

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of Wednesday 9th November 22, 17:00 – 19:00
Chaffron Way, Business Centre (Lecture Theatre – Room 1)

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance Record 2022/23	Present at this meeting
Sally Alexander	CEO	2 of 2	Yes
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings	Independent	1 of 2	Yes
Alan Cook	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Peter Cox	Independent	2 of 2	Yes (Teams)
Kaye Dwight	Staff	2 of 2	Yes
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Sean Hainsworth	Staff	2 of 2	Yes
Shalom Lloyd	Independent	2 of 2	Yes (Teams) (in part)
David Meadowcroft (Chair)	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Angie Novell (joined 28/10/22)	Independent	0 of 0	n/a
Ruby Parmar	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Charlyne Pullen	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Ian Revell	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Gwynneth Tan	Independent	2 of 2	Yes (Teams)
Sufian Sadiq	Independent	2 of 2	Yes (Teams) (in part)
Neil Sainsbury	Independent	2 of 2	Yes
Manish Verma	Independent	1 of 2	Yes
Jeremy Wilsdon (joined 28/10/22)	Independent	0 of 0	n/a
Total Percentage attendance (this meeting)		100%	16/16
Total Percentage attendance (year to date)		94%	30/32

Attendees this meeting: Annie Allen (Chief People Officer), Alex Warner (Principal: Curriculum Innovation and Pedagogy), Jason Mansell (Principal: Quality and Student Experience), Miranda Coles (Chief Financial Officer), Sam Samuels (Governance Partner),

Amy Langford (Group Director Inclusion) (in part), Lee Parker (Director of Marketing and Communications) (in part), Ali Murphy (Learning and Development Manager) (in part), Jim Nowell (Acting Head of School: SCloT) (in part)

Natalie Malena-Bangs (Judicium Clerk) – Teams

The meeting started at 17.03 pm

PROCEDURAL	
1.1	Welcome and Apologies The chair welcomed all to the meeting.

	<p>Apologies were received from Karen Brown. Jeremy Wilsdon and Angie Novell were not in attendance as their DBS checks had not been received in time for the meeting. As agreed at his appointment interview, Jeremy will not be available for the December meeting.</p>
1.2	<p>Declaration of Interests: Standing items: None previously declared.</p>
<p>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2022/23</p>	
3.1	<p>CEO's Report (<i>previously circulated as Paper 3.1</i>)</p> <p>The Chair congratulated Sally Alexander (SA) on her CEO appointment.</p> <p>SA reported that Karen Brown has been signed back 'fit for work' and will be working on a gradual phased return to work.</p> <p>SA referred to the report circulated before the meeting and shared her vision on growth</p> <p>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM <i>Minuted separately</i></p> <p>Skills and Post-16 Education Bill / Meeting Local Needs</p> <p>There is published guidance outlining how FE Colleges should meet their duty to ensure that local needs are met. The Board will need to undertake regular reviews (at least every 3 years) of how well the College meets local needs, in particular in relation to local employment. The Board will need to consider what actions they <i>and other providers</i> can take to better meet local needs. The outcome of the reviews will be published on the College website.</p> <p>Anna Clarke, Group Director for Employment and Partnerships, is already working closely with local employers, the Chamber, the Council and SEMLEP to review the curriculum offer in preparation for the upcoming Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) which the College will support the Chamber to develop and implement. Anna will update and provide assurance that the Board's statutory duty is being met.</p> <p>Meeting local, regional and national needs is a key focus for Ofsted (Skills Contribution is a sub-judgement). Ofsted will evaluate the extent to which colleges contribute effectively towards meeting the skills needs of employers and other relevant stakeholders and the local, regional and national economy.</p> <p>Governors asked questions:</p> <p>Q: Where are we with Milton Keynes University (MK:U)? A: We are having a meeting with MK:U next Monday to explore ways of working together positively.</p> <p>Q: If we take 500 students into MK, it should help other places like MK:U? A: Ensuring the IoT provision is right will help support this goal.</p> <p>Q: Does anything from this CEO report need to go into the Strategic Plan? A: It is a very welcome opportunity, and the strategic plan was written in such a way, that we review it and if necessary, can slot appropriate actions into the six strands. There will be an opportunity this year at the 'Away Day' to re-focus it and pick up any key areas.</p> <p>Q: There are two questions. The first one is regarding the A-level provision, there are two things needed: growth in schools, and investment in buildings. If you look at the outcomes of schools, the 2019 results do not match up to places like Luton which they should. As for growth, we need to explore the hybrid qualifications -e.g., engineering, as to get into a Russell Group University, students need physics, maths, and computing A-Level, plus an engineering B-TEC, etc. I also think it would be a good idea to provide a niche with a high-</p>

quality provision of needs for A-Levels, but if it is to be narrowed down to STEM subjects and focussed on small numbers, it needs to be of a high-quality provision to operate.

A: In terms of A-levels, my view is that the college should specialise. Historically, the college stopped A-Levels, as it used to be the second choice and was spread thin, so want to specialise in the IoT subjects, so people want this college to be the provision of choice and then see how we go with the opportunity to set up an A-Level centre and take that forward.

SA commented that in the growth plan, she welcomes the opportunity to collaborate closely with the council on jobs and creating skills to meet employers post-16, as well as targeting deprived areas. The close relationship with the local council will support this. The next step is to recruit a permanent Chief Operating Officer to have a stable senior team to drive and promote growth.

The Board received the CEO Report

3.2

**Student Experience (previously circulated as Paper 3.2, 3.2A and 3.2B)
2021/22 Student Performance Data and 2022/23 KPIs**

Jason Mansell (JM) referred to the report and provided the key headlines:

- Fallen short of the aspirational KPIs but have made clear progress in most cases to improve achievement rates and KPI performance when compared with the 2020/2021 outturn.
- This is positive considering there was a pandemic and now a cost-of-living crisis, and the exam organisations increased the pass grades
- The overall achievement trend, including English and Maths, shows an improved position. 16-18 years overall achievement finished at 81.7% which is 8.4 percentage points better than 2020/2021.
- All ages overall achievement finished at 82.4%, which is 2.6 percentage points better than 2020/2021.
- Adult overall achievement finished at 83.6%, a drop of 4.2 percentage points compared to 2020/21.
- Apprenticeships finished at 68.8%, a 6-percentage point improvement on 2021/22.
- Key areas for improvement in addition to adults is care professions, construction, and engineering, English and Maths, particularly functional English, and functional Maths, and continuing to drive consistency in high achievement rates across all schools.
- Care Professions struggled with staffing issues and poor student behaviour in the 2021/2022 student cohort, resulting in a higher proportion of red RAG-rated student, which affected student retention and progress. An early IQR has been completed in Care Professions, with clear actions for improvement identified.
- As previously reported, Built Environment had safeguarding concerns at the start of the year, issues with student behaviour and attitudes, and issues with attendance and punctuality all resulting in a higher proportion of red RAG-rated students. The main challenges were in Painting and Decorating, Anglian Water courses, Level 3 Electrical Installation, and Entry Level and Level 1 Bricklaying. As with Care Professions, an early IQR is being completed in Built Environment to identify actions for improvement.
- Whilst Engineering has delivered a 4-percentage point improvement in 2020/2021, the impact of Covid on practical sessions in 2020/2021 affected retention in the first year of the two-year programmes in Level 3 Aero and Level 3 Engineering. Overall, withdrawals were 7%, with some late unexpected withdrawals. 10% completed but did not achieve, linked to an increase in examinable components and stringent Awarding Organisation requirements. For 2022/23 year 1 starts, we have moved from EAL to BTEC, as EAL assessment methods have had an adverse impact on student engagement
- A key challenge in terms of output is linked to distance learning and professional courses, in particular our Accountancy courses, which were also impacted by a Cyber Incident as we had to close our evening provision for a period in January/February 2022. This impacted retention and timely achievement, so we need to recover our long-distance learning.
- We are looking for people who want to upskill and run on a 'roll on, roll off' approach and investigate if that has an adverse impact.

- English and Maths integrated into the schools to drive greater ownership of curriculum areas - moving to earlier exam windows to take them when they are ready - functional skills lessons have been increased to recap and revise to retain knowledge and improve achievement
- 360s will be used to monitor attendance throughout the year and set clear actions to address attendance risks
- Retention Panels now focus on attendance and working with those students at risk.

After many meetings, it was agreed to have aspirational targets even though we knew it would be a challenge. We will continue to grow to address the weaker areas identified and the introduction of the live data form will provide more realistic stretched targets and then will need to maintain the higher level stretched targets.

Governors asked questions:

Q: On page 5, distance learning, what does isolation mean?

A: I was not involved but there was an issue with learners not being able to enrol on our systems via apple devices, which had a significant impact on the number of enrolments. There was also a Cyber incident around January/February time too and had to switch off at 6pm, which had a massive impact on that delivery.

Q: Regarding the care professions, was it student behaviour?

A: A cohort of students last year had challenging behaviour.

Q: As a Link Governor to the caring theme, I recognise the challenges, but what happened to those that completed the course but did not achieve?

A: The challenge was learners, who just did not want to complete the final bits of work required to get them through. In some cases, we were able to get them a smaller certificate, but anything like that does not count as an achievement.

Q: Under 'Project September,' a small cohort started and decided it was not for them, so an external marketing agency is contacting them to see why they have left and what we could do differently to improve our process but what are we getting the marketing agency to support us with?

A: The explanation is in the middle of page 6 of the report circulated.

Q: Is work experience behind target due to COVID, and what do you think will happen in relation to the cost-of-living increases, the leisure industry, and businesses going forward?

A: It will be a challenge. The CQG will be meeting to look at how we build on improvements on where we were in 2021/2022.

Q: Aspirational targets should be an aspiration but also should be achievable, but when you look at targets and everyone is missed, it tells a story of not knowing enough about your business model. I know we wanted to be stretched, but when it comes to Ofsted and setting targets that are not going to be hit, does it send the wrong message?

A: Conversations at CQG have been about where we need to review some of these targets. However, the challenge is: are we sending the wrong message as we have already agreed set of targets? When setting targets this year, we said they need to be aspirational, but also achievable too. We are anticipating that the national averages are going to take a hit this year across the colleges, with a 5-8% drop. Therefore, I am suggesting we stay where we are with some as they are still aspirational and achievable.

Q: From an Ofsted perspective, is the College at risk, if it has improved but has not hit its targets?

A: We do not believe so as MK College is a good college and has gone forwards as an organisation. Therefore, we stand by the targets set and believe they are aspirational and achievable.

Q: Last year's targets were missed? So, if they are going to be aspirational for 2022/2023, this might be even more of a stretch. Do other colleges also set aspirational targets?

A: We do believe we can meet our targets and they are aspirational and achievable. Last year looking at initial targets they were quite different from what was finally approved by the Board. The targets last year were aspirational and supported the drive on improving our provision across most areas and striving for a continual year-on-year improvement. It is good to have targets that stretch us and need to maintain that ambition.

The chair expressed that there must be the opportunity to set targets and KPIs that are stretching but also achievable, even if certain things happen so there needs to be some contingency built in.

Q: Should targets be achievable and set up for the college to be able hit them?

A: A new tool has been developed where we can see the aspirational targets for 2022/23 and they can be realistically suited to the attendance in each area.

The CQG has reconsidered it this year and brought its achievement rating earlier so we can monitor it sooner and see if some of these are realistic by January/February time, rather than wait until May/June. We will review it again at that time and look at attendance data as that builds up over the year. Also, some targets are not hit one-half term but will be the next half term. The key message is there was a significant achievement compared with last year.

It was discussed that the KPIs are to be brought back next term and revised after data attendance has been reviewed, as the different cohorts will have different achievement rates. The CQG needs to relook at the data as the College does not start every year in the same position. A review of performance in the new year may cause a revisit to the targets in the new year and will then need to agree on them at the next board meeting

Action: The KPIs are to be revised after data attendance has been reviewed and relooked at by the CQG, with a recommendation made to the Board.

Sufian Sadiq (SS) left the meeting at 17.57 pm

The Board:

- **Noted the achievements rates for 2021/22 and performance against KPIs**
- **Agreed that 2022/23 Academic KPIs will be reviewed at CGQ Jan 23 with a further recommendation to be made to the Board**

3.3 **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

**Skills (previously circulated as Paper 3.3 and presentation)
Update on IoT 2022/23**

Jim Nowell (JN) and Lee Parker (LP) joined at 18.05pm

Minuted separately

Shalom Lloyd left the meeting at 18.10 pm

JN and LP left the meeting at 18.31 pm

3.4 **Financial Health (previously circulated as Paper 3.4)
September 2022 Management Accounts / Student Numbers**

Miranda Coles (MC) referred to her report and provided the following highlights:

- The Board approved the 2022/23 Budget in July 2022 and no monthly management accounts are produced for the month of August as much of the new academic activity starts in September.

- Produced the first set of management accounts for this year, which summarises activity for the first two months of the year and reflects learner numbers at the end of October, before the point at which allocations are confirmed and staffing requirements finalised
- Had a letter from ESFA, which confirms a 'good' level of financial health
- The budgeted Group contribution for the 2022/2023 year is £373k
- There has been fantastic growth in apprenticeships.
- Apprenticeship activity is well ahead of budget and evidence shows that some potential students are choosing an apprenticeship rather than a full-time course due to the economic climate
- Due to students enrolling in longer programmes this will increase the carry-in in future years and therefore support continual growth
- The pay and non-pay costs are well within budget
- Cashflow is on target
- In terms of staff and the sharing of resources there is no impact on delivery, but workload has increased. Staff biggest concern is their workload
- There were 119 vacancies at the end of September 2022, 43 on Campus and IoT and 76 in Prison Services. The job market is extremely challenging at present and all employers are finding it difficult both to recruit and retain staff. The pay increase implemented in September 2022 has made MKCG salaries more attractive than previously, but recruitment is still challenging
- The majority of vacancies are within teaching which impacts staff, and it is hard to recruit, so need to look at making the College inviting for new staff
- 99 vacancies as of this month
- It was agreed with the unions the first workload subcommittee for the campus will take place on the 23rd of this month, which is the process where we work with Union colleagues to identify ways to address workload and work towards those commitments.

Governors asked questions:

Q: You said there were 99 vacancies this month. Do we need all 99 jobs?

A: In the prison there 65 and 35 are at the checking stage, which is face-to-face checks that are causing delays.

There are some positive numbers around Apprenticeship and Adults. That new team is doing well. However, there is a concern that the Higher Education numbers are below target, with much of the Higher Education under recruitment being in the Institute of Technology. Some enrolments are determined by students still requiring a loan agreement in place, so we anticipate that each of these could go up. For all areas, we continue to recruit, enrol, and explore new offers, and January 2023 starts are planned and should make up some of the shortfalls.

The Board:

- **Noted the financial position**
- **Approved 2022/23 Financial KPIs**

3.5 **People** (previously circulated as Paper 3.5 and 3.5A)
People Strategy: Learning and Development/Benefits

Ali Murphy (AM) joined the meeting at 18:40

AA Introduced Ali Murphy (AM) who provided the following highlights:

- Leaders Development – taken on board the feedback from the six cohorts, combined with internal review, the Transform programme has been overhauled and relaunched with two programmes: Transform: Aspire, designed for those colleagues who are yet to move into a management position and provides learning opportunities that require more experience or knowledge, delivered across 7 months, and Transform: Develop.
- Taken away the cost of buying external training content and now own our content so people can see it and take it away

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning and organisational resilience – coaching opportunities for eight newly appointed heads of depts started last week – initial feedback positive. • Working with Thomson International PPA around psychosomatic and emotional intelligence and looking at how people can lead their teams • Student projects – using some IoT students in January conference for them to be a mentor or mentee • Continuing to use Focus Theory workshops and Team Dynamics workshops • Continuing to expose traits and behaviours across the team and how they work well together • Looking at five aspects of wellbeing. Held a Menopause Awareness session and will hold a second session at Bletchley in November. Provided Pensions Advice webinars and will be taking part in ‘Movember.’ • Employee engagement and recognition – using Applause, which is an internal platform where people can send messages internally to applaud each other – continuous praise and engagement. Looking to evolve that, take it to another level, and explore embedding it into the reward and recognition programme • Our engagement target was 8, which was very aspirational – we are currently at 7.2 so looking at 7.5 as an ideal target for moving engagement scores • Employee benefits - making work fun and getting the best out of working here • Looking at the benefits package and improving to engage of those already here • Looking at ways of helping with the cost of living • Last Monday was the annual ‘develop together’ conference and the subject this year is about sustainability. 400 colleagues engaged in the Accredited training with the Carbon Literacy Project <p>No questions were asked.</p> <p><i>The Board noted progress across the MK College Group</i></p> <p><i>Ali Murphy (AL) left the meeting at 18.54</i></p>
3.6	<p>Organisational (<i>verbal updated provided</i>)</p> <p>There was a written resolution made to the Board to agree SA’s appointment to the CEO position, which was approved.</p> <p>It was reported that the College will now be focussing on the recruitment of a Chief Operating Officer, which will go out to advert on 21st November and be advertised over the Christmas period, with a view to interviews commencing on 11th January 2023. There will be a Selection Committee and SA will function as the Hiring Manager.</p> <p><i>The Board noted CEO Appointment and progress with Senior Recruitment</i></p>
GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE	
4.1	<p>PDMG Meeting of 19th October 2022 (<i>previously circulated as Paper 4.1, 4.1A, 4.1B and 4.1C</i>)</p> <p>PC provided the following updates:</p> <p>The Capital programme for the South-Central Institute of Technology consists of three development projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading (Activate Learning) delivered • Oxford at Blackbird Leys - Activate Learning delivered 12th October 2022 – there are some outstanding issues to be resolved, one of which is an oil tank and currently looking to the DfE to provide funding for targeted equipment to cover the costs • Bletchley campus due to be completed in April 2023. It is still within budget but has been a challenge and roughly on track timing wise

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Topping out ceremony remains on track for the 11th of November 2022, and the contractor has promised that the works will be completed in time. We are also planning a site tour for our Employer Anchor Partners to see the work and progress for the 1st December 2022. • The decision was taken to merge CPMG with PDMG from 21st December meeting, so there is one group that looks at the capital projects • The decking in the open learning area has been completed • The PVC unit on the ICT roof should be completed this week • Ten days ago, six contractors were interviewed for the main works and two have been taken forward to the next stage. <p>PC expressed his thanks to RP and IR for their contributions, as they will be standing down from the PDMG.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Board noted the Contract signing schedule and HM Land Registry Title Plan</i> • <i>The Chair of the Board signed the Legal Charge for SCIoT, witnessed by the CEO</i>
4.2	<p>CQG Meeting on 17th October 2022 (previously circulated as Paper 4.2)</p> <p>CP provided the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group approved the 2022/23 CQG Business Plan and received assurance on the following topics: • Ofsted readiness (including skills and inspection) • Emerging SAR themes/draft campus SAR - The final draft Campus SAR will then be reviewed by CQG on 21st November 2022 before being brought to Board on 14th December 2022 • Review of KPIs (emerging 2021/22 achievement rates) - Emerging data demonstrated an improvement across many of the KPIs when compared with 2020/21. All ages overall achievement and 16-18 achievement showed clear improvement against 2020/21, however it was recognised that Adult Achievement rates had dipped. • Noted subjects to do 'deep dives' in • Looked at 2021/22 Student Feedback (including complaints) and there has been a new student survey produced <p><i>The Board noted the report from CQG Committee meeting on 17th October 2022</i></p>
4.3	<p>S&G Meeting on 18th and 26th October 2022 (previously circulated as Paper 4.4)</p> <p>The appointments of the two new independent Governors, Jez Wilson and Angela Novell (approved by email) were ratified.</p> <p>RP reported that there are two new student Governors in process and the Board needs to look at succession planning as there are five Governors coming up for retirement at the end of the academic year.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ratified the appointment of Jez Wilsdon and Angela Novell</i> • <i>Noted the succession planning of 5 independent governors</i> • <i>Noted the compliance against the Code of Governance 21/22</i> • <i>Noted the changes to committee membership</i>

4.4	<p>Items for the next meeting:</p> <p>Student Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College SAR and QIP • Curriculum reform update <p>Financial Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2022 Management Accounts • Financial Statements 2021/22 • Estates Update • CoL/Energy costs/hardship funds • Finance KPIs <p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Strategy: Remuneration workload and wellbeing <p>The Chair requested that Governors send him any other agenda items required. He thanked SA and all the team for all of their work and for the presentations today.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 19.03 pm</p>
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CONSENT AGENDA

	The following items were approved by consent without discussion:
5.1	The Board approved the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 5th October 2022 <i>(previously circulated as Paper 5.1)</i>
5.2	The Board approved the Freedom of Speech and Expression for publication on the college website <i>(previously circulated as Paper 5.2)</i>
5.3	The Board approved the Terms of Reference for Curriculum Quality Group and Search and Governance Committee <i>(previously circulated as Papers 5.3A and 5.3B)</i>
5.4	The Board approved the Health & Safety Policy and Procedures Policy <i>(previously circulated as paper 5.4)</i>
5.5	The Board noted that the contract would be signed under seal after this meeting.
5.6	The Board approved the Department for Education Grant Offer Letter Post-16 CPD <i>(previously circulated as paper 5.6)</i>
5.7	The Board noted the Accountability Framework <i>(previously circulated as Paper 5.7)</i>
5.8	The Board approved the Conflicts of Interest Policy <i>(previously circulated as Paper 5.8)</i>

NEXT BOARD MEETING 14th December 2022

Date Raised	Actions	Action Owner	Current position
9.11.22, Item 3.2	The KPIs are to be revised after data attendance has been reviewed and relooked at by the CQC, with a recommendation made to the Governing Board.	JM	Pending
05.10.22, Item 3.1	Paper to November Board to update on developments and to provide opportunity for the Board to meet Jim Nowell.	JM	Completed – Item 3.3 for 9 Nov 22 Board, presentation given by Jim Nowell and Lee Parker

05.10.22, Item 4.3	Board to approve salary recommendations by Remuneration Committee by written resolution	GT	Completed – written resolution approved 13 th Oct 22
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Approved 14 December 2022
Chair of Governors – David Meadowcroft