



**Cirencester  
College**

**VERSION – EXTERNAL MINUTES (Final)**

**MINUTES OF CIRENCESTER COLLEGE  
CORPORATION MEETING  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 from 5pm**

**N001 and Microsoft Teams**

This meeting was also available via Microsoft Teams. All documents were made available to all Governors via Office 365 and shared via Microsoft Teams.

**Governors:**

- Arron Evans (AE) (Parent Governor) (via Teams)
- Jane Fern (JF) (Staff Governor)
- Fiona Galbraith (FG) (External Governor)
- Jim Grant (JG) (Principal)
- Chris Haslam (CH) (External Governor) (via Teams)
- Ben Mathis (BM) (Student Governor) (via Teams)
- Libby Reed (LR) (External Governor) (via Teams)
- Nicole Saunders (NS) (External Governor) (via Teams)
- Amelie Solomon (AS) (Student Governor) (via Teams)
- Julian Tudsbery (JT) (External Governor)
- Nikki Webster (NW) (Staff Governor)
- Ben West (BW) (External Governor)
- David Zan-Kreyser (DZK) (External Governor) (via Teams)

**In attendance:** Matt Couzens (VP Curriculum and Quality), Angelo Faria (AF) (Finance Director), Karen Fraser (KF) (VP Student Experience and External Relations), Matt Reynolds (MR) (VP Teaching and Learning), Jeannie Adam (Clerk)

Governor Comments (GC)

Governor Questions (GQ)

Corporation Decision (CD)

Ben West (Vice Chair) – was Chair for this meeting.

1. **Apologies:**  
Apologies were received and accepted from Peter Holmes, Susie Richards and Andrew Tubb.
2. **Declarations of interest**  
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Corporation membership**

**CD - On the recommendation of the interview panel appointed by the Search and Governance Committee (6<sup>th</sup> February 2023) and following the interview on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and subject to DBS clearance and satisfactory references, the Corporation unanimously approved the appointment of TF as an external governor and member of the Audit Committee.**

**Action – Clerk to write to TF to advise of Corporation approval of his appointment as an external governor and member of the Audit Committee (subject to DBS clearance and satisfactory references).**

#### **4. Financial Statements Review 2021-2022**

The letter from ESFA (29<sup>th</sup> March 2023) confirming the financial health grade for 2021-2022 as outstanding had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Corporation noted the ESFA letter of 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

#### **5. Appointment of external auditors**

**CD - On the recommendation of the Audit Committee selection panel which met on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, the Corporation unanimously approved the appointment of Mazars LLP as external auditors effective from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 for 3 years and with 2 annual optional extensions thereafter.**

**Action – Clerk to write to Mazars LLP and Bishop Fleming to confirm the outcome of the tender process.**

#### **6. Annual Strategic Conversation**

- a. The agenda of the annual strategic conversation had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting and was noted by the Corporation.
- b. The annual strategic conversation skills reform presentation had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting and was noted by the Corporation.

The Principal gave a verbal report regarding the Annual Strategic Conversation with DfE and Further Education Commissioner's (FEC) office held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023. PH and AF also attended the meeting. The key points raised were:

- A key area of interest was the college response to the skills agenda and progress around T Levels. The evidence of collaboration with other institutions was well received.
- There was little discussion around academisation.
- The meeting was very positive and a good opportunity to share information about the college.
- Ongoing contact will be termly.

#### **7. Accountability Agreement 2023-2024**

- a. The Department for Education guidance document 'Accountability Agreements for 2023-2024' (updated April 2023) had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting and was noted by the Corporation. This document outlines the requirements of the accountability agreement for 2023-2024.
- b. The final draft of the Accountability Agreement 2023-2024 for Cirencester College, prior to its submission to the Department for Education in advance of the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 deadline, had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

**CD – Subject to a minor amendment to the opening statement, the Corporation unanimously approved the final draft of the Accountability Agreement 2023-2024. The document will be signed by the Chair of the Corporation.**

**Action – Clerk to arrange for the sign off of the Accountability Agreement by the Chair of the Corporation.**

**8. Principal's Report (Confidential)**

**a. Principal's report April 2023**

The Principal's report for April 2023 had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The details of these discussions are recorded in the confidential internal minutes.

The Corporation noted the Principal's report for April 2023.

**b. Key Performance Indicator (KPI) tracker against Strategic Plan 2022-27.**

The KPI Tracker had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The KPI Tracker (2022-2027) was noted by the Corporation.

**9. Quality of teaching and learning (planning and implementation, impact, pedagogy, out of class learning, high achievers)**

The Quality of Teaching and Learning Report (April 2023) had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The VP Teaching and Learning made the following key points:

- Recent HESA data continues to show positive outcomes for Cirencester College students who attend university. These are above national figures for the state and independent sectors.
- The outcome for GCSE Maths and English re-sits continues to show high levels of achievement for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row which are well above the national figures.
- Curriculum development and expansion continues to be a priority.

**GQ – Has the college noticed any issues with artificial intelligence being used by students?**

A – This is coming up regularly and is usually easily identified by teaching staff as they are aware of their students' abilities and can spot any issues. Assessment methods may have to change over time.

**GQ – How is the revised supervised study programme working?**

A – It is being piloted with current 2<sup>nd</sup> years and will be rolled out to 1<sup>st</sup> years for 2023-2024. The app monitors attendance as the students log their activities via the app.

**GQ – Are 3-hour lessons working well?**

A – The teaching approach is key. It allows staff to structure the learning time differently and flexibly. It works very well for science and arts-based subjects. Complaints about 3-hour lessons are no longer being received.

**GC – The overall message – academic, professional, technical – is a very effective way to capture and describe the college approach and strengths.**

The Corporation noted the Quality of Teaching and Learning Report (April 2023).

**10. Pastoral support – student behaviour/attitudes, student support, student participation in enrichment and community**

The Pastoral Support Report (April 2023) had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The VP Student Experience and External Relations made the following key points:

- Exclusions have returned to expected levels.
- Student support is levelling off but remain above pre-pandemic levels.
- Tutor group attendance has improved and students who attend provide positive feedback.
- A new counselling service has been introduced which provides 24/7 access to support via an app and helpline.

The Corporation noted the Pastoral Support Report (April 2023).

#### **11. Statutory duties – safeguarding, Prevent, EDI, GDPR and FOI (Confidential).**

The Statutory Duties Report (April 2023), which also included the College Performance Report (data on student outcomes for particular groups – FSM, deprived areas, Polar postcodes) deferred from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023, had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The details of these discussions are recorded in the confidential internal minutes.

The Corporation noted the Statutory Duties and College Performance Report (April 2023).

#### **12. Budget sign-off (2023-2024)**

The operating budget for 2023-2024, finance plan and commentary (extended to 2026-2027) had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Finance Director thanked JT and DZK for their time at a recent Focus Governor meeting.

The Finance Director drew the Corporations' attention to the areas where he is seeking Corporation approval as outlined in the operating budget 2023-2024, finance plan and commentary.

GC – Following a meeting with the Finance Director, JT and DZK are supportive of the budget for 2023-2024 and recommend Corporation approval. Projections for capex, student enrolment and inflation assumptions were challenged and found to be prudent.

The VP Student Experience and External Relations advised that student applications are 250 higher than at the same point last year.

**CD – The Corporation unanimously approved the following:**

- **The proposed operating budget for 2023-2024.**
- **Loan option 4 or 5 to release £1m cash security.**
- **Finance plans extended from 2024-2025 to 2026-2027.**
- **Approve of the additional £440k of capital appropriation from reserves, taking the prior £8.106m to £8.546m of appropriations.**

**Action – Clerk to write to Finance Director to confirm Corporation approvals.**

#### **13. Focus Governance**

##### **Focus Governance**

The Focus Governor reports regarding contact and meetings with SLT and key college staff had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

- a. The email from Chris Haslam (1<sup>st</sup> March 2023) was noted by the Corporation.
- b. The Focus Governor report for HR (31<sup>st</sup> March 2023) by SR and AT was noted by the Corporation.

- c. The Focus Governor report for safeguarding, student wellbeing, tutorial, education for life, student experience. (20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023) by LR was noted by the Corporation

#### 14. **Governance**

- a. To note, approve and sign off the minutes of the Corporation meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023:
  - i. Confidential minutes – external governors only
  - ii. Confidential Internal minutes
  - iii. External minutes

The minutes had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

NB: Confidential minutes for external governors only of the Corporation meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 had been issued by email.

All minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Vice Chair of the Corporation.

- b. Matters arising from the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no matters arising from the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 minutes.

- c. The FE Commissioners Spring Term Newsletter had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting and was noted by the Corporation.

#### 15. **Policies**

- a. The Pay and Pay Review Policy (March 2023) had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

**CD – The Corporation unanimously approved the adoption of the Pay and Pay Review Policy (March 2023).**

**Action – Clerk to write to the policy owner to advise of Corporation approval.**

#### 16. **Any Other Business**

There was no further business for the meeting.

**JF/BM/AS/NW/MC/MR and KF left the meeting.**

#### 17. **Pay proposals 2023-2024 (confidential external governors only)**

The details of the discussions for this item are recorded in the confidential minutes for external governors only.

#### 18. **Date of next meeting**

5.00 pm on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 in N001 at Cirencester College.

As detailed in SO Appendix 2B – Summary of Key Business 2022-2023 this meeting will receive reports on the following:

- Additional 40 hours report
- Quality of teaching and learning – progress on at-risk areas
- Student retention and attendance report
- Destination report
- Results of staff, student, and parent surveys.

**The meeting closed at 6.45pm**

**Signed by:**  
**Peter Holmes (Chair of Corporation)**



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**Date**

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Summary of resolutions, action points and outstanding business from this meeting (20 <sup>th</sup> March 2023).	Action	Completed?
Item 3 – Clerk to write to TF to advise of Corporation approval of his appointment as an external governor and member of the Audit Committee (subject to DBS clearance and satisfactory references).	Clerk	Complete. Appointment from 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Item 5 - Clerk to write to Mazars LLP and Bishop Fleming to confirm the outcome of the tender process.	Clerk	Complete. 24/4/2023 Mazars advised by email. 26/4/2023 Bishop Fleming advised by email.
Item 7b - Clerk to arrange for the sign off of the Accountability Agreement by the Chair of the Corporation.	Clerk	26/4/2023 – complete.
Item 12- Clerk to write to Finance Director to confirm Corporation approvals.	Clerk	26/4/2023 – complete.
Item 15 - Clerk to advise policy owner and the Principal's PA that the policy has been approved by the Corporation. The revised document can be issued via CCO and posted on the website (if required).	Clerk	26/4/2023 – complete.
Item 17 - Clerk to write to Finance Director to confirm Corporation approvals.	Clerk	26/4/2023 – complete.