

**Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting  
held on 12 July 2023 at 6.00pm, Jorvik room.**

<b>Present:</b>	Ian Looker (Chair) Helen Crews Janet Dean Rob Hickey Donald Inglis Lee Probert (CE & Principal) Cathy Waters	Libby Bush Julia Histon – joined remotely. Matthew Rice Ann Lees Georgie Linsey-Bessent
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Ken Merry – Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) David Hawkins – Vice Principal, Finance and Professional Services Carolyn Barker – Director of Governance	
		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest</b>	
1.1	Apologies were received from Heidi Fraser-Krauss, Ranjit Singh, Victoria Inness, and Andrew Thomas. Celeste Finnochchi was not in attendance.  There were no declarations of interest.  The Chair of the meeting was Ian Looker. Notice of the meeting was given at least 7 days in advance. The meeting was quorate.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	
2.1	It was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
3.1	<b>Action Summary</b> It was noted that all actions apart from the review of the strategic risk appetite had been completed.  The Chair advised that as part of the discussions with members over the summer break the Chair would discuss with the Chair of Audit Committee the approach to reviewing the strategic risk appetite.  <i><b>The Governing Body noted the update on actions.</b></i>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Strategic Matters</b>	
4.1	<b>Chair's Update</b> The Chair updated members that since the last meeting, several important events and discussions have taken place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department for Education Strategic Conversation: regular conversation had been held recently. The principal is to circulate the letter to governors.</li> <li>• Union Panel on Pay: A discussion was held about the union's stance on pay negotiations, and a letter was provided in the board pack to cover this matter.</li> <li>• AoC Governance Conference: There was a presentation from Education Northeast explaining how they operate, along with a conversation about community links.</li> </ul>	<b>LP</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ofsted Inspection Framework: Ofsted discussed the wider inspection framework, and the context of our college's outcome compared with other college inspection reports. Out of 56 colleges inspected, 36 were rated as good, seven as outstanding, and the rest required improvement or were inadequate.</li> <li>Awards: The college held awards ceremonies, and it was a powerful reminder of the college's purpose and impact. Parents showed pride, and tutors' passion for their work was evident in the videos that were presented during the awards.</li> </ul>	
4.2	<p><b>Progress against Strategic Plan/Scorecard</b></p> <p>The principal shared his perspective on the past year's performance. Some areas did not achieve the expected impact, which had been reported throughout the year to governors. The most pressing issue being student attendance and its impact on retention. Ongoing efforts to assess the likelihood of student withdrawals are underway, with greater clarity to be seen through the new structure. Attendance continues to be a sector-wide challenge, especially in schools, and understanding student challenges is difficult.</p> <p>Governors noted that student behaviour has significantly improved due to increased challenges and encouragement. Members asked about the behaviours of construction students and were advised that considerable improvement had been noted. The college will enforce a lanyard-wearing and visibility policy in the upcoming year, with sanctions for repeat offenders. The Student Governor enquired about the rules, and it was clarified that both staff and students need to always have their ID visible unless they have an exception.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body resolved to note the progress against the strategic plan.</i></b></p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Finance &amp; Resources</b>	
5.1	<p><b>F&amp;GP Committee Chair Report</b></p> <p>The report was taken as read. It was noted that the last meeting of the Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee was inquorate so unfortunately decisions were not made.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p>	
5.2	<p><b>2022/23 Year End Financial Forecast</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal of Finance &amp; Professional Services provided an overview of the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The budget for the 2023-24 academic year was discussed, and it was noted that it included a deficit of £362,000. This is the first time a deficit budget had been presented to the Governing Body.</li> <li>The college made staff savings earlier in the year, implemented a vacancy factor, and considered other factors to address the deficit.</li> <li>Capital expenditure (capex) has been held back, with a total budget of £2 million, of which £200,000 is from the college's own funds. Risk and contingency have been factored into the budget.</li> <li>The college aims to maximise income and control costs, with a focus on T-levels, apprenticeships, funding rates, retention, progression, and A-level delivery.</li> <li>The curriculum review process has started to incur costs.</li> <li>There were questions about the adult budget, which appears to be increasing in the new budget, and the feasibility of achieving it was discussed.</li> </ul>	

	<p>The Chair suggested that consideration of the approval of the budget was to be discussed after items on the agenda covering pay and subcontracting.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the 2022-23 Financial Forecast.</i></b></p>	
5.3	<p><b>2023-24 Budget and College Financial Forecast Return (CFFR)</b>  The Vice Principal of Finance &amp; Professional Services advised that the college's financial health assessment is to be submitted through the College Financial Forecast Return (CFFR), and the regulators will focus on EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation) which is expected to be reasonable but not up to sector benchmark.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to approve the 2023-24 budget and noted the CFFR.</i></b></p>	
5.4	<p><b>Pay Negotiations / Dispute Resolution [confidential – redacted minute]</b></p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the update and supported the decision made.</i></b></p>	
5.5	<p><b>ESFA Financial Health Assessment</b>  Governors received a letter from the Education and Skills Funding Agency confirming its agreement to the College's self-assessment that the 2021-22 financial position was 'outstanding'.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body noted the ESFA's confirmation of Financial Health Assessment.</i></b></p>	
5.6	<p><b>EFL Subcontracting Proposal</b>  The Deputy Principal/Deputy Chief Executive, Curriculum and Quality presented a proposal intended to outline the potential benefit to York College of exploring a partnership with the English League Football (EFL) Trust (and related community sports trusts) across the EFL network. Members were advised that the opportunities that are available through the proposal will come into scope over the next three academic years.</p> <p>It was noted that the Subcontracting Proposal was debated at the People &amp; Governance Committee meeting on 3 July 2023 with members not agreeing to sign off the proposal but requesting further information and assurances.</p> <p>The governing body debated the proposal with a focus on mitigating risks in strategic alignment and costs. The proposal offers an opportunity to build a relationship in a growth area that the EFL partnership provides and the associated benefits of being involved in a broader network, strategic alliances with other colleges, access to different funding streams, and reaching economically and socially disadvantaged pockets.</p> <p>Members were advised that financially, the proposal may have an impact of approximately £400k in costs in the next year, but it is expected to generate around £100k per year in income. The Deputy Principal advised that the college would undergo due diligence as normal, and the contract will be signed on an annual basis without penalty for withdrawal.</p>	

	<p>Members raised concerns about the extent to which the opportunity represents new business, considering the expansion to new regions and whether it significantly differs from the college's current delivery. After a thorough debate, a majority of nine members present were happy to approve the budget with the additional £400k as an exceptional item.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to approve the draft budget to include the additional £400k as an exceptional item.</i></b></p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Quality Education and Students</b>	
6.1	<p><b>6.1 Q&amp;C Committee Chair's Report</b></p> <p>The Chair's report was taken as read. The Committee Chair drew members attention to issues of retention and ongoing debate about how to manage risk appetite.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p>	
6.2	<p><b>Student Association Report</b></p> <p>The reports submitted were taken as read.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the reports.</i></b></p>	
6.3	<p><b>Safeguarding Report</b></p> <p>Members received the safeguarding report outlining the College's approach to safeguarding and providing an update of the progress made since the submission of the safeguarding audit.</p> <p>It was noted that the College has started to recognise high incident referrals and harmful behaviours among students. There is a community project across York and North Yorkshire, and an event planned in college in September to address these issues. Staff training exercises have also been taking place covering preventing radicalisation and raising awareness.</p> <p>There is also an exercise focused on male mental health. The College is making targeted efforts to raise awareness among students about these issues. Members asked about industry placements, as there have been several challenges, and there were concerns about whether this might impact the achievement of qualifications. This was thought not to be the case at the moment.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p>	
6.4	<p><b>Curriculum Review and Strategy</b></p> <p>Governors were provided with an update on the curriculum review and strategy work that was started in the early part of 2022/23. This also included an outline of plans for further work in 2023/24. A series of activities will be undertaken to ignite and restart the curriculum review process, with clear deadlines and outcomes. There will be a review of the curriculum offer, and decisions on AS/A2 courses will be made by 17th October to inform marketing for the 2024/2025 academic year.</p> <p>Governors welcomed the paper and the comprehensive scope of work to be covered in the review process.</p> <p>Further updates are to be provided periodically into 2023/24 to provide the board with assurance around the direction of travel being achieved through the review work.</p>	

	<b><i>The governing body noted the report.</i></b>	
6.5	<p><b>Accountability Agreement 2023/24</b> Members received a report and copy of the Annual Accountability Statement demonstrating the skills priorities in the local and regional area that fit well with the College's curriculum intent statements. The document highlighted specific examples to demonstrate how the curriculum offer meets those skills and how the direction of travel of the curriculum will continue to do so. Governors gave thanks for the report and commended the team on a well written statement.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body approved the Annual Accountability Statement for 2023/24.</i></b></p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Audit &amp; Risk</b>	
7.1	<p><b>Audit Committee Chair's Report</b> The report was taken as read.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p>	
7.2	<p><b>Strategic Risk Monitoring</b> The risk report was received and noted.</p> <p>The matter of reviewing the risk appetite statement is to be picked up through discussions over the summer period.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
8.1	<p><b>P&amp;G Committee Chair Report</b> The report was taken as read. The Committee Chair advised that several matters were discussed at the last meeting with no decisions made therefore were included on the board agenda. Following informal discussions with 4 staff interested in the staff governor vacancies, a recommendation was submitted to the People &amp; Governance Committee to select and approve, for recommendation to the Board, two staff members. The Committee approved the recommendation.</p> <p>The Director of Governance was asked to circulate a written resolution to the full board to gain approval for the two staff governors.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body noted the report.</i></b></p>	<b>CB</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>PART 2</b>	
9.1	<p><b>Health and Safety Report</b> The governing body received the Health and Safety Report for review. There was nothing further to report.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p>	
9.2	<p><b>Subcontracted Partnership Provision</b> The governing body received a report and were asked to formally approve the subcontracted partnership provision as it is a requirement of the Colleges Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) agreement. The proposal was consistent with the College's strategic aims, ongoing due diligence is conducted, and the budget assumes expenditure from ESFA funded provision subcontracted to York City FC (or a similar partner) at an amount of £64,000. The Vice Principal of Finance &amp; Professional Services confirmed that it is</p>	

	<p>necessary to have some flexibility in funding amounts to be able to respond to changes in year and as such the funding level requested for approval was £250,000.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body resolved to approve the proposed document and expenditure as noted.</i></b></p>	
9.3	<p><b>Schedule of Governance Meetings</b> The annual schedule of meetings was tabled for approval.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body resolved to approve the schedule.</i></b></p>	
9.4	<p><b>Policy Reviews</b> The Chair confirmed that all policies submitted for approval had been through detailed scrutiny at the relevant committee meetings.</p> <p>The Vice Principal of Finance &amp; Professional Services confirmed that the Tuition Fees policy had not been to a committee but noted that there were no significant changes to note.</p> <p><b><i>The governing body resolved to approve the following policies -</i></b></p> <p>Whistleblowing Financial Regulations Risk Monitoring Tuition Fees</p>	
<b>SUMMARY MATTERS</b>		
10.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> The following matters were noted.</p> <p>Georgia Linsey-Bessent is to stay at the College for a further year and will take up the HE Student Governor role however she will not be continuing as the Student Union President. Governors thanked Georgia for her work and involvement over the last year.</p> <p>The principal advised governors that his Executive Assistant, Ruth McKelvey, is to retire in the Summer and that a new appointment has been made. Harriet de Bourg is to join the College from York St John University.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b> As outlined on the schedule of governance.</p>	