

MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE GROUP

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2025

Room 3, Chaffron Centre, Chaffron Way Campus

13:30 – 14:30

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance Record 2024/25	Present at this meeting
Sally Alexander	CEO	6 of 6	Sally Alexander
Abbas Bandali ²	Student	5 of 5	Abbas Bandali
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings	Independent	5 of 6	Richard Bartlett-Rawlings
Ian Bickers	Independent	6 of 6	Ian Bickers
Ajira Bouchada ¹	Independent	4 of 6	Ajira Bouchada
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	6 of 6	Mat Gotkowski
Leroi Henry	Independent	2 of 6	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Rebecca Myrie	Staff	5 of 6	Rebecca Myrie
Amit Nayyar	Independent	6 of 6	Amit Nayyar
Angie Novell	Independent	3 of 6	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Ruby Parmar	Independent	6 of 6	Ruby Parmar
Ian Revell	Independent	6 of 6	Ian Revell
Neil Sainsbury	Independent	6 of 6	Neil Sainsbury
Lindsey Styles	Independent	6 of 6	Lindsey Styles
Jay Timpany	Staff	6 of 6	Jay Timpany
Manish Verma	Independent	4 of 6	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Jeremy Wilsdon	Independent	5 of 6	Jeremy Wilsdon
Tom Wraight	Independent	5 of 6	Tom Wraight
¹ from 2/10/24 Catherine McKenna-Mackmurdo (1/11/24 to 29/4/25)	Student	2 of 4	
Attendance % this meeting		83%	15 / 18
Attendance % year to date		85%	94 / 111

Attendees at this meeting: Jason Mansell (Chief Operating Officer), Mark Fell (Executive Principal), Karen Brown (Head of Governance), Sam Samuels (Governance Partner)

Attendees in part: Maria Bowness (Group Director: Curriculum & Pedagogy), Mariyam Azher (Interim Group Director: Employee Relations and People Development), Arv Kaushal (Head of People Development & EDI), Claire Griffin (Associate Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Group)

1.0 Procedural

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed Maria Bowness and Claire Griffin to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Leroi Henry, Angie Novell, Manish Verma. Catherine McKenna-Mackmurdo resigned on 29th April.

1.2 Declaration of Interests

None previously declared

2.0 Strategic Priorities 2024/25

2.1 Curriculum Planning 20225/26 (previously circulated as Paper 2.1)

Mark Fell and Maria Bowness referred to Paper 2.1 and summarised:

- The Curriculum Plan (the Plan) for the 2025/26 academic year is aligned to the Curriculum Strategy approved by the Board in October 2024.
- Student numbers are expected to grow next year in line with demographic predictions. Curriculum areas expected to see the highest growth are Construction, Engineering and Digital (reflecting government priorities), Skills Academy (high needs and lower level learners) and A levels (for which over 500 applications have been received). A small retraction is expected in Media, Care and Performing Arts.
- Curriculum financial planning is based on allocations. Efficiency targets have been set as listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Curriculum Plan target 2025/26

Measure	Financial Target
Allocations	Plan to exceed
Average Class Size	18 or higher
Overall Contribution Rate	Minimum 50%
Attrition Rate (student numbers)	Less than 5%
Staff Remission Rate	Less than 5%
Staff Utilisation	95% or better

- Curriculum planning has been a robust process recognising local and national priorities with input from employers and stakeholders. Validation panels have challenged employer engagement in informing skills needs, accuracy of data, resource allocation and curriculum reforms etc.
- The Plan will be frozen as of 2nd June to allow initial draft timetables to be issued by 10th June.

Governors asked questions to which Mark and Maria responded:

Does the reduction in Care provision reflect local demand? If there is a local skills need, how are you encouraging applications?

We are not removing any Care provision but planning for lower numbers based on applications and trends.

There is a local skills need, and Care continues to be one of our largest teams. In all curriculum areas, we work with key employers to ascertain needs.

Has the employer engagement created any surprises in terms of expected demand.

No because Heads of School engaged with employers to co-construct localised strategies which then informed the overall Curriculum Strategy on which this Plan is based.

Our overall three year Curriculum Strategy, approved in October, already needs a refresh to reflect the latest sector developments and employer feedback.

Students are more aware of career pathways which is behind the increased demand in Construction and Engineering.

How are we ensuring that the Construction curriculum is providing the right skills so that young people can progress to employment? Is the qualification framework fit for purpose?

Through our engagement with employers.

We are passing on employer feedback to the awarding bodies.

We have been approached by a construction firm about training students onsite which will provide the employer with a recruitment pipeline and students will benefit from hands on experience.

Is there flexibility if the numbers are understated?

Yes, but we have better data this year including Vector data and students progressing to a higher level or an apprenticeship, so we are planning for no surprises. However, we do need to meet demand and this is not always predictable.

Are students advised on learning pathways before they enrol?

Yes, we offer careers information advice and guidance on our open days.

The Board requested an example of employer engagement e.g. with the NHS including meeting frequency, employer needs and the College's response.

Action 1: Mark Fell 16th July 2025

The Board received assurance that there is a robust Curriculum Plan for 2025/26 which is aligned to the Curriculum Strategy, reflects local needs and will drive curriculum efficiency and effectiveness

Maria was thanked for attending and she left the meeting.

Arv Kaushal was welcomed to the meeting

2.2 EDI Annual Report May 2024 – April 2025 (previously circulated as Paper 2.2)

Arv Kaushal presented the key headlines from the EDI Annual report:

- Good progress has been made against the May 2024 EDI Priorities which are detailed in Paper 2.2. Activities have supported a more targeted and informed approach to addressing cultural issues which impact the College.
- The Pay and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2024/25 (and its action plan) is being finalised and will be available for the next meeting (the deadline for publication is 31st March 2026). The key findings are:
 - Headcount has increased by 12% to 1,205 (1,119 in 2023/24)
 - 69% of the workforce are female (same as 2023/24).
 - The declared minority ethnic representation is 16.7% (16.5% in 2023/24) however this may change as disclosure rates improve. The student population ethnic minority representation is 35%.

- On average:
 - female employees are paid less than male employees
 - minority ethnic employees are paid less than non-minority ethnic employees.

This does not mean that male / non-minority ethnic employees are paid more for doing the same job but there are more male / non-minority ethnic employees in senior roles. 80% of employees in the lowest quartile are female and more women work part time.
- The gender and ethnicity gaps have marginally increased in 2024/25; actions to close the gaps will focus on intersectionality as well as encouraging employees to improve ethnicity sharing (particularly employees who have been with the College for less than two years).
- EDI priorities for 2025/26 will contribute to attracting, developing and retaining an increasingly diverse and talented workforce and will include:
 - Gain Leaders in Diversity reaccreditation by autumn 2025
 - Review and develop an EDI Strategy for 2026 onwards.
 - Confirm the actions to address the Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gaps
 - Employee Networks to be supported to develop their ongoing priorities
 - Review and update the Inclusive Language Guide (on hold in 2024)
 - Continue to develop Equality Accessibility Impact Assessment (EAIA) and our inclusive approach to risk
 - Review and develop our approach to an inclusive curriculum
- All Governors are welcome to attend the themed ESG (Equality, Strategy Review Group) meetings. Previous topics have included freedom of speech, gender based violence and inclusive spaces.

Governors asked questions to which Arv responded:

As well as training, are under-represented groups encouraged to put themselves forward for roles (positive action)?

Yes, the employee networks are looking at this.

The new My P2E (My Progress to Exceptional) appraisal and development process includes career aspirations and next steps so that individuals can be supported to develop the necessary skills. There is bite-size learning which can be targeted at individuals and a new leadership programme,

Is the minority ethnic target 35% in line with the student population?

This is not the target. We will benchmark against the demographics locally (for campus) and nationally (for prisons) and against the sector (e.g. very few women work in construction). This will inform appropriate EDI targets and realistic positive action.

Action 2: Arv Kaushal by November 2025

Bringing the recruitment management platform in house will give us access to better data to support analysis e.g. the proportions of applicants who are female or minority ethnic.

The Board:

- ***Received assurance that the College is meeting its statutory responsibilities for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion through the delivery of its 2024 EDI priorities.***
- ***Noted the emerging themes from the analysis of 2024/25 Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap data***
- ***Noted the recommended 2025 EDI Priorities.***

Arv was thanked for attending and he left the meeting.

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

- 3.1 **CEO Report and Board Dashboard** (previously circulated as Paper 3.1)
- 3.2 **Audit & Risk Committee 28th March 2025** (previously circulated as Papers 3.2, 3.2A, 3.2B, 3.2C and 3.2D)
 - *the report of the meeting*
 - *Strategic Risk register*
 - *Financial regulations*
 - *Business Continuity Plan*
 - *Appointment of Validera as providers of the College's Internal Audit Services (previously approved by written resolution)*
- 3.3 **Capital Projects Monitoring Group 8th April 2025** (previously circulated as Paper 3.3)
 - *the report of the meeting*
 - *PSDS4 Salix Grant Funding Agreement (previously approved by written resolution)*
- 3.4 **MKC Commercial Ltd / The Code Makers Academy Ltd 1st April 2025** (previously circulated as Paper 3.4)
 - *the report of the Directors' meeting*
- 3.5 **Remuneration Committee 23rd April 2025** (previously circulated as Paper 3.5)
 - *the report of the Directors' meeting*
 - *the revised terms of reference for 2024/25*
- 3.6 **Minutes of the last meeting (19th March 2025)** (previously circulated as Paper 3.6)

Matters arising

Date Raised	Actions arising from the last and previous meetings	Action Owner	Current position
19/3/25	Arrange for students to give feedback to the Board on the visit to Thailand	KB	Complete - Governors have been invited to meet with students prior to the June Board meeting
	Investigate why Engineering students had not received the satisfaction survey	NF	Complete – NF has spoken with the Head of School to address the issue (which was caused by staffing issues).
5/2/25	Curriculum Planning KPIs – what are the current metrics for comparison?	MF/MB	Cancelled – unable to confirm as the metrics are not available for the current year.

- 3.7 **Items for the next meeting**
 - HE Strategy & APP / IoT update (including new HEAB governance / OfS conditions)
 - Workforce Strategy
 - Capex Budget for 2025/26
 - Meeting Skills Needs
 - Draft Accountability Statement / Board priorities

4.0 Next Meeting 4th June 2025

Rebecca Myrie, Jay Timpany, Abbas Bandali, and Claire Griffin left the meeting

Item 5.1: Minuted as confidential

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Parmar', written in a cursive style.

Approved 4th June 2025
Ruby Parmar
Chair of Governors