

**Approved Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Corporation held on Tuesday 2 July 2024  
at 6:00pm in the Oak Room, Kirkley Hall and via Teams Conferencing**

**Present:** Louise Bradford, Vice Chair -South (*via Teams*)  
Ian Brown  
Pamela Dawson  
Louise Doyle (*via Teams*)  
Sue Houston  
Susan Pollard (*left after item 109*)  
Alison Shaw, Vice Chair –North (Chair)  
Darren Sterling (*via Teams*) (*arrived during item 96*)

**In Attendance:** Abigail Wampamba Nassuna, FE Governor 2024/25/Observer (*left after item 97*)  
Nick Collins, Co-opted member of the Finance Resources and Projects Committee (*for item 98*)  
David Howells, Chief Financial Officer  
Toni Rhodes, Deputy Chief Executive (*left after item 109*)  
Lee Lister, Campus Principal Northumberland College (Kirkley) (*left after item 109*)  
Vikkie Morton, Vice Principal Student Services and Community (*left after item 109*)  
Iain Nixon, Vice Principal Partnerships and Commercial (*left after item 109*)  
Naomi Robson, Vice Principal Resources (*left after item 109*)  
Jo Cooper, Associate Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality (*left after item 109*)  
Joanne McCormack, Associate Principal, Management Information Services (*left after item 96*)  
Christine Stretesky, Head of Corporate Governance and Policy  
Donna Swan, Governance Officer

The Vice Chair – North took the Chair in the absence of the Chair of the Corporation and welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the Board this academic year. She extended a special welcome to Abigail Wampamba Nassuna, who had been invited to observe the first part of the meeting as an introduction to her role as the FE Student Governor for 2024/25.

**Bd/23-24/94 Apologies and consent for absence and declarations of interest**

There were apologies for absence from the Chair of the Corporation, Governor Stuart; the Chief Executive, Governor Thinnesen; and Governors Fox, Jones, Laing, and O’Leary.

The Attendance Report was received and noted. There were no declarations of interest made.

**Bd/23-24/95 Minutes of previous meeting held on 14 May 2024 and Matters Arising**

The Board agreed the minutes and confidential minutes presented as an accurate record of the meeting held on 14 May. The confidential minutes will be maintained separately.

The Action Log was received. There were no matters arising.

**Bd/23-24/96 DfE Funding Simplification Project**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/97 Curriculum Offer for 2024/25**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/98 Financial Planning and Savings Update**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/99 Safeguarding Policy**

The Vice Principal, Student Services and Community Engagement (VPSS) presented the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for approval and adoption for use in 2024/25.

The changes to the policy include recommendations by the Safeguarding Committee as well as technical changes to remain compliant with the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) which comes into force in September 2024. In addition, changes have been made to reflect feedback from the lived experience of a parent and student who have experienced Domestic Abuse.

The Board commented it was very helpful to have the document with the tracked changes and thanked the VPSS for this. The Board asked whether the updated policy created the need for additional training to be undertaken by Governors and staff. The VPSS responded that there are no general training implications, but two members of staff have undertaken specialist training in Domestic Abuse. The Head of Corporate Governance (HCGP) stated she would include safeguarding training in next year's training offering to keep governors abreast of best practice.

AGREED: to approve the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for 2024/25.

**Bd/23-24/100 Managed Services Contract**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/101 Acknowledgements and Committee Recommendations**

The HCGP advised that there had been no requests for any of the items to be withdrawn for further discussion by the Board.

The Board ACKNOWLEDGED the Chair's use of his authority to award the Transport Contract.

The Board APPROVED the following on the recommendations of the relevant committee:

- Item 101a – appointment of the Student Governors for 2024/25 (Governance),
- Item 101b – modification of the College’s Instrument and Articles of Government to reflect new method of student governor appointment (Governance),
- Item 101c – assignment of Governors Brown and Dawson to the Audit Committee (Governance),
- Item 101d – re-appointment of Catherine Magog as co-optee to the Audit Committee (Governance),
- Item 101e – appointment of Tim Care as co-optee to the Audit Committee (Governance),
- Item 101f – Governor Recruitment and Appointment Policy (Governance),
- Item 101g – Corporate Programme of Business (Governance),
- Item 101h – Corporate Risk Register (Audit),
- Item 101i - Financial Regulations (Audit and Finance, Resources and Projects (FRP)),
- Item 101j – Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Framework (Audit),
- Item 101k – reappointment of Internal and External Auditors (Audit),
- Item 101l – External Audit Plan and Strategy (Audit),
- Item 101m – appointment of Governor Sterling as Vice Chair of the FRP Committee (FRP),
- Item 101n – appointment of Governor Dawson as Vice Chair of the Curriculum Quality and Student Experience (CQSE) Committee (CQSE),
- Item 101o – dissolution of the English and Maths Scrutiny (EMS) Committee (EMS and CQSE),
- Item 101p – Freedom of Speech Code of Practice (CQSE),
- Item 101q – HE Academic Appeals Code of Practice (CQSE),
- Item 101r – HE Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy (CQSE).

The Board ACKNOWLEDGED the approval of the Governor Induction, Training and Performance Policy by the Governance Committee.

#### **Bd/23-24/102 Quality Improvement Plans (QIP)**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

#### **Bd/23-24/103 Committee Chairs’ Reports**

*This item was deferred to a future date in the absence of the Committee Chairs.*

#### **Bd/23-24/104 Lead Governor Updates**

The following reports were made:

Governor Dawson (Lead Governor for Quality) commented positively on the following:

- Huge strategic strides made during the year on improving pedagogy within the College,
- Excellent start to the partnership with Hull University, and
- Great to see the College, in its policies and other documents about HE, using the appropriate vocabulary. She stated it will be important that the Board is confident in its understanding of Higher Education.

Governor Doyle (Lead Governor for SEND provision) reported as follows:

- She had carried out her final visit to Bede Campus where she found the same strong, consistently positive view about the quality of the provision as she had found at the other campuses. This view was shared by several SEND students with articulacy and strength of feeling,
- She met a former SEND student at Bede who was now on the path to becoming a teacher and noted this would make an excellent case study,
- She was pleased with the breadth of the role of the Campus Principal, Northumberland College (Kirkley) (CPK) and thanked him for his response to concerns about the effectiveness of classroom assistants in SEND provision. The CPK expanded upon this to advise that it had been observed that classroom assistants were supporting SEND students to the point that they were restricting their progress towards independence. This resource has now been replaced with specialist mentors.
- An Invitation to all Governors to attend the SEND Graduation in October was issued.

Governor Houston (Lead Governor for Economy and Place (Hartlepool)) reported as follows:

- Connections had been made during the year with several key players in the Tees Valley, notably with Darlington Economic Council and Tees Valley Business Club, raising the profile of Hartlepool Sixth Form College (HSFC) as a college and as an events venue,
- She has made contact with Tees Business to obtain copies for distribution of new Tees Skills magazine to staff and students, and
- On 23 May 2024 the Tees Valley Business Club ran an event at HSFC aimed at the nuclear industry. This was attended by 100 representatives.

Governor Bradford (Lead Governor for Economy and Place (Sunderland)) reported on:

- The massive regeneration of Sunderland which the College is very much at the centre of with its HICSA development which will meet national, regional, and local skills needs in construction and innovation. New developments continue to be brought forward including a proposal for a further gigafactory at Sunderland, new leisure developments, and Fulwell 73,
- Sunderland City Council are looking for ways to engage young people, potential opportunities for the College to assist with this,
- Expo Event with Skills component being planned for October together with a Sunderland Business Festival,
- Potential opportunities that a change in Government may bring forward,
- Impetus for several organisations working together to develop a scheme similar to SmartWorks in Newcastle for Sunderland, provides opportunities for the College to get involved. (ACTION: the HCGP to organise a meeting for Governor Bradford, the DCE and Richard Kierl (EPNE Training) to discuss).

AGREED: to note the reports.

### **Bd/23-24/105 Thank you and Goodbye to Retiring Governors**

The Chair put on record the Board's thanks to the following retiring Governors for their hard work and contributions to the success of the College:

- Governor Jeff Hope – the former Chair of the Northumberland College Governing Board, Governor Hope had made a remarkable contribution in representing the College’s interests with Northumberland County Council and the Ashington Town Board,
- Governor Michael Laing – as FE Student Governor, Governor Laing had presented the student perspective with courage and fluency, and
- Governor Sue Houston – in her role as Senior Independent Governor, Governor Houston had made a significant contribution to governance with the College. She had also served on the English and Maths Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee and as Lead Governor for Economy and Place (Hartlepool) bringing perspective to all. Governor Houston spoke of the real pleasure she had had in being a member of the Board and working with the College. She commented on the innovation and huge achievements that the College had secured in just four years and wished everyone continued success.

*The following item was moved up the agenda:*

**Bd/23-24/109 Any Other Business**

*This report was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

There was no further business.

*Staff Governors and attendees were requested to withdraw from the meeting for the following item and were permitted not to return for the subsequent information items:*

**Bd/23-24/106 Remuneration – Recommendation of the Remuneration Committee**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/107 Draft Minutes of the following Committees**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/108 Papers from Committees**

*This item was deemed confidential with minutes maintained separately.*

**Bd/23-24/110 Date, time, and venue of the next meeting**

The Board noted the arrangements for the next meeting as follows:

- Tuesday 1 October 2024 at 6:00pm in the Boardroom at City Campus.

**Bd/23-24/111 Meeting Wrap-up**

The Chair asked members to reflect on the meeting and provide any feedback to the HCGP.

The Chair requested that the Board’s thanks to the Senior Leadership Team, the HCGP and the Governance Officer for their support during the year be recorded.

The meeting closed at 8:00pm.

**These minutes were approved by the Board of the Corporation at its meeting on 1 October 2024 pursuant to minute Bd/24-25/02.**