

**Runshaw College Corporation Board Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday 7 December 2023, 5.30 – 7.30 pm**

| Corporation Board Members |                                  | Attendance |           |            |                     |          |           |          |           |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
|                           |                                  | 28.09.23   |           | 07.12.23   |                     | 21.03.24 |           | 16.05.24 |           |
| Full Name                 | Position                         | Attended   | Apologies | Attended   | Apologies           | Attended | Apologies | Attended | Apologies |
| Warren Middleton          | Chair                            | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Alison Watson-Bird        | Vice Chair                       | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Motunrayo Ainehi          | Student Governor                 |            |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Portia Bailey-Barrow      | Independent Governor             |            | A         |            | A [Maternity leave] |          |           |          |           |
| Robert Cobourne           | Staff Governor                   | ✓          |           |            | A                   |          |           |          |           |
| Simon Drew                | Independent Governor             |            | A         | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Richard Evans             | Independent Governor             | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Gary Hall                 | Independent Governor             | ✓          |           |            | A                   |          |           |          |           |
| Ali Kamel                 | Student Governor                 |            | A         | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Joshi Jariwala            | Independent Governor             |            | X         | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Martina Jay               | Independent Governor             |            | A         | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Michael Lowe              | Independent Governor             | ✓          |           |            | A                   |          |           |          |           |
| Alex Magowan              | Staff Governor                   | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Dominic Martinez          | Independent Governor             | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Graham Murphy             | Independent Governor             | ✓          |           |            | A                   |          |           |          |           |
| Ade Oladapo               | Independent Governor             | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Clare Russell             | Principal                        | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| <b>Total attendance</b>   |                                  | <b>69%</b> |           | <b>75%</b> |                     |          |           |          |           |
| <b>Clerk</b>              |                                  |            |           |            |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Denise Williamson         | Head of Governance               | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| <b>In Attendance</b>      |                                  |            |           |            |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Martin Rigby              | Deputy Principal                 | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Janet Ivill               | Vice Principal                   | ✓          |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |
| Helen Knowles             | Beever & Struthers [Item 3 only] |            |           | ✓          |                     |          |           |          |           |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| ✓ | Present   |
| A | Apologies |
| X | Absent    |

| Item  | Agenda item  |
|---|--|
| 1.  | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>   |
| <p>Apologies for absence were received from Gary Hall, Michael Lowe, Graham Murphy and Robert Cobourne. Portia Bailey-Barrow was absent due to maternity leave and therefore was not expected to attend.</p>  |  |
| 2.  | <b>Declarations of interest</b>  |
| <p>Governors were invited to declare any direct, indirect, pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interest relating to any item on the agenda for the meeting. Alison Watson-Bird declared an interest in agenda item 5.1 relating to the appointment of a new Chair of the Corporation Board.</p>  |  |
| 3.  | <b>Presentation of Audit Findings – Beaver &amp; Struthers</b>   |
| <p>Helen Knowles, Audit Director at Beaver and Struthers attended the meeting via MS Teams for this agenda item only.</p> <p>Helen Knowles confirmed that the audit is now complete and extended her thanks to the Finance Team for their assistance and co-operation throughout the process. It was further confirmed that the auditors would be issuing unqualified opinions on both audit and regulatory aspects of the work carried out and that no issues of significance had been identified.</p> <p>A total of six recommendations were recorded, all of which were low risk and had been agreed as part of the management response.</p> <p><b>Action: CB A14:</b> The Chair of the Finance Committee asked that progress against the actions identified within the management response be brought to the next Finance Committee meeting [Owner: Vice Principal Finance and Facilities/Head of Governance].</p> <p>Governors extended their thanks to the External Auditors and to the College’s Finance team.</p> |  |
| 4.  | <b>Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 September 2023</b>  |
| 4.1   | <b>Corporation Board Minutes – 28 September 2023</b>   |
| <p>The minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on 28 September 2023 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record.</p>   |  |
| 4.2   | <b>Approval to amend governor attendance information on Corporation Board minutes from 30 March 2023 and 18 May 2023</b> |
| <p>The Head of Governance confirmed that the attendance of one Governor had not been accurately recorded within the minutes of the Corporation Board meetings in March and May 2023 and sought approval to amend the minutes accordingly.</p> <p><b>Decision: CB D5:</b> The Board agreed that the minutes should be amended.</p> <p><b>Action: CB A15:</b> Minutes to be amended to reflect accurate attendance information [Owner: Head of Governance]</p>  |  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>4.3</b>   | <b>Action Log</b>   |
| <p>All actions remaining on the Action progress log had been completed with the exception of Action Number CB A8 relating to the completion of Safeguarding and Prevent modules by Governors. This activity is scheduled for January 2024.</p>   |   |
| <b>5.</b>  | <b>Governance Matters</b>   |
| <b>5.1</b>   | <b>Arrangements for the appointment of a new Chair of the Corporation Board</b> |
| <p><b>Alison Watson-Bird withdrew from the meeting</b></p> <p>The Head of Governance summarised the activity to date in relation to the appointment of a new Chair of the Corporation Board following the retirement of the existing Chair at the end of December 2023.</p> <p>The Head of Governance confirmed that one nomination was received following a request for nominations for the role in relation to Alison Watson-Bird. The Board was therefore requested to confirm the appointment of Alison Watson-Bird as Chair of the Corporation Board from January 2024 and to agree the arrangements for the nomination and subsequent appointment of a new Vice Chair. The Board confirmed the appointment of Alison Watson-Bird as Chair of the Corporation Board from January 2024.</p> <p><b>Alison Watson-Bird re-joined the meeting.</b></p> <p><b>Decision: CB D6:</b> The Board confirmed the appointment of Alison Watson-Bird as Chair of the Corporation Board from January 2024.</p> <p><b>Decision: CB D7:</b> The Board agreed that nominations in relation to the role of Vice Chair should be sought and that details of the process would be circulated by the Head of Governance prior to the Christmas break.</p> <p><b>Action: CB A16:</b> Process for the appointment of a Vice Chair of the Corporation Board to be communicated to Board members complete with role descriptor [Owner: Head of Governance]</p> |   |
| <b>5.2</b>   | <b>Appointment of a new External Governor</b>                                   |
| <p>Following a discussion at the recent Search and Governance Committee, and subsequent conversations, a recommendation was made to the Corporation Board to appoint Martyn Lylyk, an existing co-opted member, to the Corporation Board.</p> <p><b>Decision: CB D8:</b> The Board agreed the appointment of Martyn Lylyk to the Corporation Board.</p> <p><b>Action: CB A17:</b> Appointment to be confirmed and an induction schedule arranged [Owner: Head of Governance]</p>   |   |
| <b>5.3</b>   | <b>Appointment of a new Student Governor</b>                                    |
| <p>The Head of Governance confirmed that the process leading to the election of a new Student Governor had recently concluded and, following a ballot, Motunrayo Ainenehi had been elected</p>   |   |

as Student Governor. The new Student Governor introduced herself to members and was warmly welcomed by the board.

**5.4 Co-opted Member Resignation**

The Head of Governance confirmed that Mark Kerfoot, a co-opted member on Audit Committee has confirmed his intention to resign.

**Decision: CB D9:** The board accepted Mark Kerfoot’s resignation.

**5.5 Adoption of the new AoC Code of Good Governance**

The Head of Governance provided a summary of the current position in relation to the new AoC Code of Good Governance, confirming that it is expected that colleges will adopt the new code no later than 1 August 2024.

**Decision: CB D10:** The Board agreed to adopt the new AoC Code of Good Governance from 1 August 2024 and further agreed that the current position vs. the new code be incorporated within the scope of the External Board Review planned to take place during the Spring term.

**Action: CB A18:** Work to commence in relation to adoption of new AoC Code of Good Governance, ensuring that this informs the scope of the EBR. [Owner: Head of Governance]

**5.6 Governor Skills Scan and Training**

The Head of Governance confirmed that a Skills Scan had been developed for completion by Governors which would be distributed at the beginning of January. This would enable a mapping exercise to be carried out in relation to current skills vs those that are anticipated to be required in the future and will inform future governor recruitment activities.

The Head of Governance confirmed that following this exercise, a training plan will be developed aligned to the new ETF Governor Development programme which will include mandatory training regarding areas such as Safeguarding and Prevent.

**Action: CB A19:** Skills Scan to be circulated and outcome to be used to inform future training and new governor recruitment [Owner: Head of Governance]

**6 Reports from Corporation Sub Committees**

**6.1 Audit Committee**

A member of the Audit Committee provided an overview of the work of the Audit Committee in the absence of the Chair. She confirmed that 2022/23 had been a strong year in terms of the College’s response to audit recommendations and provided a summary of the actions which are continuing to be progressed in relation to both IT disaster recovery and the risk of a cyber-attack. The member also confirmed that the audit had progressed smoothly and reiterated her thanks to the College’s finance team for their work in this respect.

**6.2 Finance Committee**

The Chair of the Finance Committee provided a summary of the work of the Finance Committee confirming that the management accounts were in line with forecasts and that no significant issues had arisen.

The Chair confirmed that the Finance Committee had reviewed the proposal in relation to the staff pay award and that this had been supported by the committee in relation to affordability and that discussions had taken place in relation to the campus masterplan which would be included as part of the agenda for the forthcoming strategy day.

In response to the summary provided, a member asked if the pay award had been communicated to staff. The Principal confirmed that the details of the award had been communicated and had been received very positively.

### **6.3 People & Organisational Development Committee**

The Chair of the People and Organisational Development Committee provided a summary of the work of the committee confirming that the committee had reviewed the proposal in relation to the staff pay award and that this had been supported by committee members.

The Chair confirmed that a standing item had been added to the committee agenda in relation to recruitment to hard to fill roles which was an on-going challenge for the College and that a number of strategies had been implemented in order to address this. A discussion in relation to staff voice had also been part of the recent committee meeting and, again, it was reported that the College had a number of initiatives in place in order to hear and respond to feedback from staff.

Finally, the chair confirmed that positive progress had been made in relation to reducing staff sickness absence.

### **6.4 Search & Governance Committee**

The Chair of the Search and Governance Committee provided a summary of the work of the committee, referring back to the conversations which had taken place as part of the governance self-assessment meeting. The Chair of the Committee confirmed the intention to review the Terms of Reference of the Committee to ensure that this remains fit for purpose and to focus future work on succession planning and training amongst other areas.

### **6.5 Standards & Curriculum Committee**

The Chair of the Standards & Curriculum Committee confirmed that the work of the committee had been re-aligned in line with the new quality procedures implemented across the College. The Chair of the Committee raised the duty to review the extent to which the College's curriculum meets local, regional and national skills needs which is proposed as part of the agenda for the Strategy Development meeting in January.

The Chair confirmed that the committee continues to focus on supporting sustained improvements to the quality of provision, particularly within A Level provision.

The Chair explained that an additional meeting of the committee had been arranged in order to give consideration to the College SAR and QIP and confirmed that, following a small number of

amends, the committee had agreed the grades proposed within the College SAR. Committee members felt that the grades awarded were accurate and should lead to a robust understanding of the current position.

A member asked if the outcome of the Quality of Education survey completed by students is reported to the Standards and Curriculum Committee and the Chair confirmed that this was the case.

The Principal thanked the committee for their responsiveness and for their support in ensuring that the committee is completely aligned with the new ways of working.

## **7. Principal's report**

The Principal provided a summary of her report highlighting that, whilst the College had met its 16 – 18 recruitment targets, there remains a shortfall to the overall target due to issues in relation to retention. The Principal confirmed that work is ongoing in order to address this and that there will not be a financial impact in year due to the lagged funding model.

The Principal outlined the significant advances achieved in relation to the Campus Masterplan, including the opening of the new Health Care facilities in Tyndale alongside a wide range of other internal and external refurbishments.

The Principal confirmed that work continues in relation to initiatives to drive improvements in the Quality of provision, including significant changes to the College's Quality Assurance and Improvement processes which are now starting to have a positive impact. She confirmed that self-assessment is now complete at all levels of the college and Reviews of Quality are underway in relation to any curriculum areas designated as being in 'urgent care'. Quality improvement is also being supported by cross college improvement days, two of which had taken place during the Autumn term, along with extensive additional training in a wide range of topics relevant to individual roles. The Principal confirmed that teaching teams in particular have attended several training events on pedagogy and quality improvement, adding also that she had met with staff regularly in order to ensure alignment, including the presentation of educational impact awards with more awards planned at the end of the Autumn term focusing on the College strategy and values.

The Principal confirmed that four very successful open events have taken place during the Autumn term and that a new 'Back to the Future' Event had also taken place attended by Employer Partnership Board members which had been well attended by employers from a wide variety of different sectors, the outcome of which is now feeding into curriculum planning. The Principal confirmed that employer Partnership Boards are now well established and members were very proactive in terms of curriculum input. In addition, to the above, the Principal advised that several excellent events had also been held for the parents and carers of our current students including welcome evenings, a prestigious universities evening and a degree apprenticeship evening.

On the subject of the pay award, the Principal confirmed that the increase of 7.52% for all staff exceeds the AoC recommendation of 6.5% whilst also ensuring that the College's teacher pay scale matches that of Sixth Form Colleges.

Finally, the Principal referred to the draft agenda for the Strategic Planning meeting planned to take place on 25 January. The Principal reminded members that the College is coming to the end of the existing 3 year planning period and will therefore be embarking on the development of a new Strategic Plan. The Principal provided a draft agenda which included a number of potential areas for discussion.

Following a conversation, a member suggested that some pre-reading would be helpful prior to the event, particularly in relation to strategic drivers within the external environment which would impact on the development of future strategy. Members agreed that input from relevant external representatives would also be useful.

**Action: CB A20:** Agenda for the Strategic Planning Day to be confirmed in accordance with feedback received from the Board [Owner: Principal/Head of Governance]

**8. Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 July 2023**

The Vice Principal, Finance and Facilities presented the Annual Report and Financial Statements for approval. The Vice Principal confirmed that the financial position is positive and that the College meets the criteria for Outstanding Financial Health.

The Chair of the Finance Committee confirmed that members of the committee had reviewed the information and were content to recommend the approval of the Annual Report and Financial Statements to the Corporation Board.

A member queried the income derived from Apprenticeship provision which was lower than budget, asking if this was a particular concern. The Principal confirmed that the College’s strategy was to focus on high quality apprenticeships in specific sector areas rather than on driving income growth.

**Decision: CB D11:** The Board approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 July 2023.

**9. Corporation Annual Reports**

**9.1 Audit Committee Annual Report to the Corporation**

The Head of Governance presented the Audit Committee Annual Report to the Corporation, explaining that the purpose of the report was to advise the Board on the effectiveness of the College’s systems of internal control.

The Board noted the opinion of the audit Committee that there is an effective framework of governance, risk management and control.

**Decision: CB D12:** The Board approved the Audit Committee Annual Report.

**9.2 Remuneration Committee Annual Report to Corporation**

The Head of Governance presented the Remuneration Committee Annual Report confirming that the production and publication of the report was a requirement as part of the Senior Postholder Remuneration code adopted by the College.

**Decision: CB D13:** The Board approved the Remuneration Committee Annual Report

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>10</b> | <b>Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan</b> |
|-----------|--|

|             |                            |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| <b>10.1</b> | <b>College SAR and QIP</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------|

The Deputy Principal summarised the College’s Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 and the Quality improvement Plan for 2023/24. The Deputy Principal highlighted particularly the positive changes made to the Quality Assurance and Quality improvement processes, confirming that improvements in student satisfaction could be seen as a consequence of the changes made following the publication of the results of the recent Quality of Education survey.

A board member queried the response of staff to the changes made in relation to quality processes and the Deputy Principal confirmed that it is helpful that staff are able to see the impact of the changes that have been made, particularly in the quality of the student experience. It was recognised that establishing new ways of working can be challenging and the Principal confirmed that she was committed to supporting staff as the College implements the change programme.

A board member queried the timeline in relation to a return to Ofsted Outstanding. The Deputy Principal confirmed that the Senior Leadership Team had confidence that improvements would be secured this academic year but reinforced that the impact of the changes made will not be fully realised until next year.

**Decision: CB D14:** The Board approved the College Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 and Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/24.

|             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>10.2</b> | <b>Governance SAR and QIP 2022/23</b> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|

The Head of Governance summarised the Governance Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan which, she said, had been developed following questionnaire responses received from governors as well as the self-assessment meeting with governors.

A discussion followed regarding relevant KPIs and targets were agreed in relation to governor attendance at meetings, participation in training, response to surveys and governor engagement in college activities. It was agreed that a target would be established in relation to the impact of governance following the conclusion of the External Board Review in the Spring Term.

The Head of Governance concluded by summarising the proposed priority areas and associated actions for 2023/24 which included a focus on new governor recruitment and induction, governor training and succession planning and governor connectivity amongst other areas.

**Decision: CB D15:** The Board approved the Governance Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 and Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/24.

|           |                        |
|-----------|------------------------|
| <b>11</b> | <b>Staff Pay Award</b> |
|-----------|------------------------|

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>11.1</b> | <b>Ratification of Written Resolution</b> |
|-------------|---|

The Head of Governance summarised the written resolution in relation to the pay award of 7.52% effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 which, she confirmed, had been supported by all external governors.

The Principal advised that one amendment was now required following the publication of the autumn statement in relation to the national minimum wage which would mean that the College proposed to make a pay award of £11.44 per hour for the lowest paid staff rather than £11.39 per hour as was previously proposed. The financial impact of this change was estimated to be c. £28k.

**Decision: CB D16:** The Board approved the proposal in relation to the staff pay award.

## 12 Safeguarding/Prevent Update

The Deputy Principal presented the Safeguarding and Prevent update confirming that, whilst the number of students referred for support had reduced slightly in comparison to the same point last year, there had been a significant increase in the complexity of cases, many of which required multi-agency support.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that various strategies had been implemented in order to ensure a proactive response, including the provision of additional resource in this area as well as an enhanced focus on ensuring the early identification of support needs pre-enrolment.

A member asked about the reason for the increased complexity and the Deputy Principal confirmed that this was due to a number of factors including cost of living challenges.

The Principal commented that high schools are also experiencing similar increases in safeguarding referrals and therefore the requirement to dedicate resource in this area was likely only to increase in the future.

## 13. Destinations Report

The Deputy Principal provided a summary of destinations of Level 3 16 – 19 students leaving College in 2022/23 in response to a previous action. The Deputy Principal confirmed that progression to higher education was again the most popular destination for both A Level and vocational learners. He confirmed that the College had recently appointed a Prestigious Universities Co-ordinator to devise and implement a package which will be known as the Scholars Programme which is a refined and superior version of the Prestigious Universities Programme. The Deputy Principal confirmed that a Prestigious Universities event had taken place which was very well attended and included alumni speakers, a representative from the University of Oxford and the recently appointed Prestigious Universities Coordinator, confirming that feedback from students, parents and guardians was very positive. This initiative had been implemented in response to falling applications for prestigious MDV and Oxbridge destinations.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that 276 students have initially been identified to participate in this project and, in response to a question from a governor, confirmed that this number would be expanded in future in order that more students could have the opportunity to participate in this programme.

**14. Finance Monitoring Report – Monthly Management Accounts**

The Vice Principal Finance and Facilities presented the Monthly Management Accounts confirming that the current position is as expected and Financial Health is forecasted to be 'Good' for the Year End.

A discussion followed regarding the longer term financial planning and a member asked for early sight of the draft budget for 2024/25, particularly in light of the reduction in 16 – 18 income next year due to the shortfall in learner numbers.

**Action: CB A21:** Draft budget for 2024/25 to be shared with the Finance Committee [Owner: Vice Principal Finance & Facilities].

**15. Risk Register**

The Vice Principal [Finance and Facilities] provided an overview of the Risk Register which includes five key risks with details of associated mitigations.

The Vice Principal confirmed that she had noted the discussion in relation to the potential impact on staff morale as a consequence of the discussions regarding the impact of changes to quality assurance and improvement processes and that this would be added to the risk register.

**Action: CB A22:** Risk in relation to the impact of changes to quality assurance and improvement processes on staff morale to be added to the risk register [Owner: Vice Principal Finance and Facilities]

**16. Policies for approval**

**16.1 Complaints Policy**

It was confirmed that a number of amendments had been made to the Complaints Policy which was now being recommended to the Corporation Board for approval following review by the Standards & Curriculum Committee.

**Decision: CB D17:** The Board approved the Complaints Policy.

**16.2 Election of Student Member Policy**

It was confirmed that minor amendments had been made to the Election of Student Member Policy which was now being recommended to the Corporation Board for approval following review by the Search & Governance Committee.

**Decision: CB D18:** The Board approved the Election of Student Member Policy.

**16.3 Risk Management Policy**

It was confirmed that minor amendments had been made to the Risk Management Policy which was now being recommended to the Corporation Board for approval following review by the Audit Committee. The Vice Principal Finance and Facilities confirmed that the overall risk appetite remains 'Low' but the college is not adverse to taking well managed and carefully considered risks as appropriate.

**Decision: CB D19:** The Board approved the Risk Management Policy.

**16.4 Value for Money Policy**

The Vice Principal Finance and Facilities confirmed that a small number of amendments had been made to the Value for Money Policy which is now more explicit in relation to treasury guidelines following public sector classification. The Policy had been reviewed by the Audit committee and was now being recommended to the Corporation Board for approval.

**Decision: CB D20:** The Board approved the Value for Money Policy.

**17. Governance Impact Statement**

The Board identified the following in terms of impact:

- The focus on staff wellbeing and the inclusion of staff morale within the risk register
- The focus on staff voice within the People and OD Committee
- The change in approach of the Standards & Curriculum Committee in line with changes to quality assurance and improvement processes
- Approval of the Governance SAR, QIP and associated KPIs

**18. Confidentiality**

None identified

**19. Date of next meeting**

Strategic Planning Meeting: 25 January 2024  
 Corporation Board Meeting: 21 March 2024