GRANTHAM COLLEGE
CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 October 2024, 18.00
Conference room and Remote access via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Mr G Brewis	General Member (Chair)
Mrs C Dewhirst	General Member
Mr P Deane	Principal & Chief Executive
Ms S Ellis	Staff Member
Mr N Jones	General Member
Ms L Smith	Staff Member
Mr C Turner	General Member
Mrs A Treacy	General Member
Miss K Roberts	Student Governor (appointed 24/138)

In Attendance:

Mr M Kalbasssi	Lay Governor (for part)
Mrs T Scarborough	Vice Principal – Quality & Curriculum
Ms L Steptoe	Vice Principal – Apprenticeships and Business Development
Mrs C Temprell	Vice Principal – HR and Student Services
Mrs J Taylor-Holmes	Clerk

Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

	24/137 - Apologies for absence	
1	Apologies were received from Mrs J Adams, General Member Ms B Dungarwalla, General Member	
2	Apologies were also received from Mrs A Harrison, Director of Finance.	
	24/124 – Confirmation of eligibility, quorum and declarations of interest	
3	No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office.	
4	The meeting was quorate and there were no declarations of interest in agenda items.	
5	Governors reviewed the Forms for completion; • Declaration of Eligibility	

6	• Declaration for Fit and Proper Persons • Declarations of Interest • Code of Conduct – noting there were no proposed changes **Resolved:** Governors approved the forms for completion and it was agreed that these would be completed by Governors and returned to Mrs J Taylor-Holmes, Clerk to the Corporation	
7	**24/139a – Appointment of Student Governor** **Resolved –** Miss K Roberts was appointed as Student Governor to 31 July 2025.	
8	**24/139 – Minutes of the previous meeting: 9 July 2024** **Resolved –** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record, noting that there was a change within the minutes that the Audit Committee had approved the external audit plan.	
9 10 11 12 13 14	**Matters Arising** Matters arising and progress was noted. It was noted that the capital update was on the agenda, the project income streams were contained within a separate spreadsheet for the Finance & Resources Committee meeting to consider. Staff pay increase had been deferred for consideration by the Finance & Resources Committee meeting in November. It was noted that the demonstration of the Senso IT software in relation to safeguarding would be provided to the Standards Committee meeting in November. Both the equality and diversity information for staff and students would be presented to the Board meeting in December 2024. All matters arising were complete, on the agenda or for completion at a future meeting. **Notification of Urgent Business / Any other business**	

15	There had been no items of urgent business / any other business notified.	
	24/141 - Chair's Report & activity report from Governors	
16	Mr G Brewis, General Member and Corporation Chair explained that he had now undertaken to meet with all Governors as part of the one-to-one process and the self-evaluation of the Board. There was one outstanding meeting which would be held in the coming days. The emerging theme was around Governor engagement with the work of the College. The themes would be reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee, along with the prioritised recommendation from the External Governance review and the Committee self-assessment (in Autumn) with a view to providing a Board Development Plan to the February Governor Development session.	
17	Mr Brewis explained that there had been a Search and Governance Committee meeting held in advance of the Board meeting and there had been a discussion around plans for the 2024/25 Governor Development sessions.	
18	It was agreed that the session to be held on 5 November 2024 would include a tour of the site which would support Governors to better get to know the site and the challenges such as the response to RAAC and the new facilities available. It was agreed that this would provide some context and Governors would be split into groups to undertake the tour with members of the senior leadership team (SLT).	
19	The session to be held on 4 February 2025 would include presentations from all members of the SLT on their areas of focus and the risks and opportunities arising out of their areas of responsibility. Governors would be split into groups to discuss areas where Governors might support the work of the SLT and how Governors may undertake the ambassadorial role and get involved in the work of the College. The session to be held on 6 May 2025 would allow for the full discussion and agreement of the strategic plan and the accountability statement. This would be timely and hopefully build in the outcome of the Spring Budget to could feed into any decisions and areas of focus.	
20	The above plan would also support the two external governance review recommendations which had been	

	suggested as areas for focus in this year; have an annual conversation between the Board and the Executive to help clarify the expectations of each other, in regard to governance, and where governance oversight should be focused for the next 12 months; Clarify the governors' ambassadorial role, their external facing role.	
21	Ms C Dewhirst, General Member explained that she had attended College and had visited the accommodation block and a quiz night for students. Ms Dewhirst explained that she had met families and students as part of the student awards event and had received lots of good feedback about the positive impact of the College. Ms Dewhirst commented that she had met with Mrs Scarborough, and she would be attending learning walks with members of the senior team. Mrs T Scarborough, Vice Principal – Quality & Curriculum explained that the opportunity to attend and participate in learning walks was open to all Governors and information would be circulated.	
22	**Resolved -** Governors noted the content of the Chair's Report and Activity report from Governors.	
	24/142 – Principal & Chief Executive's Report	
23	Mr Deane, Principal & Chief Executive presented the Principal and Chief Executive's Report and a summary of key matters.	
24	Mr Deane referred to the decisions, included within the report following the outcome of the general election. Mr Deane was disappointed to note that the 5.5% agreed pay increase for schools didn't apply to the FE sector and this would further widen the pay gap for staff.	
25	Mr Deane referred to the creation of Skills England and the associated plan to close the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE). There had been a pause in the review of the defunding of BTECs pending the outcome of a review which was positive. It was understood that the review would be undertaken in December 2024. It had been hoped for a longer pause to enable to sector to support and advise students on options; any feedback following the review would be shared with Governors and it was hoped that the Government would take into consideration the comments from the sector about the significant disadvantage to students should BTECs be withdrawn.	

26	Mr Deane commented on the positive news that there had been a commitment to fund in year growth.	
27	It was noted that the launch of a Curriculum and Qualifications Review to include 16-18 could provide opportunities and threats and would be considered in due course.	
28	Mr Deane referred to the decision to continue with devolution in Lincolnshire and it was noted that there would be an impact of this, particularly in relation to the adult education budget.	
29	Governors noted that the National Careers Service would be merged with job centres.	
30	It was further noted that, following a budget on 30th October, a Spending Review was planned in Spring 2025. The Spending Review would provide more information and was important in terms of how the Department for Education would receive funding. This would also impact on the College Strategic Plan which was for review during 2024/25.	
31	Mr Deane referred to the decisions to come listed within his report. It was noted that there had been no mention of Institutes of Technology however, the College had received retained the licence of the IoT for a further five years; the Government had mentioned new Technical Colleges. This also linked to the discussions around more integration between FE and HE.	
32	Mr Deane commented on the decision by Pearson to (with very late notice and after assurances that any change would mirror that in previous years) significantly change grade boundaries. In response to a question from Governors, it was noted that this was linked to the specific v2 qualifications aimed at the FE sector and Post-16 students. Mr Deane explained that a number of papers had been submitted for remark with some success.	
33	The RAAC update was noted. Mr Deane referred to the new temporary buildings on site and commented that the remaining buildings were planned to be on site during half term. It was noted that the work was funded by the DfE. Mr Deane explained that the work would be undertaken in two stages; an approval letter has been obtained in relation to the professional fees and this element would go to tender.	

	It was hoped that the full rebuild of the link block would be approved with the aim for completion in Spring 2027.	
34	Mr Deane confirmed that, following confirmation that the Anglian Water apprenticeship contract had been renewed. Anglian Water had doubled the number of apprentices. All staff involved including Imogen Brooks, Head of Curriculum area and the accommodation staff were thanked for their support and response to the request.	
35	Mr Deane explained that the College had been requested by SKDC to award the College funding to deliver under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. It was noted that there was a requirement to spend funds and deliver the project by the end of March 2025. It was suggested that Governors may wish to submit a Freedom of Information Act request to SKDC to ask how the funds had been allocated and how much had been allocated to skills.	
36	Governors were referred to the update within the report in relation to the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF). Governors agreed that the investment and support in this area had been extremely positive and provided some excellent opportunities for students to develop skills and experience.	
37	**Resolved:** Governors noted the content of the Principal's Report.	
	24/143 - Reporting against Strategic Plan 2022-2025	
38	Governors received the dashboards.	
39	Mr Deane referred to the targets and progress made.	
40	Governors received the finance dashboard.	
	Strategic Plan Progress Report	
41	Governors received an update on each of the four main goals identified within the strategic plan.	
42	Goal 1; Ensure that student and apprentice progression, employability and career opportunities are central to everything we do so that we help to improve social mobility, reduce employers' skills gaps and support the creation of a thriving and sustainable local economy and community; noted achievement rate improvements.	

43	Mrs Scarborough commented on the improving achievement rates and attendance. Mrs Scarbrough explained that this continued to be closely monitored with a clear reporting and escalation process in place. It was noted that reports to parents and carers for 16-18 year old students would go out at the end of the next term.	
44	Ms L Steptoe, Vice Principal – Apprenticeships and Business Development commented that when reviewing performance against standards only, the College was around 60.6% which was at the ESFA target. It was noted that students on framework were a legacy of the old system. There had been a great focus on compliance with apprentice reviews with meetings being held with employers every three months.	
45	Mrs Scarborough provided an update on progress against goal 2; Develop and deliver a vocational, technical, professional and higher education curriculum which supports the above whilst increasing access & inclusivity.	
46	Mrs Scarborough referred to the work being done to engage with school children and the changes in the curriculum offer in terms of Higher Technical qualifications and HNC in construction and animal care. The College had changed the layout in the healthcare rooms to create a hospital area and the College was supporting students on some of the defunded qualifications.	
47	The College had completed the Access and Participation Plan and there were plans in place to reduce gaps for students due to social mobility. There had been increased marketing in HE.	
48	Ms L Steptoe confirmed that the College apprenticeship numbers were currently improved on the previous year with further opportunities in the pipeline. Governors were referred to the new four-week review which had been undertaken at the outset of the apprenticeship to review the suitability of the apprentice and the programme. It was hoped that this would support students and employers further.	
49	In relation to engagement with employers further, it was noted that the College was holding regular employee forms to ensure full engagement with curriculum design and to demonstrate meeting LSIP priorities.	

50	Mr C Turner, General Member asked whether the College was looking at an increase in degree apprentices and any potential competition from universities in relation to provision of this. Ms Steptoe confirmed that the College was monitoring Government policy in relation to this; the current focus appeared to be on foundation apprenticeships. Mr Deane commented on the difficulty faced in gaining accreditation from an awarding body as it was likely that the university would wish to deliver the apprenticeships themselves.	
51	It was noted that recruitment had increased across all areas as against the previous year; 16-18 had increased by 7%, HE by 15%, apprenticeships by 36%, the adult figures were under review (as currently showing a 61% increase). It was noted that the increase in apprentice recruitment may be a timing issue with enrolment occurring earlier than in the previous year.	
52	It was agreed that the figures were positive however, there was a cost and challenge in relation to the requirement to deliver more in the Maths and English provision.	
53	Mr Deane explained that much of the information in relation to goal 3 was within the Finance papers. Goal 3; Maintaining a financially robust and sustainable organisation that allows us to continue to invest in delivering our mission.	
54	Mr Deane explained that the year-end position was slightly more positive than forecast with a smaller deficit against budget. Whilst there had been some in year growth, Mr Deane reminded Governors that the 16-18 funding was lagged funding and would not be provided until 2025/26.	
56	In relation to pay, this was currently around 75% of income which was above the 65% target. This was an area where the College may be challenged. The College continued to forecast a good financial health grade.	
57	In relation to student retention; Mr Deane commented that the year-end position had been negatively impacted by the Home Office moving a number of refugees out of the area at short notice; this had also impacted on achievement.	
58	In relation to performance in Maths and English; Mr Deane commented that the College was in line with national average in Maths and below the national average for English (noting that this figure had been impacted by the Pearson	

	issue). It was noted that this would be discussed further at the Standards Committee along with the Quality Improvement Plan.	
59	In relation to goal 4; Create a values driven organisation where all staff are supported & empowered to deliver the above, continuously improve & inspire our students to strive for and achieve the highest standards.	
60	Mrs C Temprell, Vice Principal – HR and Student Services referred to the continued staff wellbeing and physical activities and the training which had been provided to staff at the outset of the academic year.	
61	**Resolved:** Governors received the update on progress against strategic goals.	
	24/144 –Finance Report & Enrolment update	
62	On behalf of Mrs Harrison, Mr Deane provided the Finance Report.	
63	The report summarised the financial position at the end of July 2024.	
64	Mr Deane explained that the draft year end outturn showed an operating deficit of £78,100 (against a forecast deficit of £109,500) excluding FRS102 and predicted education specific Earnings Before Interest Tax and Depreciation (EBITDA) of £305,0000 surplus or 3.2% of income which should result in a 'Good' financial health grade for 2023/2024. It was noted that this did not take into account any adjustments if required following the financial year end audit.	
65	Governors agreed that the position was positive against the forecast.	
66	It was noted that the year-end position would be provided to the Joint Audit and Finance & Resources Committee meeting in November 2024 along with draft annual Finance Statements.	
67	Governors noted the update on enrolment provided as part of agenda item 24/143.	
68	**Resolved:** Governors received the Financial Report to the 31 July 2024.	

	24/147 – Capital / Estates Projects update	
69	Mr Deane provided an update on the OfS engineering building development noting that there had been a slight overspend in relation to the project. Governors noted the LSIF update as part of agenda item 24/142.	
70	Mr Deane referred to the earlier update in relation to RAAC and commented that it was good to see the response to requests for repayment and with repayments being made promptly and not impacting on cashflow.	
71	In relation to leaks in the roof, a quote for £70,000 including VAT had been received for repairs, this would be considered further.	
72	In relation to the proposed sale of North Lodge; work was ongoing to finalise legal arrangements before the property would be submitted to sale at auction.	
73	Mr Deane explained that the DfE were planning to undertake a drone survey of the roof to review the roof condition. It was hoped that this work could be undertaken promptly due to the impact on classroom space.	
74	Mrs A Treacy, General Member asked about the ringfencing of proceeds of sale from the North Lodge site. Mr Deane confirmed that the proceeds would be ringfenced for capital and this could be allocated to roof repairs. Mr Deane explained that there was currently £50-60,000 allocated within the budget for capital, this was an extremely challenging budget.	
75	Mr Deane commented that he was hopeful that the Government would allocate some funding to the FE sector for capital improvements.	
76	**Resolved:** Governors received the Capital / Estates projects update.	
	24/148 – Subcontracting report	
77	Ms Steptoe presented the Sub-Contracting report and confirmed that the College did not have any sub-contracting in place during 2023/24 and did not plan to enter into any sub-contracting arrangement in 2024/25.	

78	**Resolved:** Governors noted the Sub-Contracting Report 2023/24 and Subcontracting Policy 2024/25.	
	24/149 – HE update	
79	Mrs Scarborough provided the HE update. Governors were referred to the conclusions within the paper as follows;	
80	2023/24 end of year performance in terms of achievement and retention had increased on the previous year which was positive.	
81	2024/25 HE enrolments were slightly up at the same point as this time last year despite a fee increase – 69 students as compared to 64 at the same time in the previous year when writing the report, 71 currently. There was a keen focus on marketing and internal progressions.	
82	Access and Participation plan 2025-2029 was completed and submitted on time with a focus on progression routes and clear strategies to support students. The HE team continued to work on this area. Governors received the Access and Participation Plan and noted the objectives and targets within the report. It was noted that this was one of many Office for Students requirements which applied to all providers of HE in the same way.	
83	Mrs Scarborough proposed a fee increase from £8000 to £8252 per annum and provided the local fees for comparison.	
84	Mrs Scarborough referred to the success of the STEM challenge and comments within the paper in relation to enhancing student engagement and the work being undertaken with LinCHigher to support destinations and progression.	
85	It was noted that work and collaboration continued with the LIOT to showcase the college and provide support with marketing the provision under the LIOT umbrella.	
86	**Resolved:** Governors received the HE update.	
87	**Resolved:** Governors approved the HE fee increase (£8285 annually in line with RPI).	
	24/150 – Safeguarding update	

88	Mrs Temprell provided the Safeguarding update.	
89	Mrs Temprell referred to changes to the Safeguarding Policy as a result of changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. Mrs Temprell referred Governors to section 3.1 of the report which detailed the main amendments / additions to the Policy.	
90	It was noted that following the inclusion of stronger emphasis regarding working together, there had been an increase in multi-agency meetings which were very useful to support students. There had also been a change around domestic violence and a widening of the definition to cover when students 'see, hear or experience its effects'. This meant that if the student was present in the home when there was domestic violence, the definition covered this whether the student saw or heard anything.	
91	Mrs Temprell referred to the growing number of 14–16-year-old students and how this was also linked to the growing number of home educated students. The College was the alternative provision in some cases. There was a duty to inform the school if the student was absent and a duty to carry out home visits.	
92	Mr Brewis asked about the format of the multi-disciplinary meetings. Mrs Temprell confirmed that these were usually held via MS Teams and described the type of things and support which would be discussed as part of the meetings.	
93	Mr Brewis asked whether the new guidance and changes in approach to safeguarding were meaning a greater resource requirement for the College. Mr Deane explained that the greater statutory responsibilities were creating a greater resource issue for the College. It was also noted that there was a recommendation that Ofsted would undertake annual safeguarding reviews which was being considered and would result in further work in this area.	
94	Mrs Temprell referred to the greater and more complex safeguarding issues which were being seen at the College and how this was also impacting on the work of the team. Mrs Temprell also referred to the high levels of deprivation within Grantham. Mrs Temprell commented on the support for staff to support their resilience when dealing with challenging matters. There were regular team meetings in place to support the team and providing the opportunity to share and discuss cases.	

95	In a response to a question around challenges, Mrs Temprell commented that there remained issues arising from COVID, lack of parental control and lack of student and individual responsibility which continued to contribute to challenges. There were more instances of homelessness being reported and Mrs Temprell referred to the LA and the lack of funding for housing support.	
96	In relation to the number of cases, sexual behaviours were the highest and a number of these had Police involvement; there was a mix of peer on peer and reports from outside the College. The second highest number of incidents were in relation to suicide. Mrs Temprell confirmed that this followed a similar pattern to the previous year. There had been incidents of financial coercion and financial abuse reported for the first time.	
97	Mrs Temprell confirmed that the College continued to educate students and staff regarding safeguarding risks and were using external partners to deliver some messages regarding some safeguarding topics. Mrs Temprell referred to training which was being delivered on 28th October by Lincolnshire Police's violence against women and girls team and will cover sexual harassment and help support the College in the new employer duty around this subject. It was agreed that Governors would be session.	
98	Mr Brewis referred to the increasing responsibilities and costs of delivering the requirements. Mrs Temprell explained that the College continued to work with external agencies to support students and this also included the use of volunteer counsellors.	**Action: Mrs Temprell October 2024**
99	Mrs S Ellis, Staff Governor commented that there were many more lower-level concerns that do not meet the safeguarding incident threshold that were dealt with regularly by the pastoral team.	
100	**Resolved:** Governors approved the Safeguarding Policy.	
101	**Resolved:** Governors received the Safeguarding update.	
	24/151 – Governance update	
102	Governors received the Governance update.	

103	Mrs Taylor-Holmes presented the schedule of business for 2024/25.	
104	**Resolved:** Governors approved the schedule of business for 2024/25.	
	24/152 - Urgent Business / Any other Business	
105	Mrs Temprell referred to a Maths and English event which was being held on 28th October; this was a Multiply session on Improving confidence to support students with GCSE Maths (and was mandatory for academic staff who have learners taking GCSE Maths, optional for others). The aim of the session was to update teaching and support staff on current maths GCSE requirements. The session would also provide ideas and activities which could be used to support students doing GCSE maths. It is an opportunity for staff to refresh their own maths skills where necessary. Governors were invited to stay for this session after the sexual harassment training.	
106	Mr Brewis commented on the positive data and the progress being made by the College.	
107	There being no further business the meeting closed.	

Meeting:
Tuesday 10 December 2024

Signed as a true and accurate record

Chairman
Date

Action Table

Agenda Item	Description	By whom	By when
23/126 – Forecast out-turn 2022/23 and Budget 2023/24 and 2 year forecast	It was agreed that project income streams would be added to the dashboard for to enable easy monitoring.	**Mr Deane**	**Autumn 2023 To F&R Committee COMPLETE and ON AGENDA**
23/139 – Principal & Chief Executive report	The College funding announcement in July 2023 was seen as a positive development and Mr Deane referred to the pay award to given to staff in April 2023. Consideration of the pay award for staff going forward would	**Finance & Resources Committee**	**June 2024 <u>UPDATE</u> NOW Deferred until Autumn 2024 COMPLETE and ON AGENDA**

	be made at the Finance and Resources Committee in March 2024.		
23/142 – Equality and Diversity for Employees	Ms B Dungawalla, General Member asked about reporting and the use of the information. Mrs Temprell explained that there were reporting requirements such as the gender pay gap report and that the information was used to review recruitment and advertisement practices. It was agreed that Mrs Temprell and Ms Dungawalla would discuss this further.	**Mrs Temprell / Ms Dungarwalla**	**TBC** **To be rescheduled**
23/145 – Safeguarding update	It was agreed that an update on the Senso IT software system would be provided to Governors at a future Strategic Development session.	**Mrs Temprell**	**TBC** **Strategic Development Session** **COMPLETE AT STANDARDS COMMITTEE**
23/163 - Annual Diversity, Equality and Inclusion for Students 2022/23	Mrs Temprell explained that the next step was the development of an action plan. Ms B Dungarwalla, General member offered support.	**Mrs Temprell / Ms Dungarwalla**	**TBC**
24/131 – Finance Report	Resolved: Governors resolved that the decision regarding staff pay increase be deferred to Autumn 2024.	**Finance & Resources Committee**	**November 2024** **To F&R Committee** **COMPLETE and ON AGENDA**
24/150 – Safeguarding update	Mrs Temprell referred to training which was being delivered on 28th October by Lincolnshire Police's violence against women and girls team and will cover sexual harassment and help support the College in the new employer duty around this subject. It was agreed that Governors would be session.	**Mrs Temprell**	**October 2024** **COMPLETE**