

Minutes of the Corporation meeting
held on 16th May 2023

Present: Martin Wyn Griffith (Chair)
John Arnott, Peter Boucher, Simon Cove, Richard Hewitson, Emma Jarman,
Carole Kitching, Monica Lawson, Kathy Newman, David Panes, Shereen Sameresinghe,
Jim Webster, Rob Wheeler

With: Leah Palmer, Deputy CEO/Deputy Principal Curriculum and Learning
Lynne Plested, Vice Principal HE and Curriculum
Lindsey Stewart, Interim Vice Principal Business Development and Employer Engagement
Matthew Butcher, Chief Commercial Strategy Officer
Peta Fry, Head of HR
Tracy Scaife, Head of Governance

338. Welcome – the Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised of a confidential item to be discussed under confidential any other business. Congratulations were offered to Kathy Newman who has a new job with Metro Bank. Unfortunately this means that she will be tendering her resignation as a governor towards the end of the calendar year. This will leave the Corporation with five external governor vacancies and the Chair asked all governors to consider if anyone within their networks might be interested in a governor position. The Head of Governance confirmed that an application has been made to Peridot through the FEC Active Support Programme as agreed in March.

339. Apologies for absence – received from Indyanah-Rayne Francis, John Dernie, Tim Thurston and Marc Webb.

340. Disclosures of Interest – received from Kathy Newman with regard to her employment with Nationwide Building Society with whom the college holds an account.

341. Non-confidential minutes of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 and matters arising – agreed as a correct record subject to Kathy Newman being added to the list of those present.

Matters arising were raised as follows:

(a) Minute 316(c) Safeguarding – noted that the student services review is still ongoing. It was further noted that the Safeguarding Manager has resigned and that the recruitment process for a replacement is in process. Interim measures are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students.

(b) Minute 316(d)(i) Resources, Integration and Change: 24th January 2023 – noted that the IoT Commercial Strategy was due to be presented to the Strategy Day which had been postponed. The meeting requested that the Chief Commercial Strategy Officer and the Managing Director of the Institute of Technology (IoT) be asked to attend the next scheduled meetings of the Resources, Integration and Change committee and the Curriculum and Quality committee to present the IoT Commercial Strategy.

ACTION: MB and DM to present IoT Commercial Strategy to next scheduled meetings of the C&Q and RIC committees

342. Principal's Report – received and noted.

The Principal advised that the report does not have any content on external policy and changes as this had been planned for the Strategy Day.

A formal application to designate Higher Education (HE) provision as *New College Swindon University Centre* has been submitted and it is hoped that this will be in place for September 2023.

The Corporation was saddened to learn of the death of Jake Smith, a bricklaying student of the college, who had died in a tragic accident in the River Thames over the May Day bank holiday weekend. A book of condolence has been opened and college counselling and wellbeing staff have been supporting students and staff. The meeting also noted with sadness that the Principal of Cirencester College had passed away the previous week.

A detailed discussion was held with regard to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Much work has been done on the KPIs based on feedback received and the Chair welcomed the improvements. There is still more work to do, in particular in identifying the key strategic lagging KPIs and a further update will be presented to the Corporation at the July meeting or the revised date for the Strategy Day, whichever is the sooner. Although the KPI dashboard presented to the Corporation was static live incorporates drill down tabs. While not detailed in the KPIs presented, the KPIs presented to the Resources, Integration and Change committee include details of staff who leave the college within their first year of employment. It was suggested that the KPIs should contain reference to the number of audit actions and include more risk and control items.

It was noted that there are some improvements in attendance and retention with figures currently trending well against national data where retention at P6 is higher than national averages. Pass rates still need to be included to calculate final achievement rates (AR). There has been a relentless focus on attendance with key interventions introduced in teaching and learning in order to support student achievement. Timetabling is also being fully revised for September as this has an impact on attendance. The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Learners outlined the comprehensive arrangements introduced to maximise attendance at exams.

The meeting was advised that there is an opportunity for the college through the IoT to work with Nationwide Building Society in the development of a podcast project. The project initiated by a college Governor will initially be funded by Nationwide Building Society with further funding needed from Gatsby and/or external sources. The Chief Commercial Strategy Officer and the Managing Director of the IoT are discussing the opportunity together with the Director of Marketing. The Chief Commercial Strategy Office was asked to keep the Corporation advised of progress.

With regard to cyber security courses, suggestions were made with regard to possible organisations that the college could approach for help.

ACTION: MB to keep Corporation advised of progress re. work on podcast project with Nationwide Building Society.

343. Student Voice Report – received and noted.

The meeting was pleased to be advised by the Student Governor that the majority of issues raised in the report have been actioned. The scheme to collect car registration numbers will be introduced in September 2023.

One of the main concerns of students is the increase in prices by the college caterers. A meeting has been held with the college Procurement Manager to voice student concerns and a follow-up meeting will be held this week. A survey of students is also planned.

A question was asked with regard to the college view/policy on AI. The meeting noted that plagiarism is covered by the Academic Misconduct Policy and that the plagiarism software used by the college identifies most examples of this, however as this becomes more sophisticated more exploration is required and the policy may require revisiting in the future. The Principal said that the college needed to take a broader look at the opportunities presented by AI as well as the challenges and suggested that an open and creative discussion on the matter is included either at a strategy day or within a meeting.

ACTION: *Consideration be given to the inclusion of a discussion on the implications of AI at a future Strategy Day or meeting.*

344. Minutes of committees to note:

(a) Resources, Integration and Change committee: 9th May 2023 – further noted that there have been some small changes to accounting policies which leads to the different figures in the P7 accounts from the previous accounts.

345. Written resolutions – received and noted.

346. Any other business – raised as follows:

(a) Bank mandate – report by Interim Director of Finance (tabled) received and noted.

RESOLUTION – that, following recent staff changes, bank signatories be amended as recommended.

ACTION: *CK/MW to amend bank signatories as recommended.*

(b) Confidential item – confidential minutes refer.

347. Date of next meeting – Tuesday, 4th July 2023 at 4.00pm.

348. Risk management update – confidential minutes (part 1) refer.

349. Accountability Agreement and LSIP update - confidential minutes (part 1) refer.

350. Lockdown Policy - confidential minutes (part 1) refer.

351. Proposal to repay bank loan - confidential minutes (part 1) refer.

352. Confidential minutes (part 1) of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 and matters arising - confidential minutes (part 1) refer.

353. Safeguarding update - confidential minutes (part 1) refer.

354. Confidential minutes (part 2) of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 and matters arising - confidential minutes (part 2) refer.

355. Confidential minutes (part 2) of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 and matters arising - confidential minutes (part 2) refer.

356. Any other business (part 2) - confidential minutes (part 3) refer.