

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday, 26th September 2024 at 5.30pm in the Boardroom of the College.

Present: Nigel Holliday (Chair); Claire Dunn; Peter Ellwood; Alison Hampson; Phil Jardine; Michael Priestley; Robert Milburn; Chris Nattress; Val Pallister; Professor Jill Stewart; from Minute No 68/24: Tyler Millington and Elizabeth Hull.

By Teams: Sophie Kelly; Denise Rollo

Apologies: Elaine Clinton

Also present: Karen Wilson (Deputy Principal); Iain Glendinning (Vice Principal); Jane Murray (Clerk); Irene Farragher (DSO) (Min No 70/24)

66/24 Chair's Address

The Chair opened the meeting by thanking the Board (and the staff who support directly and indirectly) for their attendance and input in the previous year. The 82% attendance rate was remarkable given that there had been four extra (special) Board meetings in 2023-24 and several more financial recovery group meetings.

67/24 Appointment of New Staff Governors

Resolved –

- 1) That Tyler Millington be appointed to the Board as the teaching staff Governor from 26 September 2024 to 25 September 2025 and to the Finance and Corporate Working Group.
- 2) That Elizabeth Hull be appointed to the Board as the business support staff governor from 26 September 2024 to 25 September 2025 and to the Quality Working Group.

Both appointments are extendable by a further three years, equivalent to a 4-year term of office.

68/24 Minutes

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 27th June 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

69/24 Declarations of Interest

None received.

70/24 Boardroom Briefing: Safeguarding

The DSO, having reminded Governors of their responsibilities, drew attention to the updated guidance in keeping children safe in education 2024. She noted that there were no significant changes required to Lakes College Policy and procedure. The team continued to work with partner agencies.

She noted the Early Help programme where there was an expectation of intervention as soon as a problem emerged. A member of her team had carried out the training. She also noted that in responding to expectations, she felt that the intervention into a family setting would fall within the remit of social services.

The team were alert to maltreatment (within or outside of the home) and noted that the team were grilled by Ofsted on this aspect of safeguarding as part of inspection earlier in the year.

She also noted the Encompass approach, about responding to exploitation, criminal and sexual abuse, and neglect. This included where learners were witness to domestic violence and a commitment by partner agencies to check up on learners who had experienced this as soon as possible thereafter.

There had been an increased expectation for schools in respect of attendance, to identify where those learners were. The DSO felt that this would become a requirement for Colleges too and while non-attendance was currently followed up, the requirement went further than what was currently expected.

She noted that all staff had attended safeguarding training and that all areas of the curriculum were represented on the Safeguarding Committee.

In turning to the overview of the previous year, she noted that there had been no requirements to refer to Channel for prevent concerns, noting that Cumbria was one of the lowest in the country for referrals. 168 learners had been in receipt of counselling through the college. She felt that Children Looked After had been very positive with several learners having transitioned to University. There had been 30 learners monitored on the Safeguarding Register. 95% of staff responded in respect of the staff survey that they felt that safeguarding was effective. She noted that 100% of college devices have filtering and monitoring systems and that this is audited and also noted a significant increase in multi-agency working.

The Safeguarding link governor noted that there was a strong and rigorous process. He was pleased to hear that there were conversations to be had about early help around lead responsibility with families. *In respect of Children Looked After, it was requested that the achievement rates be shared with Governors and this was agreed once the final achievements had been collated.*

The cases of abuse of power by paramedics against apprentice paramedics was noted for context and it was asked about safeguarding for Lakes College apprentices. Assurance was given that apprentices were given the same induction in respect of safeguarding as all other learners and there was engagement with employers in respect of their responsibilities, including breakfast events, and how to report concerns to College.

Noting that there had been 95% of staff who had felt that safeguarding was effective, it was asked about the reservations of the 5%. This was not known as the survey did not give opportunity for further comment, however, it was also the case that there was a duty on staff to raise concerns.

Resolved–

- 1) That the updated guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 be received and noted.
- 2) That CLA achievement rates 2023-24 be shared with the Board.

71/24 Confidential Session and Confidential Minutes

Resolved –

- 1) To move into confidential session.
- 2) That the minutes of the meeting held in confidential session of 27th June 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

72/24 Finance Update - confidential

The Deputy Principal updated the board on financial and budgetary matters.

73/24 Financial Intervention – confidential

The Principal updated the Board in respect of activity from DfE.

74/24 Sellafeld Contract- confidential

The Deputy Principal update the Board on contract activity

75/24 Strategic Plan and other Strategic Developments

The Principal updated the board on local and national policy developments, and partnership activity.

76/24 Open Session

Resolved – that the meeting be reopened

77/24 Key Performance Indicators

The outturn KPIs for 2023-24 were received and noted and of particular concern to the Board was the turnover of apprenticeship staff. There had been a realignment in July recognising the very specialist nature of the work although not without cost in upskilling and retraining.

Ultimately, the risk was recognised that there may come a point when the College may not be able to deliver some programmes and every care was being taken to make sure that any opportunities arising were subject to very careful consideration.

Turning to the KPIs for the coming year, there were some changes, including at risk learners and forecast achievement (working at above or below target). Value-added alps scoring was giving way to measuring the % of learners working at merit+. There would be a trend analysis.

It was noted that for each KPI there would be an action plan. *It was requested that there should be a KPI for apprentices overdue.*

Resolved – that the KPIs be approved subject to the above comment.

78/24 Curriculum Update

In noting maths and English outturn, it was asked about staffing and there had been again a recruitment drive for maths and English and a further re-purposing of the department, working with all learners including adults and neets.

Noting that apprenticeships were currently at 12% unfunded, it was felt that there were multiple reasons - some was to do with maths and English – and every effort being made to push them across the line. Of the apprenticeships under review, it was asked about health and social care and work was going on with employers for a diploma only route.

It was asked about the relationship with the Open University and felt that the relationship is going from strength to strength.

In respect of adults outturn, it was confirmed that it was close to outturn. Some data was awaited from partners, but it was thought that there would not be a massive clawback.

The Green Skills development was welcomed by the Board, however it was verified that this was not another academy but a branding exercise.

The curriculum update was received and noted.

79/24 Health and Safety Annual Summary

The Board offered their very best wishes for a happy retirement to Jane Robertson whose last day was imminent. Health and Safety consultants were supporting the college while recruitment was taking place for a health and safety officer.

There had been 3 RIDDOR reportable incidents in-year for students after a long-period of no riddor reportable incidents and the Board sought and received assurance that follow up action had been taken. There had been no RIDDOR reportable staff incidents.

It was asked whether the Lakes College operations at Energus would be fitted into the framework and assurance received that there would be integration. In addition to this, the Superintending Officer at Sellafield Ltd had signed off that arrangements were fit for purpose, both at the Lakes workshops at Energus on the Lakes College campus.

The Board received and noted the annual summary.

80/24 Governance

The Clerk thanked Governors for their individual feedback over the summer and shared an overview.

Following consultation with Search and Governance Committee, the Board was happy to accept the recommendation to re-appoint Valerie Pallister and Jill Stewart for a further three years.

The financial regulations had been reviewed and considered by the Audit Committee, and were accepted by the Board, noting that authority levels had been put down in some instances in light of the current financial situation.

The regularity audit had also been considered by the audit committee and the Board was content the questionnaire to be signed by the Chair and Principal.

A minor amendment to the Single Equality Policy was received and approved.

Resolved –

- 1) That Valerie Pallister be re-appointed from 1/11/24 to 31/07/27
- 2) That Jill Stewart be re-appointed from 23/11/24 to 31/07/27
- 3) That the Financial Regulations be approved
- 4) That the Regularity Audit questionnaire be approved for signature and submission.
- 5) That the Single Equality Policy be approved.
- 6) That the draft minutes of the Audit Committee 090924 be received and noted.

Staff, staff and student governors left the meeting and observer Sue Thompson

81/24 Confidential Session

Resolved – to move into confidential session

82/24 Performance Reviews

The Board considered the performance review of the Clerk.

The Clerk withdrew

The Board considered the performance review of the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 1950h