

## EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION BOARD

### Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 5 July 2024 at the Future Skills Centre, Exeter Airport, Exeter

#### Present

Bindu Arjoon	Chair
Glenn Woodcock	Vice Chair
John Laramy	Principal/CEO
Graham Atkins	
Sue Clarke	
Pamela DeGregorio	
Laura Eggins	
Neil Hitchings	
Antony Hart	
Rob Hutchins	
Carol McCormack	
Ayomide Okesola	
Tim Quine	
Victoria Roberts	
Cynthia Sedgman	
Sally Wolkowski	

#### Observers

January Roberts

#### Apologies

Stewart Noakes  
Damion Norcombe  
Lindsay Skinner  
Patrick Tigwell  
Stephen Wiltshire

#### In Attendance

	Jade Otty	Deputy CEO
	John Dowell	Executive Director of Finance
<i>For item 5.3 only</i>	Steve Strang	Executive Director of Estates and IT
<i>For item 5.4 only</i>	Gemma Noble	Executive Director of People and Organisational Development
<i>For item 5.5 only</i>	Lucinda Sanders	Director of Adult and HE
<i>For item 5.5 only</i>	Katie Wild	Head of Media and Performing Arts
<i>For item 5.5 only</i>	Dave O'Connor	Head of Construction
	Alison Layton-Hill	Head of Governance

1.

#### Welcome and Apologies

The Chair commenced the meeting by welcoming colleagues and thanking governors for their commitment and support over the past academic year. Following the general election, the change of government was acknowledged, and the College looked forward to understanding the government's agenda for Further Education.

The Chair offered a particular welcome to Antony Hart to his first Board meeting. Apologies were noted from Stewart Noakes, Damion Norcombe, Lindsay Skinner, Patrick Tigwell and Stephen Wiltshire.

#### Action

The Board noted that this would be the final meeting for the student governors, Ayomide Okelsola and Laura Eggins. The Chair thanked them for undertaking a crucial role and wished them well for their futures.

The Chair acknowledged that this would be Glenn's Woodcock's final Board meeting after eight years serving as a governor. The Chair particularly thanked Glenn for his support as Vice Chair, including his participation in the SPH appraisals. She conveyed that Glenn had been an excellent governor, had challenged the Board in its thinking and his passion and determination for ensuring that the College does its best for all young people had played a significant role in evolving the culture of the Board. Glenn thanked colleagues, adding that it had been a great privilege to have been part of the College.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Bindu Arjoon, CEO of Exeter City Council declared an interest in items related to the Council and as a Director, in items related to Exeter College Services Ltd.

Glenn Woodcock, Member of Council at the University of Exeter, declared an interest in items related 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, items related to Exeter College Services.

## **2. Minutes of Meetings**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2024, as circulated, were agreed.

2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2024, as circulated, were agreed.

## **3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

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

The Chair advised governors that, following a robust election process, Vicki Roberts had been re-elected as the Business Support staff governor for a further term of four years. The Chair congratulated Vicki on behalf of the Board and thanked her for all that she has and continues to contribute.

The Chair particularly highlighted Ayo's impressive achievement at being awarded runner up at the Sixth Form Colleges Association annual awards in the category of governance.

The Chair had attended the Michael Caines Academy awards expressed her confidence that @34 is deserving of the national accolades it receives.

The Vice Chair was invited to comment on the Academic Awards that he had attended earlier in the week. It had been a delightful evening to acknowledge the success of learners, as well as create a sense of progress and excitement for the future.

The Chair referred to the continuing challenge the College faces in terms of space and acknowledged how proactive the leadership team is in securing additional accommodation at this time.

Referring to the Board Residential, the Chair thanked everyone for their contribution and commented that it had been a resounding success. The main focus had been the evolution of the strategic plan and governors looked forward to receiving an update from the lead members of staff later in the meeting.

The Chair acknowledged a hugely successful academic year and thanked all students, staff and governors for their continued commitment. She wished everyone a happy and restful summer break.

### **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 Budget 2024/2025**

This item was dealt with as a confidential and recorded in the confidential minutes.

*Steve Strang joined the meeting*

##### **5.3 Capital Projects Scrutiny**

The Board received the presentation and noted the extensive capital works programme over the next year.

Governors received a fly through of the design of the Centre for Law and Social Sciences (CLS) and noted that the financial position was as expected. The completion date had been slightly delayed, however early delivery of some teaching spaces was anticipated.

The Board was pleased to note that the savings, which would be realised related to the 3G pitch at Flowerpots, would enable the reinstatement of the floodlighting and spectator areas.

The works associated with the T Level Wave 5 funding at the Laurence building and the CCI and the LSIF funding at Falcon House and the Technology Centre were all progressing well.

Governors questioned the mix of formal and informal space within the CLS design. It was confirmed that teaching staff had been part of the design and that the teaching spaces will be flexible. In addition, a large ground floor area and patio will be available for social space and informal gathering and learning.

The Board sought assurance related to the sustainability of the build. Power will be fully electric supported by solar panels leading to increased efficiency and reduced demand on the energy centre.

The Chair congratulated Steve and the team for their efforts in managing such an extensive capital programme. She also recognised the robust oversight of the Business Services Committee.

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

*Steve Strang left the meeting and Gemma Noble joined the meeting*

#### **5.4**

#### **Gender Pay Gap**

The Board received the report and data which was correct as at 31 March 2023.

Governors asked whether there was a disparity between teaching and non-teaching staff. It was confirmed that this was not the case in terms of the overall pay gap. Pay scales are the same for men and women in all roles, however there are more women in lower level business support roles. It was noted that the pay scales had been amended for business support staff and that this recognition had provided reassurance.

The Board requested that pay gap data is made available for each quartile in the future.

**GN**

Governors questioned whether recruitment policies encourage part time or job shares in senior roles. The College's approach is flexible and there are part time staff within the Senior Leadership Team and the College Leadership Team. The role of the Curriculum Area Managers had not historically been part time but there had been a significant increase in part-time staff over recent years.

The Board was pleased to note the paths for progression and was reassured that mentors are available for colleagues to support them with the confidence to apply for promotions. The College has also introduced an inspiring leadership programme.

*Gemma Noble left the meeting and Lucinda Sanders, Katie Wild and Dave O'Connor joined the meeting*

- 5.5 Strategic Plan Evolution  
Governors received the draft strategic plan and provided comment. The Board will receive an updated textual version to the Board meeting on 18 October 2024 and discussion had already commenced with the design team and learners in terms of the final format of the strategic plan.

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

- 6.1 College News  
The report was received and taken as read.

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

- 6.2 Learner and Student Voice Report  
The report was received and taken as read.

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

- 6.3 Student Governor Reports  
The Board received the reports provided by the student governors. Ayo thanked governors and the Head of Governance for their support adding that the experience of being a student governor had enabled her to understand the world of governance, assisted her progression and ultimate career path as well as improving her self confidence and strategic thinking. She expressed confidence that the College was committed to doing the right thing for all learners. Ayo felt honoured to receive the recognition from the Sixth Form Colleges Association and will cherish her award.

Laura expressed that she had thoroughly enjoyed being a student governor, thanked the Vicki Roberts and the Head of Governance and acknowledged the support she receives from the HE team. She was grateful for the insight into how the College is governed and noted how that had supported her learning. Through her tenure as a governor, Laura had become part of the RNIB training delivery and she was pleased that disability awareness and visual impairment training has been implemented over the year.

The Board thanked both student governors and noted that they had been enthusiastic, engaging and approachable.

### **The Board noted the reports**

## **Part 2 REPORTS FOR NOTING/APPROVAL**

7. **Recommendations from Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**  
7.1 Executive Summary from Committee meeting on 10 June 2024

The report summarising the key issues considered at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 10 June 2024 was received and the Committee Vice Chair highlighted the key issues.

The Committee had received assurance through deep dives into two risks; R2.74 failure to recruit 16-18 learners and R2.13 adverse publicity and reputational damage.

- 7.2 Risk Register
- The Board considered the risk register, which had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 10 June. Governors proposed further consideration is given to the risk related to the lack of funding and inflation. It was also raised that despite mitigations risks remain high, a situation that will continue to be monitored. **JD**

**The Board approved the Risk Register**

- 7.3 Post 16 Audit Code of Practice
- The Board considered the report detailing the changes made in April 2024 to the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice.

**The Board agreed to adopt the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice**

- 7.4 External Audit Strategy 2023/2024
- The Board received the External Audit Strategy for the preparation of the financial statements for the current year.

**The Board approved the External Audit Strategy for 2023/2024**

- 7.5 Internal Audit Service re-appointment 2024/2025
- The Board received the Committee's recommendation to re-appoint Tiaa as the internal auditors for the following year.

**The Board approved the reappointment of Tiaa as the internal auditor for 2024/2025**

- 7.6 Internal Audit Programme 2024/2025
- The Board received the internal audit programme for 2024/2025. It was confirmed that external specialist organisations would be used where appropriate.

**The Board approved the internal audit programme for 2024/2025**

8. Recommendations from Business Services Committee
- 8.1 Executive Summary from Committee meeting on 17 June 2024.
- The report summarising the key issues considered by the Business Services Committee meeting held on 17 June 2024 was received.
- 8.2 Exeter College Provisional Budget 2024/2025

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting under Strategic Discussion items.

- 8.3 Exeter College Services Ltd Provisional Budget 2024/2025  
This item was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

9. **Recommendations from Quality and Standards Committee**

- 9.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 24 June 2024.  
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 24 June 2024 was received.

It was highlighted that TLD had already amended staff CPD for the following year based on learner feedback. Lucinda Sanders was complimented on the positive feedback received from the HE student voice.

Cynthia Sedgman had attended a QRR session and had appreciated the unique insight into this quality assurance process.

- 9.2 Careers Strategy  
The Board considered the Careers Strategy and noted the suggestion for a more accessible version for learners.

**The Board approved the Careers Strategy**

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

10. **Reports**

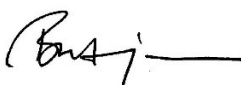
The following reports were **received and noted**.

- 10.1 Opportunities and Developments register  
10.2 On Course Teaching and Learning survey  
10.3 Governance/Sealings Report

The Chair closed the meeting expressing her thanks to governors for their engagement and continuing commitment to the College.

11. **Dates of scheduled meetings for 2024/2025**

Friday 18 October 2024  
Friday 13 December 2024  
Friday 4 April 2025  
Friday 4 July 2025

Signed by Chair: 

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024