

MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE GROUP

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2024

Room 3, Chaffron Centre

17:00 – 19:00

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance Record 2023/24	Present at this meeting
Sally Alexander	CEO	7 of 7	Yes
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings	Independent	5 of 7	Yes
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	7 of 7	Yes (Teams)
Leroi Henry	Independent	5 of 7	Yes (Teams)
Jacob Jempson	Student	5 of 7	No
Rebecca Myrie	Staff	7 of 7	Yes
Amit Nayyar	Independent	6 of 7	Yes (Teams)
Angie Novell	Independent	7 of 7	Yes
Rosemary Ogunade (from 16.11.23)	Student	3 of 5	No
Ruby Parmar	Independent	7 of 7	Yes
Ian Revell	Independent	7 of 7	Yes
Neil Sainsbury	Independent	3 of 4	Yes
Manish Verma	Independent	6 of 7	Yes
Jeremy Wilsdon	Independent	4 of 7	Yes (Teams) (in part)
Tom Wraight	Independent	6 of 6	Yes
Shalom Lloyd (resigned 22.8.23)	Independent	0 of 0	
David Meadowcroft (resigned 31.12.23)	Independent	2 of 3	
Sean Hainsworth (resigned 15.4.24)	Staff	4 of 5	
Alan Cook (resigned 15.4.24)	Independent	3 of 5	
Attendance % this meeting		87%	13/15
Attendance % year to date		83%	94/ 113

Attendees at this meeting: Jason Mansell (Chief Operating Officer), Annie Allen (Chief People Officer), Karen Brown (Head of Governance), Sam Samuels (Governance Partner), Anna Clarke (Group Director: Employer Engagement and Partnerships), Maria Bowness (Group Director: Curriculum and Pedagogy)

1.0 Procedural

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

Ruby Parmar welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Rosemary Ogunade and Jacob Jempson.

- 1.2 **Declaration of Interests**
None previously declared.

2.0 **Strategic Priorities 2023/24**

2.1 **CEO's Report and Board Dashboard** (*previously circulated as Paper 2.1*)

Sally Alexander drew attention to the following:

[Community Impact Report 2024](#)

The report demonstrates the impact of the College and is a useful publication to refer to when speaking to stakeholders.

General Election 4 July 2024

Due to the election announcement, the AoC has delayed making a recommendation on staff pay and the Unions have not yet raised it.

Whichever party is elected, we expect clarity on curriculum reforms.

Prison Education Services (PES) contract

A decision of the PES contract has been delayed by six months requiring the current PEF (Prison Education Framework) to be extended. Maxine Bennett, who is meeting with the MoJ today, will be attending her last Board meeting in July prior to her retirement.

Cultural and Diversity Days

This event was arranged following feedback from our Student Racial Justice Commissioners who wanted to raise awareness of the range of diverse cultures at the College.

Students of the Year celebration

Governors were thanked for attending and specifically Ian Revell who co-hosted and Angie Novell who gave the vote of thanks.

Executive Principal

Mark Fell has been appointed; Mark starts on 10 June 2024 and will attend the next Board meeting.

Board Dashboard

Governors asked questions to which Maria Bowness and Jason Mansell responded:

What is the ongoing work to secure improved outcomes in English & maths (Dashboard Strategic Priority 1)

Every student is monitored and has a plan of support which is reviewed with the Head of Schools weekly. We are also working with other colleges and the Get Further charity as well as reviewing our choice of Awarding Bodies and Schemes of Work.

A risk relating to the growth in student numbers in 2023/24 is that many of these students require Functional Skills maths which traditionally has lower achievement.

What is the justification for the Amber RAG rating for IoT student numbers (Dashboard)

The definition is that the target is ‘at risk and *may* not be met’. Short courses have been recently developed. These are now being delivered, and a challenging target of 500 starts has been set. These plus additional Activate Learning numbers will reduce the gap. The DfE’s IoT Dashboard has not been updated since March 2024, so the true numbers are higher than published (the numbers in the narrative are correct).

From September 2024, we will be working in partnership with the Open University which will support the generation of OU appropriate starts as IoT learners (we will not receive the funding, but the numbers count towards the targets). This is subject to a change request being approved by the DfE recognising the OU as an Anchor and Delivery Partner. Going forward, partnering with an undergraduate HEI will support us to grow the IoT provision.

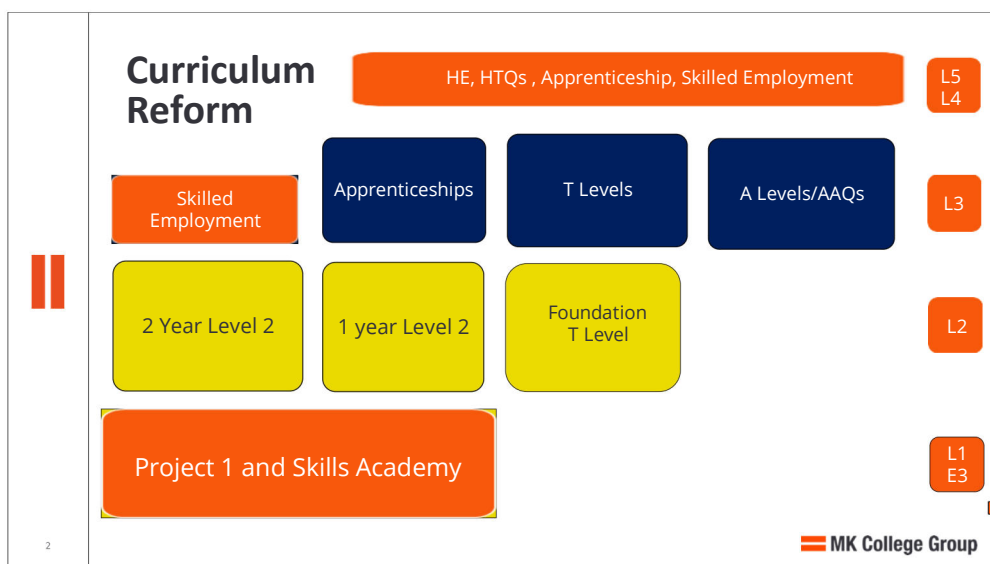
The Board received the CEO Report

2.2 Student Experience – Curriculum Strategy / Curriculum Reform (previously circulated as Papers 2.2)

Maria Bowness gave a presentation highlighting the following:

Curriculum Reform

- Maria explained the rationale behind the Curriculum Strategy which covers Entry Level to Level 5, with a range of options which respond to government reforms. These may change if there is a change of government / government policy.



- In 2023-24, the College delivered 186 starts in T Levels across Digital, Business, Science, Construction, Engineering, and Childcare. From September 2024, 250 starts are planned with the addition of Electric Vehicle and Care. These programmes are being introduced in line with the defunding of BTECs and other Level 3 qualifications.
- From September 2024, the College is offering A Levels linked to career pathways and 150 offers have been made so far (target is 100 but capacity is 150). The

provision has been very popular, particularly the social sciences pathway, and is fully staffed.

Surprisingly the environmental pathway was not popular so has been withdrawn. The environmental / green skills pathway was identified through the LSIP (Local Skills Improvement Plan) but whilst young people are keen to support environmental matters, they are not yet seeing a clear pathway to employment.

We are working with the Open University to explore how they can support A Level provision through guest lecturers / speakers and mentoring (by PhD students).

- Planning is starting for Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs) which will be funded from September 2025. AAQs are designed to be delivered alongside A Levels (they cannot be delivered without an A Level).

Draft Curriculum Strategy

- The draft will be reviewed by Mark Fell and in the context of any further announcement about curriculum reforms.
- The Curriculum Strategy will be supported by a three-year Curriculum Plan

Governors asked questions to which Maria responded:

On what basis has the College made offers for A Level places?

All students were interviewed and predicted GCSE grades were considered. Advice and guidance was given where applicants did not meet our strict entry criteria and an alternative offer was made where appropriate.

Have you carried out a diversity analysis of the A Level offers? Will the cohort reflect MK demographics?

We will undertake this analysis for actual enrolments. Whilst the majority of students come from MK, we have also received applications from Leighton Buzzard, Buckingham and further afield.

Action 1: Maria Bowness by October 2024

Do we have staff for the new T Levels?

Yes

How can the College promote the green skills pathway for 2025?

We need to lobby because the Awarding Bodies and Schools do not have a 'green' curriculum. Our new green skills centre will help to generate interest.

Will A Levels be financially viable?

Yes, the same considerations apply to all study programmes in terms of curriculum efficiency.

Where will A Level provision be located?

In a former Art Room in the main building at Bletchley which is being repurposed and the top floor of the SCIoT.

For how many students who have been offered an A level place is MK College their first choice?

We have this number as it was explored at interview.

Is there a concern about retention on a two-year L2 course?

It is a risk but for some students, a two-year course, with the opportunity to have more time to study English & maths and employability skills, is appropriate e.g. in Construction. We will plan an exciting curriculum to retain them. It is not appropriate for all students and will only be offered where it is appropriate.

Will students complete the full 2 years if they are not learning new skills?

We will be monitoring through our usual quality measures to ensure that they continue to make progress.

The Board noted the update on Curriculum reform and the draft Curriculum Strategy

2.3 Progress against 2023/24 Strategic Priorities and Accountability Agreement Targets (previously circulated as Paper 2.3A)

2024/25 Accountability Agreement Targets (previously circulated as Papers 2.3B)

Jason Mansell and Anna Clarke led on this item:

2023/24 Progress

- Governors were reminded that the refreshed College Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026, the Accountability Agreement Targets and the Board Strategic Priorities are all aligned.
- As discussed at the Board Awayday on 1 May 2024, good progress has been made and targets will be met in all areas, Progress has been monitored through the College monthly Strategy and Performance Monitoring Meetings (SPMM) and the Board Dashboard.
- Achievements include:
 - A Good Ofsted outcome
 - Reform of Level 3 Curriculum implemented
 - Refreshed vision for the SCIoT and a significant increase in starts
 - ESFA continue to judge Financial Health as Good
 - A reduced / downward trend in the number of staff vacancies (gaps) (now 5% campus and 8% prisons)
 - The PES bid was submitted
 - The College led on the LSIF on behalf of local colleges
 - CTF project (Chaffron Way refurbishment) is on target
 - The Utilisation, Transport and Access studies were completed and are informing discussions with the Council about post-16 capacity.

2024/25 Draft Accountability Statement (including Local Needs Duty)

The Accountability Statement and Local Needs Duty are combined into one document which includes the College's mission and purpose, local context, the approach taken to developing the Accountability Statement, progress against 2023/24 targets and the

2024/25 targets. The Ofsted judgement (Overall Good and a 'strong' contribution to meeting skills needs), demonstrates that the College is meeting its Local Needs Duty.

2024/25 Draft Accountability Agreement Targets / Board Strategic Priorities

As in 2023/24, the Accountability Statement targets will also be the Board Strategic Priorities. The draft targets for 2024/25, informed by discussions at the Board Awayday, will be further developed before the Accountability Statement is submitted by 30th June 2024.

Governors asked questions to which Jason responded:

The Curriculum Strategy refers to 35% growth in 16-19 students by 2029. Can the College accommodate this level of growth?

A proposed Board Priority for 2024/25 is planning for Estates Growth.

When will the Board start reviewing the Strategy beyond the current Strategic Plan (2026) noting that the Curriculum Strategy is quoting growth up to 2029. Should we consider convening a separate meeting over the summer?

The current strategic plan runs until the end of the 2025/26 academic year (31 July 2026). We will need to start developing our next strategic plan during 2025/26, for final approval at the July 2026 Board meeting. It is too early to convene a meeting this summer, as we still have two years to run on our existing strategic plan.

Recognising that the measures have still to be added, the Board requested more definition and SMART targets which can be tracked, reported and people held to account. The Board will be asked to approve the Board Strategic Priorities at the next meeting.

The Board also requested that the Accountability Statement, including the measures, be emailed to Governors for a 24 hour turn around towards the end of June, prior to signing and submission before 30 June 2024

Action 2: Jason Mansell by 27 June 2024

The Board:

- ***Noted the progress made against the 2023/24 Board Strategic Priorities and the 2023/24 Accountability Statement targets.***
- ***Delegated authority to the Chair of Governors or Vice-Chair of Governors, and the CEO, to sign the Accountability Statement when finalised before 30 June 2024.***
- ***Noted progress in developing the 2024/25 Board Strategic Priorities and the 2024/25 Accountability Statement targets***

3.0 GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

3.1 Audit & Risk Committee (A&R) meeting of 1 May 2024 (previously circulated as Paper 3.1)

Richard Bartlett-Rawlings, referred to the report of the meeting. Following a verbal update some urgent matters had been discussed / approved at the last Board meeting.

Governors enquired about cyber risks and Jason Mansell referred to the Strategic Risk Register and the risk mitigating actions which include a dedicated Data Security

Manager, ISO 27001 accreditation and Multi-Factor Authentication (MAF). At its last meeting, the A&R Committee requested regular assurance on managing cyber risks.

The Board approved the report of the meeting and the:

- ***Strategic Risk Register***
- ***Financial Regulations (Sections 2 and 6 and Appendix 1)***
- ***Business Continuity Plan***
- ***Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy***

3.2 Curriculum & Quality Group (CQG) meeting of 13 May 2024 (previously circulated as Paper 3.2)

Angie Novell referred to the report of the meeting when the CQG had received a presentation on a recent Ofsted inspection at HMP Frankland, the prisons' self-assessment reviews and emerging themes for improvement (which will inform the Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP)). The self-assessment grades relate to education provision only and not the broader learning and skills grade (over which the College has no control.

The CQG had also reviewed the impact of campus quality improvement and post-inspection actions e.g. work experience has improved to 85% (target 90%). Attendance and maths outcomes continue to be areas of focus and interventions are in place where appropriate.

The Board approved the report of the meeting

3.2 Capital Projects Monitoring Group (CPMG) meeting 17 April 2024 ((previously circulated as Paper 3.2)

Manish Verma referred to the report of the meeting. The IoT and CTF projects are waiting for the outcomes of the BREEAM applications. The Board approved an increase in the overall budget for the LSIF Green Skills Project (item 4.3 below).

The final reports from the feasibility studies are being revisited at no cost to the College.

The Board approved the report of the meeting.

3.4 Items for the next meeting (5 June 2024)

- Student Experience: Campus Student Outcomes and Achievement (predictions)
- Safeguarding & Prevent Annual Report
- 2023/24 Financial Health (P10 Management Accounts)
- 2024/25 Budget and 3 Year Finance Plan
- Staff Pay Recommendation
- Strategic Priorities for 2024/25
- Sub-contracting Strategy 2024/25
- Climate Change / Sustainability update
- Governor feedback from AoC Governance Conference

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

4.1 Minutes of the last meeting (1 May 2024) (previously circulated as Papers 4.1, and Confidential 4.1B).

Matters arising:

Date Raised	Actions arising from the last and previous meetings	Action Owner	Current position
1/5/24	Spotlight item at Board or CQG on how EDI is reflected in the curriculum (see EDI Charter)	AK	Carry forward Add to the board business plan for 24/25

The Board approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 1 May 2024

4.2 Fee Policy 2024/25 *(previously circulated as Paper 4.2)*

The Board agreed to delegate the Fees Policy for 2024/25 to the Executive Leadership Team

4.3 Written Resolution: Green Skills Capital Project *(previously circulated as Paper 4.3)*

The Board ratified the resolution, (previously agreed by email), to approve a revised contract value for the Green Skills capital project

4.4 Contract Approvals *(previously circulated as Paper 4.4)*

The Board approved the following contracts:

CCTV - Kubus Group Ltd for a 3-year period, subject to agreeing final contractual terms.

Laptops - Stone Computers for a 3-year contract, subject to agreeing final contractual terms and annual benchmarking.

Next Meeting 10 July 2024



Approved 10 July 2024
Ruby Parmar
Chair of Governors