Principal Quality of Education for the briefings beforehand.</p> <p>The College successfully managed to differentiate itself from other Colleges, emphasising less students taking level 3 for example, and also the impact of the education delivered on local communities. The diverse and complicated nature of the group makes the result even more of an achievement.</p> <p>Ofsted emphasised in their feedback that the College has skills in its DNA and is highly responsive to employers and stakeholders; has high expectations of learners and effective systems in place to monitor learner progress (BRAG) and that inspectors were impressed by the safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>The College could demonstrate improved achievement rates and will continue to drive achievement forward by focusing on areas for improvement. This includes consistency in maths and English; theory teaching in vocational lessons and streamlining monitoring of progress in apprenticeships.</p>	

4.3	<p>Governors asked questions on and discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The incubator journey from industry expert to teacher ▪ Correlations in achievement rates and campuses ▪ Leadership and quality by campus ▪ The impact of increasing numbers in high needs on income and quality ▪ The new Ofsted framework with increased emphasis on inclusion ▪ The depth and integrity of the Skills Cycle ▪ The importance of the result for Cornwall <p>The Principal and the Chair commended the Group Deputy Principal and the Vice Principal on their leadership and management of the process.</p> <p>A staff governor commented on how the result has invigorated staff and an external governor commented on how the achievement had been highlighted by the company he works for.</p> <p>Financial Update</p> <p>The Principal thanked the Director of Finance for the extensive work on the finances and was pleased to report that the Director of Finance has been offered and accepted the position on a permanent basis.</p> <p>The Principal presented a financial update with cash flow implications which had also been presented to the DfE on 20 March 2025.</p> <p>Challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ late information from the DfE ▪ a £200k reduction to in-year funding for 16-18 ▪ support for the increase in national insurance contribution will not be paid until September 2025 (400k) ▪ Penhaligon funds will be restricted ▪ allocation of £50m in announced additional funding not yet known ▪ no further announcement on capital funding to date <p>Cash flow continues to be very carefully planned and managed.</p> <p>The Principal presented early indications for 2025/26 including a £2.3m increase in funding for 16-18, staffing costs, plans to keep overall non-pay budget static and an EBITA of £1.7m.</p> <p>A governor asked about the likely end of year position and the Principal presented a waterfall chart summarising the current situation and forecasted year end position.</p> <p>The Director of Finance reported on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which is in a triannual valuation year and the discussions taking place with Cornwall Council.</p> <p>Governors asked questions on and discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No announcement on national insurance contributions beyond April 2026. ▪ The transfer of Penhaligon. ▪ Other capital funding allocations and if these will be paid upfront. ▪ Confirmation that any possible relief from LGPS is not included in the cashflow which is correct. <p>The Principal outlined the work taking place to establish a better culture of cost management. Budgets will sit with Heads of Campus going forward who will have access to a PowerBI report on expenditure to support the management of costs and budget. Governors emphasised the need for staff to understand the importance of cost management. The Principal meets regularly with College Leadership Team members and they cascade relevant information. The Finance Team are</p>	
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	<p>also adopting a new approach. The Board welcomed efforts to establish a new cost conscious culture. A governor asked if payment cards were in circulation and they are not.</p> <p>The Board discussed creditors and the importance of managing relationships with suppliers.</p> <p>The Director of Finance reported on efforts to reduce debtors and in particular 3 large debts to the College.</p> <p>The governors thanked the Principal and Director of Finance for the comprehensive update and extensive work on the College's finances.</p>	
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p>	<p>STRATEGIC MATTERS</p> <p>Update on College Strategy Process</p> <p>The Principal reported that the process is now at the consultation stage. Staff and student consultations will focus on three areas: world class; life changing and place based. The consultation with governors will take place at the Away Days. The Chair encouraged engagement, input and challenge from governors.</p> <p>Following consultation, the Executive Leadership Team will populate the detail. It will come back to the governors for final feedback and be launched in October/November 2025.</p> <p>Opportunities & Development Register</p> <p>The Principal presented the Ops and Devs register and emphasised that ambition must not exceed capacity.</p> <p>The Board noted that the Student Accommodation at St Austell (no.3) will now be retired and Degree Awarding Powers (no. 8) are awaiting final approval.</p> <p>The Principal reported that plans for A-levels at St Austell and the relationship with CELT are progressing well.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.1.1</p> <p>6.1.2</p>	<p>REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OR SUBSIDIARIES</p> <p>Finance and Resources Committee</p> <p>Chair's Report</p> <p>The Chair presented his report highlighting the amount of work completed by the executive; that meetings are currently dominated by the current cash position and the dynamic context in which the College is operating. The Board received the minutes of the PIMS meeting on 14 February 2025.</p> <p>Approvals</p> <p>The Board approved expenditure for the lease of a data centre over 5 years. The data centre is out of date and must be replaced. A governor asked if this lease can be counted as capital spend but it cannot.</p> <p>The Board also approved an amendment to the Finance and Resources Committee Terms of Reference which changes the number of Board members on the Committee from 'up to 3 Board members appointed by the Board' to 'a minimum of 3 Board members appointed by the Board' in order to improve recent challenges with the quorum.</p> <p>The Chair of the Board asked members to ensure they attend committee meetings which are important because more has been delegated to committees for scrutiny. He questioned whether the change in dates mid year had impacted attendance. Two finance committee members indicated that the change of times had supported their attendance. Another governor highlighted problems with the outlook calendar and meeting invitations and others agreed. A governor expressed concern at the number of times that he had to sign in and go through authentication. Problems with IT will be followed up as an action point. A governor suggested</p>	

	the creation of a What's App group to notify governors when meeting papers and important emails are sent out. It was agreed that this would be useful.	PN/TB
6.2	Audit & Risk Committee	
6.2.1	Chair's Report The Chair presented his report highlighting that an updated risk management framework will be presented at the Board Away Days for feedback and the proposal outlining the scope of an additional governance review by the internal auditors which was included in the meeting pack.	
6.3	Curriculum & Quality Committee	
6.3.1	Chair's Report The Chair presented her report highlighting a granular watch on KPIs; apprenticeships are now on track to meet income targets; the Government has announced a 2% funding cut to adult learning which will impact the college as the biggest provider in Cornwall and an updated application and interview process for Elective Home Education (EHE) students that improves the applicant experience and supports management of increased numbers.	
6.3.2	Committee Terms of Reference The Chair presented new terms of reference which had been further updated since the Committee meeting to take into account the closing of the Joint ELT/Governor Strategy Group on Safeguarding, SEND and Equity. The Board approved the new Terms of Reference. A staff governor raised the number of missing registers. The Group Deputy Principal explained that this is challenged and chased on a daily basis and the Vice Principal Quality of Education follows up if there is no improvement. The number is not high compared to many colleges. The Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee reported that attendance in 16-18 and English and maths had been scrutinised at the meeting.	
6.4	HE Committee	
6.4.1	Chair's Report The Chair presented her report highlighting the development of a Self Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan for HE. The Committee also recommended the HE Fees and Group Fees Policy 2026/27 for approval.	
6.4.2	HE Fees for approval The Group Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality explained that the fee proposal included the permitted inflationary increase for new students only. Wider changes to fees have been discussed and will be taken forward in due course. The Board approved the HE Fees and Group Fees Policy 2026/27.	
6.5	Joint ELT/Governor Strategy Group on Safeguarding, SEND and Equity	
6.5.1	Chair's update The Chair presented her written report highlighting the dissolution of the group and thanking members for their participation and collaboration.	
6.5.2	Gender Pay Gap Report The Chair welcomed the Director of People and Culture to the meeting and thanked her and the HR Manager for their work on the savings programme. The Director of People and Culture presented the Gender Pay Gap Report highlighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No change over the time that the gap has been monitored. ▪ The impact of the College not outsourcing many services such as catering and cleaning which are largely female dominated roles and often outsourced by other Colleges. ▪ The number of teachers in the top quartile which has increased. ▪ The increases in national living wage has raised up lower quartiles. ▪ Market premiums are needed and awarded in hard to fill roles that are largely dominated by males. Efforts have been made to promote female appointments in these areas. 	

<p>6.6</p> <p>6.6.1</p> <p>6.6.2</p> <p>6.6.3</p>	<p>The Board thanked the Director for her report and supported the strategies in the report to support female career advancement. A governor highlighted the need to promote STEM subjects to girls from an early age and that the College may have a stronger influence as an educator than an employer. The Principal reported that the Head of St Austell Campus sits on the Cradle-to-Career group. The Director of People and Culture reported on the females in engineering day with primary schools. The governor also emphasised the importance of the flip side and encouraging males into traditionally female dominated careers. The Chair welcomed all that was being done on the education side.</p> <p>Chairs Committee</p> <p>Chair's report</p> <p>The Board received the search and governance report from the Chairs Committee.</p> <p>Appointment of Simon Nicholson</p> <p>The Board approved the appointment of Simon Nicholson to the Board for a four year term and as a member of the Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p>Schools Governor</p> <p>The Chair outlined for the Board the role of a Schools Governor: a senior school leader in Cornwall appointed on a rolling 2 year basis to provide a schools perspective on Board business. Candidates will be invited based on the context of current priorities which will be the move back to a-levels in the first instance. The Chair sought the Board's agreement on the principle and the process which was received. The Chairs will recommend a candidate to the Board for appointment.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>BEYOND THE BOARDROOM</p> <p>The Chair reported that the planned campus visit to Bicton will be rearranged. Invitations have recently been sent for the Groundbreaking Event for the new St Austell Campus and the Shining Star Awards.</p> <p>A governor reported that she had recently completed a course at Rosewarne and would encourage governors to sign up for a short course as it is the ideal way to experience the College.</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Collateral warranties for St Austell New Build</p> <p>The Director of Estates and Capital joined the meeting. The Board approved the signing of the collateral warranties distributed with the meeting pack by the Chair of the Board and the Principal.</p> <p>The Board also approved the signing of any future collateral warranties relating to the St Austell New Build by the Chair of the Board and Principal. The Chair indicated that anything unusual would be shared with the Board before approval.</p> <p>Extension for Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) projects with Cornwall Council</p> <p>The Director of Estates and Capital sought approval for the extension of four SPF projects for another 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction Skills Hub ▪ Future is Green ▪ Unlocking Potential Business Support ▪ Agri-Carbon Kernow <p>The Board approved the extension of the above projects and the signing of any project documentation by the Chair of the Board and the Principal.</p> <p>A staff governor reported on the completion of the T-level building at Rosewarne.</p>	

9	INFORMATION SECTION The Board received the following documents:	
9.1	Minutes of Board Committee Meetings Audit and Risk (3/2/25) Curriculum and Quality (27/11/24 & 10/2/25) & Safeguarding and Prevent Termly Update (February 2024) Finance and Resources (27/1/25) HE (3/3/25) Chairs Committee (9/12/24, 14/1/25 & 24/2/25) CCMS (2/12/24)	
9.2	Written resolution report	
9.3	Sealing report	
10	DATE OF NEXT MEETING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4/5 April 2025 Away Days (St Mellion) Board members were encouraged to stay. ▪ 4 July 2025 	