

# EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

## CORPORATION BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 24 February 2023 in the Boardroom, Hele Road, Exeter**

### Present

Bindu Arjoon	Corporation Chair
Glenn Woodcock	Corporation Vice Chair
John Laramy	Principal/CEO
Emma Bradshaw	
Smith	
Pamela DeGregorio	
Neil Hitchings	
Rob Hutchins	
Carol McCormack	
Stewart Noakes	
<i>To item 5.4</i> Tim Quine	
Phil Randall	
Vicki Roberts	
Zakia Volschenk	

### Observers

None

### Apologies

Sangaralingam Ahilan  
Sarah Brampton  
Sally Wolkowski  
Patrick Tigwell  
Sue Clarke

### In Attendance

	Rob Bosworth	Deputy Principal/CEO
	Jade Otty	Vice Principal Performance
<i>Item 5.3</i>	Dee Rowett	Director of Teaching, Learning and Development
	Alison Layton-Hill	Head of Governance

- |    |   |               |
|----|---|---------------|
| 1. | <p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting with a particular welcome to Zakia Volschenk the new FE student governor. Apologies were received from Sangaralingam Ahilan, Sarah Brampton, Patrick Tigwell, Sue Clarke and Sally Wolkowski.</p> | <b>Action</b> |
|----|---|---------------|

### Declarations of Interest

Bindu Arjoon, Deputy CEO, Exeter City Council declared an interest in any items relating to Exeter City Council and as a Director anything related to Exeter College Services Ltd.

Glenn Woodcock, Member of Council, University of Exeter declared an interest in items relating to the University.

Tim Quine, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Exeter declared an interest in items relating to the University.

Carol McCormack, Partner Michelmores, declared an interest in any items relating to Michelmores.

John Laramy, Principal/CEO declared an interest in any items relating to Pearson and as a Director anything related to Exeter College Services Ltd.

## 2. **Minutes of Meetings**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2022, as circulated, were agreed subject to amending the stated location.

2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2022, as circulated, were agreed.

## 3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that did not appear elsewhere on the agenda.

## 4. **Corporation Chair's Report**

The Chair thanked all those involved in the Student Awards celebration held the previous month and conveyed that the event had been a wonderful reminder of the talent of College students and the valued support from partners.

The Chair referred to the Annual Strategic Conversation with the Department for Education that she attended with members of the Senior Leadership Team. It had been a positive conversation giving an opportunity to highlight the College's strengths and challenges.

The Chair confirmed that the Board Residential will be taking place on 12 and 13 May 2023 at the Imperial Hotel in Torquay. The programme will focus on how the Board will drive the strategic direction of the College into the future and governors will be able to comment on and agree the content of the programme later in the meeting.

The Chair reminded governors that the South West Governance Conference will be taking place on 20 March 2023 and encouraged governors to advise the Head of Governance if they were available and wished to attend.

**ALL**

## **The Board noted the report**

## 5. **Strategic Matters for Discussion**

- 5.1 Principal's Strategic Report  
This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.
- 5.2 Skills Update  
The Board considered the regular report presented by the Deputy CEO. Governors discussed ensuring that the College was ahead of local demand in terms of required skills sets. There was concern expressed that net zero ambitions may provide employment opportunities in areas where the associated skills do not yet exist.

The Board questioned the challenges of T Levels. The College is making every effort to successfully deliver Higher Technical Education, however there is a trend for young people to attend university as opposed to pursuing a more skills focused route.

The Chair acknowledged the excellent collaboration with the Heart of the South West.

### **The Board noted the report**

*Dee Rowett, Director of Teaching, Learning and Development joined the meeting*

The Board sent its congratulations to Kristyn and Sophie Woodward on the birth of their twins.

- 5.3 Student Services Update  
The Chair welcomed Dee Rowett to the meeting. The Board received the presentation and noted the collaboration between Student Services and Teaching Learning and Development. The presentation focussed on the Extra provision, wellbeing and mental health and careers.

Governors were keen to receive a future update related to the programme of education around sexual exploitation.

The Board questioned whether those learners that have further to travel and those with disabilities are less able to attend EXtra activities. It was confirmed that the College is mindful of ensuring activities are available at all times of the day and in different locations to ensure they are inclusive. Learners from Foundation Learning and those with high needs benefit from a specific initial six-week programme and engage well with EXtra. The College intends to target sport and fitness to ensure there are no barriers.

The Board also questioned how the college is furthering its strategy to improve the mental health of learners regionally. The College offers specific support to learners when they are preparing for exams. There are

also a variety of mindfulness activities such as Tai Chi as well as a variety of workshops.

The Board was reassured that the provision had received significant investment and was sufficiently resourced.

**The Board noted the report and expressed its thanks to Dee, Kristyn and the teams for all they do in support of learners**

*The Principal/CEO left the meeting momentarily.*

The Chair welcomed John Dowell, the new Executive Director of Finance to the meeting.

#### 5.4 Accountability Agreements/Critical Success Factors

The Board received the presentation and reviewed the critical success factors. The Board was pleased to note that all staff had attended a presentation highlighting the College values and critical success factors.

The Board was encouraged to think about what the College's role will be in terms of education across the region over the next 8-10 years with a focus on collaboration. It was confirmed that there will be further discussion at the Board Residential.

The Deputy CEO explained the new requirement for FE Colleges to submit accountability agreements to the DfE by the end of May 2023. These agreements must set out the overall expectations of providers in return for the Department's funding investment. The Board considered the draft accountability statement.

**The Board noted the report and agreed to receive the revised accountability statement for sign off at the Board meeting in April 2023**

*The Principal/CEO re-joined the meeting*

#### 6. **Learner and Student Voice update**

##### 6.1 College News

The report was received and taken as read. The Principal/CEO highlighted that planning permission had been granted for the intended works at Flowerpots and thanked Steve Strang and the team.

**The Board noted the report**

##### 6.2 Learner and Student Voice Report

The report was received and taken as read. The new Learner Leadership Team is working well to help secure improvements across the College.

**The Board noted the report**

- 6.3 Student Governor Report  
The Board received the report provided by Sangaralingam Ahilan, HE Student Governor. The Board expressed its thanks to Ahilan for his positive reflection of his experience at the College.

**The Board noted the report**

**Part 2 REPORTS FOR NOTING/APPROVAL**

**7. Recommendations from Search and Governance Committee**

- 7.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 30 January 2023.  
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 30 January 2023 was received and the Chair highlighted the key issues.

The Committee had noted that there were two external governor vacancies and that two Committee Chair roles would become vacant within the next nine months. The Committee had considered potential candidates in the context of ensuring an appropriate level of skills, EDI consideration and the ability to take on more senior roles. There had also been a discussion related to succession planning for board members and the senior leadership team.

The Committee had discussed the Skills for Jobs white paper requirement for all FE colleges to engage in a mandatory external review of governance every three years and the Chair had led a discussion to start to shape the terms of reference for the review.

- 7.2 Governor Reviews  
The Chair explained that the governor review process is an opportunity for governors to reflect on their role and give feedback on the governance of the College. She encouraged governors to consider their appetite to take on roles such as Committee Chair/Vice Chair. The Head of Governance will collate any issues and themes that emerge from the reviews and present an action plan to the Search and Governance Committee.

**The Board approved the governor review process**

- 7.3 Meeting Schedule of Dates 2023/2024  
The Board considered the proposed meeting schedule of dates for 2023/2024 which reflected the number of Board meetings being reduced to four allowing for four clear cycles where committee meetings feed into each Board meeting. This reduction of meetings is in the context of additional meetings being convened where necessary.

**The Board approved the meeting schedule of dates for 2023/2024**

- 7.4 Board Residential draft programme  
The Board received and considered the draft programme for the Board Residential on 12 and 13 May 2023 and noted that the focus would be on setting the strategic direction of the College into the future.

The Board suggested inviting a further external speaker and requested that items presented are as participative as possible to generate rich discussion.

**The Board agreed the Board Residential programme subject to the above considerations**

8. **Recommendations from Remuneration Committee**  
8.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 30 January 2023.  
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 30 January 2023 was received and the Committee Chair highlighted the key issues.

The Committee had received the new Leadership Team Structure which had been shared with the Board earlier in the meeting.

The Committee had agreed amendments to the remuneration of the senior post holders, except the Head of Governance, and had reviewed the notice periods of all senior post holders.

The Committee had agreed to source external support for the ongoing performance management of the Principal/CEO and to align performance targets against the College's long-term strategy.

**The Board noted the report**

9. **Recommendations from the Quality and Standards Committee**  
9.1 Executive Summary from Committee meeting on 6 February 2023.  
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 6 February 2023 was received and the Committee Vice Chair highlighted the main issues.

The completion rate for the student induction survey had decreased slightly and every effort would be made to improve the return rate for the following year. Student happiness had been rated the highest of any previous survey and it was particularly pleasing that learners had praised the LRCs and the canteen provision, which were areas where the College had focused improvements.

Referring to catch-up funding, it was noted that additional funding had been invested to support low prior attaining and disadvantaged learners

as well as for maths and English GCSE. The funding was confirmed for one further year.

Attendance remained an area of focus despite a small improvement against the same time in the previous year. Disruption to transport had had a particular impact on learner attendance.

The Committee had approved the following policies:

- Digital Safety policy
- Probation procedure
- Suspension and dismissal policy
- Special leave procedure
- Code of practice on the use of social media

## 9.2 High Needs SAR Grading 2021/2022

Following the outcome of the Ofsted inspection and debate at the Board meeting in December 2022, the Committee had considered reducing the SAR grade for High Needs from outstanding to good.

The Committee had received evidence of why the College had previously identified the provision as outstanding and its reflections of where the provision could be more ambitious.

Governors considered the comparable Ofsted grades of other providers nationally and acknowledged that 'good' for high needs remained a grade to be proud of.

### **The Board approved the recommended grade of 'good' for High Needs**

## 9.3 HE SAR 2021/2022 and QIP 2022/2023

The Committee had been advised that the Adult and HE provision had been redesigned and relaunched. The Committee had viewed a marketing video for higher technical education. The Committee was reassured that the curriculum is improving and that the College is ahead of the curve in relation to implementing Higher Technical Qualifications.

The Committee considered the strengths and areas for development as presented and recommended the HE SAR and QIP to the Board for approval

### **The Board approved the HE SAR 2021/2022 and QIP 2022/2023**

## 9.4 **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

The Committee had received the revised policy which included the updates from Keeping Children Safe in Education, information related to site security and signing and a reference to the digital safety policy which is a new policy.

### **The Board approved the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

### **PART 3: REPORTS AND MINUTES FOR INFORMATION**

10. **Reports**

The following reports were **received and noted**.

10.1 Student Induction Survey

10.2 Catch up funding

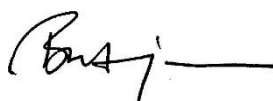
10.3 Retention and Attendance

11. **Dates of scheduled meetings for 2022/2023**

Friday 28 April 2023

Friday 7 July 2023

Signed by Chair:



Date: 28th April 2023