

Preston College

Redacted and Abridged ¹Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 20th October 2022 at 5.30pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mr John Boydell	Chair
Mr Simon Nixon	Interim Principal and Chief Executive
Mr Steve Browne	
Miss Safa Dalvi	
Mr Marcel Driver	
Mrs Janine Garcia	
Ms Joanne Jones	
Miss Lisa Keegan	
Mrs Laura Mason	
Mrs Lynda Mason	
Mrs Nashwa Osman	
Mr Dipesh Patel	

In attendance:

Ms Marie Haworth	Vice Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mrs Lyndsey Roe	Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning (Until minute 5 inclusive)
Ms Gill Thornton	Head of Human Resources

Absent:

Ms Ashley Dalton	
Mr Malcolm Goulding	
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	
Mr Iain Stott	Interim Executive Head of Resources
Miss Georgia Turner	

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

It was noted that apologies had been received from Ms Dalton, Mr Goulding, Mr Marshall-Slater, Mr Stott and Miss Turner.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

The Board appointed Miss Safa Dalvi as Student Governor (16-18) and Mrs Nashwa Osman as Student Governor (FE).

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes

The Chair welcomed Miss Dalvi and Mrs Osman to the Board and encouraged the new student governors to ask questions.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the inherent interest of all staff in item 19 Pay Award.

FOR APPROVAL

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Board approved the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 7 July 2022 and 22 September 2022 as correct records.

Resolved: The minutes of the Board meeting held on 7 July 2022 and 22 September 2022 were agreed as correct records.

4. Matters arising

The Clerk highlighted that actions would be reviewed and updated before the next Board as some had not been progressed due to time pressures. The Clerk referred to a suggestion from a member who could not attend the meeting to add an additional column with a target completion date. Members agreed this would be helpful.

The Board noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

Resolved: The Board noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

Action: To add an additional column on the table for target completion date.

5. Higher Education Update

The Chair explained that items 16 and 17 would be brought forward to the start of the agenda.

Mrs Roe, Head of Quality, Teaching and Learning, presented the Higher Education Update. She reported:

- that the Office for Students (OfS) had asked all universities and colleges to undertake a review of their compliance with consumer law and also to provide assurance to their governing bodies of ongoing compliance with condition C1 (guidance on consumer protection law);
- that the OfS had published a new standard set of student outcome and experience data measures for use in their regulatory framework from October 2022 for Condition B3;

- on the publication of the Transparency 2022 workbook on the College's website to comply with OfS condition F1 which included equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data. She explained that the data which could be published was limited due to the small number of learners and data protection requirements;
- that the College's Student Protection Plan, at Appendix A, had been reviewed and updated to include the changes to the College's partnership arrangements as the University of Derby which has now end and the proposed amendments were shown as tracked changes;
- that there were no Preston College learners studying with the University of Derby as 'teach-out' had been completed;
- that, in line with new OfS requirements, all indirectly funded partners of universities were required to reference their partner university's current Access and Participation Plan on their own institution's website. Mrs Roe confirmed that the University of Central Lancashire's plan was available on the College's website;
- on the College's collaborative work with Higher Education Social Prescribing which was a collaboration of colleges lead by City of Liverpool College to work with other colleges to support HE learners, with a focus on improving mental health outcomes;
- that Penny Mackay had been recruited to the post of HE Manager and would join the College in 2023. Penny Mackay would support the Clerk in raising the profile of the HE student governor opportunity with learners;
- on the ongoing monitoring of HE destinations and achievement data on the HE dashboard;
- that HE enrolment numbers.

Mr Noblett gave a verbal update on the Lancashire Institute of Technology (LIOT) and the College's role to date. He reported that:

- the LIOT had been formally approved by the Department for Education (DfE), including all of the capital proposals made across the partnership network;
- Blackpool and the Fylde College was the lead provider;
- the next important phase related to the formation of the LIOT as a legal entity and to achieve this Eversheds had been procured to provide independent legal advice. Management would work with the governing body in this important development over the coming weeks;
- from a delivery perspective, the LIOT should be operational from September 2023, with the College working to deliver relatively small numbers of learners in the priority sectors of Health, Engineering and Construction. The College's capital procurement

programme would commence in April 2023, with provision planned in enhancing resources in Engineering and Digital Skills.

The Chair welcomed the update which demonstrated collaboration of colleges in the North West.

In response to a query on the governance arrangements, Mr Noblett explained that the LIOT would be a company limited by guarantee and the plan was for Preston College to be a partner but not be a director. The Board noted that further information on governance arrangements would be shared with the Board for review in due course.

The Board noted that there had been no compensation payments paid for disruption as a result of Covid during 2021/22.

The Board noted the Higher Education Update and approved the changes to the Student Protection Plan at Appendix A.

Resolved: The Board noted the Higher Education Update and approved the changes to the Student Protection Plan at Appendix A.

The Chair thanked Mrs Roe for leading the learning walks with governors which had taken place before the meeting.

Mrs Roe left the meeting.

6. Decisions Taken and information Sent Between Meetings

The Board noted the report on Board decisions taken between meetings and information sent to members between meetings. The Board noted that the following written resolutions had been carried since the previous Board meeting:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 18 August 2022 | Approval of the temporary suspension of the role of Executive Director of Resources (Senior Post Holder) for the period that Mr Nixon acted as Interim Principal and Chief Executive;
The Board noted that, following consultation with independent governors, Option 3 had been progressed: for the Interim Principal and Chief Executive to create an interim role of 'Interim Executive Head of Resources' for a period of time of up to one year, which would form part of the Executive Leadership Team, and would then implement any required uplifts to other roles to backfill as required. |
| | Approval of the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations to reflect the temporary change from Executive Director of Resources to Interim Executive Head of Resources. |
| | Approval of the proposed changes to the Schedule of Delegation, to reflect the temporary change from Executive Director of Resources to Interim Executive Head of Resources. |

The Board had noted that the Interim Principal and Chief Executive was the recruiting manager for appointment of the Interim Executive Head of Resources and any other appointments required for backfill purposes. The Board had noted that an independent governor would join the interview panel in an advisory capacity.

The Clerk referred members to the revised Financial Regulations, at Appendix A, and explained that due to a typographical error the job title was incorrect in the previous version. The Board approved the revised version of the Financial Regulations.

7 October 2022 Approval of the award of a contract for the sustainable construction works to the company detailed in the report.

The Board noted the Decisions Taken and Information Sent Between Meetings report.

Resolved: The Board noted the Decisions Taken and Information Sent Between Meetings report and approved the revised Financial Regulations at Appendix A.

7. Post 2023 Strategy - Development Timetable

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented his report on the Post 2023 Strategy - Development Timetable. He reported on:

- the rationale for moving to a three year strategy;
- the proposed strategy development and consultation timetable;
- other ongoing discussions and consultations which would feed into the plan including the requirement for College's to review how well the education or training provided met local needs, and what action could be taken, alone or in collaboration with others, to better meet needs. The Board also noted the statutory duty to cooperate with employer representative bodies to develop Local Skills Improvement Plans. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive explained that whilst such reviews and collaboration would always have been good practice, the new statutory requirement increased the need for the Board to be fully engaged and provide increased oversight.

The Chair agreed that it was sensible to move towards a three year strategy.

The Board noted the Post 2023 Strategy - Development Timetable and endorsed the approach outlined.

Resolved: The Board noted the Post 2023 Strategy - Development Timetable and endorsed the approach outlined.

8. Board Forward Work Programme – Update

The Clerk referred members to the updated Board Forward Work Programme at Appendix A. She outlined different options for the Board's consideration of the post 2023 strategy,

Estates Strategy and the Board's new statutory duty to review how well the education or training provided met local need over the next three Board meetings.

The Board agreed the theme of the Deep Dive on 3 November 2022 should be the College's Estates Strategy. Following a suggestion from a member, management agreed to organise a tour of key areas of the College campus at the start of the Deep Dive, particularly iSTEM and health and wellbeing buildings to help inform the Board's discussions. The Board noted that in response to feedback from Resources Committee, the draft strategy would be revised to ensure it was curriculum led.

Following discussion, the Board agreed to hold a strategy session on the afternoon of 15 December 2022 which would include:

2.30pm - 4.00pm Local Skills Review session
4.00pm - 4.45pm Safeguarding and Prevent Update
4.45pm - 5.30pm Board/ Executive Leadership Team buffet
5.30pm - 7.30pm Board meeting

The Board agreed to hold an afternoon session with the Executive Leadership Team on 26 January 2023 to consider the College's post 2023 strategy.

The Clerk highlighted that the Board usually met with first year scholarship learners in either December or January and the Board agreed this session would need to be moved to another meeting.

The Board noted the updated Board Forward Work Programme, at Appendix A, and approved the Audit Plan Overview 2021/22, at Appendix B.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the additional meetings/activities in the autumn term;**
- **agreed the College's Estates Strategy would be the theme of the Deep Dive on 3 November 2022;**
- **agreed the timetable and content for the afternoon sessions on 15 December 2022;**
- **agreed the theme of January Board strategy meeting would be the College's Post 2023 Strategy;**
- **approved the Audit Plan Overview 2021/22.**

Action: To arrange a tour of the key campus buildings at the start of the Deep Dive session.

9. Governance Matters

The Clerk presented her Governance Matters report.

The Board noted the update reports on:

- the current Board and committee membership as of October 2022 at Appendix A including three independent governor vacancies;
- Board and committee attendance 2021/22 at Appendix B;
- the Office of National Statistics (ONS) review of the status of colleges as private sector organisations was ongoing and an announcement was expected shortly;

- the changes to the Charities Act 2022 and the impact on colleges as exempt charities.

The Clerk reported on:

- plans to open up the chairs' meeting at the next deep dive session to all governors;
- forthcoming governor Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and stakeholder engagement opportunities including a deep dive on the 3 November 2022 and a staff/governor lunch on 8 November 2022;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education had been revised in September 2022 and all governors would be asked to confirm they had read the revised guidance.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the current Board membership, Term of Office and membership of committees;**
- **noted the governor recruitment and succession planning update;**
- **noted the update on student and staff governors**
- **noted the update on key governance reforms.**

10. Board and Committee Report Template

The Clerk presented her report on the Board and Committee report template. She explained that the draft template, at Appendix A, and the guidance notes, at Appendix B, had been reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee and recommended to the Board for approval. The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance Committee had highlighted that the impact of Board decision making on learners was particularly important and should be included in the Executive Summary.

The Clerk explained that the new template and guidance notes, would ensure that Board/committee reports clearly presented all key information and facts and actions required, all followed a consistent pattern and matters such as risks, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and stakeholder consultation and impact were highlighted.

The Board approved the Board and Committee report template and, given the large size of the Board and committee packs, welcomed efforts to make Board/committee reports as accessible and streamlined as possible whilst ensuring the Board and committees had the information they needed to fulfil their remit.

The Board:

- agreed that to avoid unnecessary reading in reports, authors should be advised in the guidance notes to only include information on matters such as EDI and stakeholder impact where they were relevant;
- discussed the importance of also explaining in relevant reports the impact on the curriculum and employers as this would help the evidence in reporting how the College reviewed how well the education or training provided met local needs;

- the importance of reports explaining the key issues as concisely as possible which would also save time at meetings as management could focus on these matters when presenting reports.

The Clerk referred to a query from a governor that could not attend the meeting that the Executive summary should fit on the front page. The Clerk confirmed that this was the intention.

The Clerk explained that a designed version would be produced for approval by the Board.

Resolved: the Board approved the draft Board/committee report template and noted that a designed version would be produced for Board approval.

Action: To develop a designed version of the report.

11. Association of Colleges Governors' Council Consultation

The Clerk reported that the Association of Colleges (AoC) Governors' Council had launched a consultation, at Appendix A, on proposals for reform of the Governors' Council in order to increase the visibility and influence and strengthen the voice of college chairs and governors within the sector. The Clerk explained that the consultation had been considered by the Search and Governance Committee, however the Committee had not had time to complete the consultation response at its meeting.

The Board agreed that the Chair could approve the College's response to the consultation on behalf of the Board, following consultation with the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee.

Resolved: The Board agreed that the Chair could approve the College's response to the consultation on behalf of the Board, following consultation with the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee.

Action: The Clerk to liaise with the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee.

FOR DISCUSSION

12. Principal and Chief Executive's Report

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented his Principal and Chief Executive's Report. He explained the changes he had made to the format of the report to draw attention more clearly to the College's successes, challenges, opportunities and concerns. It was also intended to act as a guide for other items on the agenda, drawing attention to the most important items and placing them within the overall context of College business.

Mr Nixon reported:

- the College was busy and there was a good atmosphere;
- staffing in some areas remained a challenge and efforts were ongoing to mitigate this sector wide issue;

- financial pressures as a result of both the pandemic and the increased cost of living and cyber security remained key risks;
- the College was also continuing to collaborate with the University of Central Lancashire.

In response to a query on how management were made aware of potential teaching quality issues, Ms Haworth reported that management and curriculum leaders conducted regularly learning walks in all lessons and the post learning walk feedback included agency staff. Ms Haworth provided assurance that management were quick to act if an agency staff member was not at the required standard. Ms Haworth also reported that learners could speak to their student manager if they had concerns.

Mr Noblett provided an update on the learner induction and Learner Voice programme which provided management with feedback from learners on their courses.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive reported on the College's approach to commissioning agency staff.

Members commented positively on the new format of the Principal and Chief Executive's report.

The Board noted the Principal and Chief Executive's Report.

Resolved: The Board noted the Principal and Chief Executive's Report.

13. Draft Outturn Position 2021/22

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the report on the Draft Outturn Position 2021/22.

Members commended management and staff for its achievement in budget management given the challenging conditions colleges continued to operate in.

The Board noted the forecast outturn position 2021/22 and the Management Accounts Period 12 at Appendix A.

Resolved: The Board noted the forecast outturn position 2021/22.

14. Capital Budget Outturn 2021/22

The Board noted the Capital Budget Outturn 2021/22.

Resolved: The Board noted the Capital Budget Outturn 2021/22.

15. Five Year Plan Update

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Five Year Plan Update report. He reported:

- that 2022/23 was the final year of the College's five year strategic plan;
- the five year plan deliverables table at Appendix A which had been updated for 2022/23;
- considerable changes in the internal and external College environment since the Five Year Plan was originally developed, in particular the impact of Covid.

The Board discussed with management the shorter term likelihood of the College's original ambition to become an outstanding college at the next inspection given the challenges the College's had faced in the last two years, particularly the impact of Covid.

Members discussed with management:

- the pressure on staff when there was a constant drive towards achieving Ofsted outstanding when the inspection was a snapshot in time;
- the negative impact of an Ofsted downgrading on staff and the College;
- the learning walks that had taken place that afternoon which evidenced effective teaching practice and that learners appreciated the efforts of their tutors;
- that the achievements of Looked After Children and those with special education needs were aligned with the general population and if this achievement could be replicated in other areas of the College, the College would move towards outstanding;
- the importance of the College having ambition for its learners;
- the importance of a culture of continual improvement rather than focusing on achieving Ofsted "outstanding";
- the importance of ensuring that the College's resources were benchmarked as 'good' and that learners received an outstanding teaching and learning experience rather than focusing on achieving outstanding Ofsted at the next inspection.

The Board agreed that the College's ambitions would be further explored in more detail at the strategy afternoon on 26 January 2023.

The Board noted the Five Year Plan Update report and approved the priorities for 2022/23.

Resolved: The Board noted the Five Year Plan Update report and approved the priorities for 2022/23.

16. Outcome of the Quality Improvement Plan

Ms Haworth presented the Outcome of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) report and referred members to the final QIP report for 2021/22 at Appendix A. Ms Haworth reported:

- there were none or negligible gaps in achievements by gender, ethnicity, disadvantaged, disability or learning difficulty;
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners were progressing on to other colleges courses;
- learner attendance levels had improved year on year;
- impact of teacher assessed grades;
- impact of delays with End Point Assessment (EPAs) and the impact of Covid on apprenticeship outcomes as many learners had left to work during the pandemic.

A student governor highlighted the challenges faced by many learners and the benefits ESOL learners gained from hearing about the inspirational experiences of former Preston College ESOL learners and the progress they had made since completing their ESOL qualifications at the College.

Members discussed with Ms Haworth the logistical challenges related to EPAs, particularly when apprentices gained employment and did not wish to complete the qualification.

In response to a query, Ms Haworth provided an overview of the different methods the College used to improve learner attendance. She also reported that management tried to ascertain via Learner Voice if there were external factors impacting on attendance.

The Board noted the performance and progress against key Quality Improvement Plan milestones and final outturn for 2021/22.

Resolved: The Board noted the performance and progress against key Quality Improvement Plan milestones and final outturn for 2021/22.

17. Risk Management Register

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the latest report of the Risk Management Register. He explained that the Audit Committee had not met since the last Board meeting and would next meet in November.

The Board noted the Risk Management Register, the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed were agreed.

The Board noted:

- **the Risk Management Register;**
- **the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed were agreed.**

18. Committee Minutes and Verbal Reports

The Board noted the following Committee minutes:

Quality and Standards Committee - 23 June 2022 (draft).

Resources Committee - 29 June 2022.

Resolved: The Board noted the Committee minutes:

- **Quality and Standards Committee - 23 June 2022 (draft)**
- **Resources Committee - 29 June 2022.**

19. Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that a Board Deep dive session would be held on 3 November 2022 and the next Board meeting would be 15 December 2022.

Preston College

Redacted and Abridged¹ Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15 December 2022 at 5.30pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mr John Boydell	Chair
Mr Simon Nixon	Interim Principal and Chief Executive
Mr Steve Browne	
Mr Marcel Driver	
Mr Malcolm Goulding	
Mrs Jane Hilton	
Ms Joanne Jones	
Miss Lisa Keegan	
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	
Mrs Laura Mason	
Mrs Nashwa Osman	
Miss Georgia Turner	

In attendance:

Ms Marie Haworth	Vice Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Ms Helen Knowles	Director, Beever and Struthers (from Minute 3 Inclusive) (Remote)
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Ms Gill Thornton	Head of Human Resources

Absent:

Miss Safa Dalvi	
Mrs Lynda Mason	
Mr Iain Stott	Interim Executive Head of Resources

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that a quorum was present.

It was noted that apologies had been received from Miss Safa Dalvi, Mrs Lynda Mason and Mr Iain Stott.

The Clerk reported that Ms Dalton had resigned from the Board and provided background on Ms Dalton's reasons for resigning. The Board noted that Ms Dalton had sent her thanks and best wishes to the Board, College management and staff. The Board recorded its thanks to Ms Dalton and best wishes for the future.

The Board appointed Mrs Jane Hilton (Staff Governor – Academic) to the Board. The Chair welcomed Mrs Hilton to the Board.

2. Declarations of Interest

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

The Board noted the interest of Miss Keegan, staff governor, and also the College's Health and Safety Officer, in Item 18 – Health and Safety Annual Report. The Board noted that Miss Keegan was not required to leave the meeting for this item.

FOR APPROVAL

The Chair explained that he would bring forward the Annual Report and Financial Statements as Ms Helen Knowles, Director - Beever and Struthers, had joined the meeting on Zoom.

Ms Knowles joined the meeting.

3. Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the draft Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2022, at Appendix A, the management letter dated 15 December 2022, at Appendix B, the Preston College Letter of Representations for Audit and Regularity, at Appendix C, and the Regularity Self Assessment Questionnaire 2021/22, at Appendix D.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive reported:

- the surplus for 2021/22 against budget before pension adjustments;
- the College's balance sheet position had improved as the pension actuaries had assessed that the liability had improved;
- an additional comment had been added to the Report and financial statements on self assessment.

Ms Knowles confirmed that:

- all audit work had been completed and an unmodified audit opinion had been given;
- the going concern review took place up to the date of signing the accounts and an unmodified statutory audit opinion could be given with no significant issues to draw to the attention of the Board;
- the College would not be required to make an adjustment in related to the provision of Adult Education Budget (AEB) clawback as this was not considered material;
- three medium priority and one low priority recommendations had been highlighted during the audit. The recommendations were detailed in the management report and would be followed up by College management during 2022/23.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive provided an update on the College's AEB clawback.

The Board approved the Financial Statements 2021/22 and authorised the Chair to sign the letters of representation and regularity self-assessment questionnaire on behalf of the Board.

Ms Knowles was thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: The Board:

- **approved the Financial Statements 2021/22;**
- **authorised the Chair to sign the letters of representation and regularity self assessment questionnaire on behalf of the Board.**

Ms Knowles left the meeting.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Board approved the Minutes of the Board meeting held 20 October 2022 (Part 1 and Part 2 (a)) and the Notes of the Deep Dive session on 3 November 2022 as correct records.

Resolved: The Minutes of the Board meeting held 20 October 2022 (Part 1 and Part 2 (a)) and the Notes of the Deep Dive session on 3 November 2022 were agreed and signed as correct records.

5. Matters arising

The Board noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

Resolved: The Board noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

6. Decisions Taken and information Sent Between Meetings

The Board noted the report on Board decisions taken between meetings and information sent to members between meetings. The Board noted that the following written resolution had been carried since the previous Board meeting:

24 October 2022 Approval of a staff pay award of 3% pay increase for all staff from 1 August 2022.

Approval of a further increase to staff employed on Spinal Column Point (SCP) 9 – 19 from 1 April 2023 to implement the new Foundation Living Wage (FLW) rate of pay per hour. The impact of this element of the proposed pay award will provide a further increase to SCP9 – 20 of between 2.40% and 8.30%;

Approval of a further 2% increase to staff employed on Spinal Column Point 20 – 68 (i.e. the rest of the College Harmonised Pay Spine) with effect from 1st April 2023;

Commitment to continue to explore Foundation Living Wage Accreditation.

The Principal and Chief Executive reported that the staff pay award approved by the Board had been well received by College staff.

The Board noted the Decisions Taken and Information Sent Between Meetings report.

Resolved: The Board noted the Decisions Taken and Information Sent Between Meetings report.

7. Audit Committee Annual Report

The Board noted the Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22 at Appendix A, the Internal Audit Report 2021/22 at Appendix A(i) and the Subcontracting Controls report at Appendix A(ii).

Mr Driver, the Chair of the Audit Committee, reported that there were no significant issues to report and as the external audit had been completed and an unmodified audit opinion given he would sign the Audit Committee Report on behalf of the Audit Committee.

Members of the Audit Committee and the Interim Principal and Chief Executive commented positively on the work of the College's new internal auditors, Wylie and Bisset, which provided good value for money. It was noted internal audit reports included management recommendations and also highlighted areas of good practice which made the reports more useful for the Committee and management.

Resolved: The Board noted that the Audit Committee had approved its Annual Audit Committee Report 2021/22 and that all audit work has been completed and accepted the Annual Report of the Audit Committee as a source of assurance.

8. Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy

Ms Haworth outlined the proposed changes to the College's Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy which were detailed in her report and shown in track changes at Appendix A. Ms Haworth explained that the policy had been updated to reflect the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance which had been published by the Department for Education (DfE) in September 2022.

The Board approved the revised Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy.

The Clerk reported that that the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance had been previously shared with the Board and, in line with the procedure for staff, all governors would be asked to confirm they had read the revised guidance.

Resolved: The Board approved the revised Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy.

9. Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology

Mr Noblett, Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning, presented a report on a proposal for the College to join the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology (L&CIoT). He explained that the report set out the background, risks and opportunities of the proposal and an overview of consultation with committees to date. Mr Noblett outlined the tight timescales of the proposal as the DfE would meet on 16 December 2022.

The Board noted the Capital Funding Agreement at Appendix A, the Summary of Key Issues on the Model Licence and Capital Agreement at Appendix B, the Articles of Association at Appendix C, the summary SWOT analysis at Appendix D, the Sub-Licence at Appendix E, the Commercial Agreement at Appendix F and the Deed of Guarantee at Appendix G.

The Board discussed the opportunities and risks with management.

Following discussion, the Board noted the capital funding agreement and approved the College joining the L&CloT as a guarantor, member and partner. The Board authorised the Chair to sign the Commercial Agreement and Sub-Licence.

The Board approved the application of the College seal to the Deed of Guarantee and delegated the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Principal and Chief Executive to undertake authentication of the application of the College seal on the Deed of Guarantee.

The Board:

- **approved the College joining the L&CloT as a guarantor, member and partner;**
- **authorised the Chair to sign the Commercial Agreement and sub-licence;**
- **noted the capital funding agreement;**
- **approved the application of the College seal to the Deed of Guarantee;**
- **delegated the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Principal and Chief Executive to undertake authentication of the application of the College seal on the Deed of Guarantee.**

10. Policy Review

The Board noted that the proposed changes to the policies detailed in the Policy Review report had been considered by the relevant committees and were recommended to the Board for approval.

The Board approved the revised Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy (Appendix A), the revised Further Education (FE) Admissions Policy (Appendix B); the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Appendix C); the revised Data Protection Policy (Appendix D), the Subcontracting Supply Chain Fees and Charges (Appendix E); and the extension of the current Complaints Policy until March 2022.

The Board approved the:

- **revised Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy;**
- **revised Further Education (FE) Admissions Policy;**
- **new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;**
- **revised Data Protection Policy;**
- **Subcontracting Supply Chain Fees and Charges;**
- **extension of the current Complaints Policy until March 2022.**

11. Governance Matters

The Clerk presented her Governance Matters report. The Clerk reported on:

- progress to date in filling governor vacancies. The Clerk confirmed that the College's application to the DfE recruitment service for support with identifying potential governors and has been approved for support for recruitment of up to two Board vacancies and Peridot would provide the recruitment service on behalf of the DfE;
- working with Peridot to fill governor vacancies provided an opportunity for the College to benefit from good practice which could be implemented going forward when recruiting governors;
- along with the Interim Principal and Chief Executive, she had met with another strong candidate for the Board who had submitted an application and she was also liaising with a number of other potential candidates;

- that she would contact Mr Collard in the New Year when as the sabbatical agreed by the Board was due to end in January 2023;
- that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) had announced the reclassification of FE and sixth form college corporations as public sector organisations and the Search and Governance Committee would consider the governance implications in due course.

The Clerk referred that following interviews by the Search and Governance Committee on 29 November 2022, which the Chair of the Audit Committee had also attended, the Committee recommended to the Board the appointment of:

- Ms Cawthorn to the Board as an independent governor and member of the Quality and Standards Committee;
- Mrs McKnight as an independent governor and member of the Audit Committee.

The Board noted that the candidates' CVs and supporting statements were at appendices A and B.

Following discussion, the Board approved the appointment of Ms Cawthorn to the Board as a member of the Governing Body (independent governor) and the Quality and Standards Committee for a four year term. The Board approved the appointment of Mrs McKnight to the Board as a member of the Governing Body (independent governor) and the Audit Committee for a four year term. The Board noted that both appointments were subject to completion of compliance checks.

The Board noted the update on the ONS reclassification of FE and sixth form college corporations as public sector organisations

The Clerk reported that, as stated in the College's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, as the College's Designated Assessor, she should report annually to the Board on the number of times the procedure had been formally invoked, and of the outcomes. The Clerk reported that she had not received any whistleblowing reports during the 2021/22 academic year and 2022/23 year to date.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the Board membership and succession planning update;**
- **approved the appointment of Ms Cawthorn to the Board as a member of the Governing Body (independent governor) and the Quality and Standards Committee for a four year term, subject to completion of compliance checks;**
- **approved the appointment of Mrs McKnight to the Board as a member of the Governing Body (independent governor) and the Audit Committee for a four year term, subject to completion of compliance checks;**
- **noted the update on the ONS reclassification of FE and sixth form college corporations as public sector organisations;**
- **noted the Clerk's annual whistleblowing report.**

12. The Annual Corporate Self-Assessment Report 2021/22

Ms Haworth presented the Corporate Self Assessment Report (SAR) 2021/22. She reported:

- the Quality and Standards Committee had considered the SAR at its meetings in October and November and feedback from these meetings had been incorporated into the final draft of the SAR;
- the Chair of the Governing Body, and chairs of Senior Post Holder Remuneration Committee; the Audit Committee and attended the discussion in November 2022;

- rationale for grading apprenticeships as “2” and for increasing provision for learners with high needs to “1”;
- for 2022/23 the College would need to prepare a separate report on how the College met local skills needs and for this reason the skills needs content had not been fully integrated in the 2021/22 report.

The Board considered the SAR 2021/22. A member queried if, following the discussion at the Quality and Standards Committee on the importance of evidencing statements in the SAR, management had checked learners’ feedback on the College’s High Needs provision. Ms Haworth confirmed that discussions had taken place with learners during learning walks and the learners’ views aligned with the SAR statements on support for High Needs learners.

Ms Haworth also referred to the safeguarding tool kit resource which could be used by staff to support learners.

Mr Noblett added that the College engaged well with employers and this would be beneficial as the College further developed its reporting and processes in response to the new statutory duty to review how well the education and training provided met local needs. The Board also noted that there would be a separate Ofsted process in relation to Skills Needs.

A member of the Quality and Standards Committee thanked management for revising some of the language in response to the Committee’s comments that the draft SAR statements had been too modest. The Board agreed that the SAR 2021/22 indicated that, despite external challenges such as Covid, the College was in a strong position going forward.

The Board endorsed the Corporate Self-Assessment Report 2021/22 including the indicative grades.

Resolved: The Board endorsed the Corporate Self-Assessment Report 2021/22 including the indicative grades.

13. People Strategy Action Plan

Ms Thornton, Head of Human Resources, presented her report on the People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 and referred members to the Action plan at Appendix A which detailed the key strategic HR projects the College had committed to undertake in the academic year 2022/23 in order to deliver against the activities identified as the people components in the last year of the Five-Year Plan, the development of the new Strategic Plan 2023/26, the supporting strategies including the Curriculum Strategy, Quality Strategy and the Estates Strategy and working with external stakeholders.

Ms Thornton reported that the Resources Committee had recommended the People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 to the Board for approval and had also asked Ms Thornton to develop four or five key HR priorities which the Committee could monitor at a strategic level.

The Board approved the People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 at Appendix A.

Resolved: The Board approved the People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23.

FOR DISCUSSION

14. Principal and Chief Executive's Report

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented his Principal and Chief Executive's Report which highlighted the College's successes, challenges, opportunities and concerns.

Mr Nixon reported:

- on initiatives to improve learner attendance including sending reminder text messages to learners and also their parents where appropriate;
- that he had consulted with staff across the College on the College's new strategic plan and staff had made some inspiring contributions, further consultation would continue on the next Staff Development Day in January 2023;
- that as part of the discussions with staff he had shared the College's key deliverables for 2022/23;
- that as reported via email, the ONS had reclassified colleges as public sector at the end of November and this would be back dated to 1993. He outlined some of the key implications including new borrowing arrangements. He explained that it would take time for all implications to become clear and he would continue to update the Board on developments;
- that the College would benefit from a capital funding allocation as a result of the decision of the ONS to reclassify colleges as public sector organisations and further information would be provided to the Board in due course. The funding could provide opportunities to improve teaching spaces in the Visual Performing Arts building and to improve College facilities such as boiler repairs;
- correspondence from the DfE regarding College oversight: support and intervention, at Appendix A, dated 10 November 2022, which concluded that further monitoring was required to mitigate any concerns regarding the College's financial health and a requirement for the College to send management accounts and cash flow forecasts on a quarterly basis;
- the ESFA dashboard, November 2022 at Appendix B;
- a rise in Covid cases and general sickness at the College for both staff and learners which was being monitored.

In response to a query, the Interim Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that he regularly interacted and engaged with staff to ensure they felt valued and supported and he saw this as a key part of the role. He reported that the Executive Leadership Team operated an open and honest approach to engaging with staff and listened to ideas and provided feedback when any suggestions could not be implemented.

A member referred to the discussion on the importance of ensuring registers were up to date in order to successfully implement the new initiative of texting learners if they did not attend

College. He queried whether timely updating of registers had re-emerged as an issue as this had been highlighted during a previous internal audit and resolved. Management provided assurance that there was not an issue with updating registers at the College as such. However, in order for the text reminder initiative to work effectively, electronic registers must be quickly updated, which was challenging in some lessons, such as outdoors lessons. In addition, increased staff sickness in recent weeks had also created challenges in updating registers in time for the text reminders to be sent. Management agreed to provide regular updates to the Board on the impact on this initiative on improving attendance.

A member referred to the correspondence from the DfE and the dashboard and the confirmation of further financial monitoring of the College by the DfE. The Principal and Chief Executive explained that DfE used the budget information submitted by the College and had not made a separate judgement.

The Board noted the Principal and Chief Executive's Report.

Resolved: The Board noted the Principal and Chief Executive's Report.

Action: Management agreed to provide regular updates to the Board on the impact on this initiative on improving attendance.

15. Risk Management Register

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the latest report of the Risk Management Register. The Chair of Audit committee explained that the Audit Committee had agreed that, following a training session with College's internal auditors, Wylie and Bisset, to reduce the number of risks to c. 18.

The Board noted that the register would be revised for consideration by the Audit Committee at its next meeting.

The Board noted the Risk Management Register, the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed were agreed.

The Board noted:

- **the Risk Management Register;**
- **the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed were agreed.**

16. Five Year Plan Update

The Board noted the Five Year Plan Update report.

The Clerk reported that the governance deliverables targets relating to the appointment of new governors had been revised due to unplanned resignations during 2022.

Resolved: The Board noted the Five Year Plan Update report.

17. Management Accounts

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Period 2 Management Accounts.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive referred to:

- Period 3 Management Accounts would provide greater insight into College performance as they would include the January recruitment period;
- the issues with staff recruitment and retention and the impact this had on learner recruitment and learner numbers;
- the impact of agency costs on College budgets which had been reviewed during recent Business Planning meetings.

A member highlighted that he had found it difficult to find the fees for courses on the College website and whether this could be a potential barrier for prospective learners. Mr Noblett confirmed that the College regularly benchmarked its fees and that it was sometimes misleading to include a fee as many learners were entitled to bursaries. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive reported that this issue had also been highlighted by external auditors, who had independently verified each fee level. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive agreed that the approach to publication of fees should be reviewed.

Resolved: The Board noted the Period 2 Management Accounts.

Action: To review the approach to publication of fees on the College website.

18. Health and Safety Annual Report

The Board noted the Health and Safety Report 2021/22.

Miss Keegan, Health and Safety Officer, provided further details of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2012 (RIDDOR) reportable incidents which were detailed in the report.

The Board approved the draft Annual Health and Safety Report 2021/22 at Appendix A.

Resolved: The Board approved the draft Annual Health and Safety Report 2021/22 at Appendix A.

19. Committee Minutes and Verbal Reports

The Board noted the Notes of the Quality and Standards meeting held on 13 October 2022. It was noted that minutes could not be taken as the meeting had been inquorate.

The Clerk reported that the remainder of the minutes would be included as part of a governance item at the Board meeting on 26 January 2022. The Clerk explained that she had deferred non urgent governance matters until 26 January 2022 to manage the size of the December Board meeting pack.

Resolved: The Board noted the Notes of the Quality and Standards meeting held on 13 October 2022.

20. Any other business

The Chair reported that Mr Patel's term of office had ended. However, Mr Patel had planned to attend this meeting and had sent his apologies. On behalf of the Board the Chair recorded

thanks to Mr Dipesh Patel for his contribution to the Board and the Audit Committee during his four years' of service as independent governor.

21. Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that the next meeting would be the Board's strategy session on Thursday 26 January 2022 in the afternoon.

Preston College

Redacted and Abridged¹ Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 26 January 2023 at 5.30pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mr John Boydell	Chair (from Minute 3)
Mr Simon Nixon	Interim Principal and Chief Executive
Mr Steve Browne	
Mr Marcel Driver	Remote (Zoom)
Mrs Jane Hilton	
Ms Joanne Jones	
Miss Lisa Keegan	
Mrs Lynda Mason	Acting Chair
Miss Georgia Turner	

In attendance:

Ms Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mr Iain Stott	Interim Executive Head of Resources

Absent:

Miss Safa Dalvi
Mr Malcolm Goulding
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater
Mrs Laura Mason
Mrs Nashwa Osman

1. Welcome and apologies

The Acting Chair, Lynda Mason, welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Acting Chair welcomed Mrs Isara McKnight to her first Board meeting.

It was noted that apologies had been received from Miss Dalvi, Mr Goulding, Mr Marshall-Slater, Mrs Mason and Mrs Osman.

The Clerk to the Board (the Clerk) explained that Ms Cawthorn could not join the Board at present as her temporary contract with a nearby college now involved working closely with their leadership team which presented a temporary conflict of interest. The Clerk undertook to continue to provide updates at future meetings of Board and the Search and Governance Committee.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the interest of all staff present in a proposal which would be discussed during Item 3 Ofsted update. The Board noted that a decision on the proposal would not be requested at the meeting.

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

3. Ofsted Update

On behalf of the Board, the Acting Chair recorded thanks and congratulations to management and staff for the successful Ofsted outcome. The Acting Chair also commented positively on the calm and confident approach of management and staff to the inspection. The Board noted that as the judgement grades were provisional and subject to moderation they should not be shared outside of staff and governors until the Ofsted report was published.

Ms Haworth and Mr Noblett delivered a presentation on the verbal feedback from inspectors following the College's recent Ofsted inspection. They reported on:

- provisional Ofsted grades of 'Good' for all judgement areas with Apprenticeships improving to 'Good' since the last inspection;
- feedback on quality and education – intent, implementation and impact;
- feedback on behaviours and attitudes and personal development;
- feedback on leadership and management, including the role of governors;
- feedback on safeguarding arrangements;
- areas inspectors had cited for improvement;
- the introduction of a 'Skills Needs' sub-judgement at inspections. It was noted that the College had been provisionally graded as 'A Strong Contribution,' which only a small number of colleges had achieved to date.

Management reported that inspectors had given positive feedback on:

- leadership and management of the College including the test and challenge of senior leaders by governors;
- staff and learner wellbeing initiatives at the College;
- results of Ofsted's survey of staff, which was the strongest the inspectors had seen in 15 years;
- the ethos of the College and its calm, warm and modest culture;
- the College's role as a College of Sanctuary and its support for learners;
- the effective safeguarding arrangements in place and efforts to engage with learners to ensure they felt safe at College;
- the strong, long standing stakeholder relationships which had been demonstrated during the Skills Needs inspection.

Management reported on the areas inspectors had highlighted for improvement, including:

- the necessity to improve attendance on Level 1 programmes, particularly for GCSE English/maths;
- the High Needs learners' inspector had recommended the introduction of incremental development targets for High Needs learners and to increase the use of Tapestry, an online learning journey tool. Ms Haworth outlined the reasons why the College did not currently extensively use Tapestry;
- the need to increase the pace of some lessons.

Inspectors had reported that whilst it was good practice to produce separate School Self-Assessment Reports, they were of the view some strengths and grades had been overstated in some areas.

As part of the feedback on areas for improvement, inspectors had:

- commented positively on the College's structured internship which supported High Needs learners;
- acknowledged the impact of Covid and Teacher Assessed Grades, particularly on Apprenticeship retention;
- commented positively on how the College compiled 'actual' learner destination data.

Members noted that the College had received a provisional sub-judgement on Skills Needs of a 'Strong Contribution' and inspectors had commented that leaders and managers were highly effective in planning curriculum to meet local skill gaps and shaping the curriculum to meet local needs. In particular inspectors had commented on the College's highly effective response to Not in Education Employment and Training (NEET) learners. Inspectors had also welcomed the College's intention to introduce link governors for skills.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive recorded thanks to the Executive Leadership Team and staff for their contribution to the Ofsted outcome, in particular he thanked Ms Haworth as nominee and Mr Noblett as 'Skills Needs' nominee for all the effort and hours of work they had devoted to inspection preparation and supporting staff during the inspection. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive reported that this was the first time the College had retained its grade following an inspection.

The Acting Chair thanked the Interim Principal and the team for all their hard work. Members commented positively on the outcome of the inspection which followed a period of time when the College had faced many challenges. Members commented that the experience of this inspection had been different from previous inspections; the College had self assessed that it had improved since the last inspection and the feedback from inspectors endorsed this.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive thanked members for their comments and added that he considered it a privilege to listen to the feedback from the inspectors.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive reported that the Executive Leadership Team had considered how best to thank staff for the successful Ofsted outcome and one suggestion was that a payment was paid to all staff and a suggested amount. He explained that, given the current cost of living pressures, it was likely that staff would value this rather than additional leave. He explained that, whilst estimated costs would need to be calculated, it was anticipated that the additional payment could be largely funded from the credit balance from the 2021/22 academic year as the full Adult Education Budget (AEB) clawback provision had not been required. It was also noted that the Board had discussed at the previous meeting whether this credit could be used for a one off non-consolidated payment to staff. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive suggested that, if the Board were supportive of the proposal, the costs would be prepared and a full report could be considered by written resolution with costings.

Members discussed the suggestion and agreed that a bonus payment would be an excellent way for the College to reward and thank staff for their efforts and agreed the proposal could be considered by written resolution. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive thanked the Board and undertook to draft a formal proposal.

Resolved: The Board noted the confidential Ofsted Update.

Action: The Interim Principal and Chief Executive to draft a proposal report for the Board to consider by written resolution.

Mr Boydell joined the meeting during this item.

Time dependent or deferred items

4. Estates Strategy and Capital Funding Application

The Board noted that a quorum was present.

Mr Stott, Interim Executive Head of Resources, presented his Estates Strategy and Capital Funding Application report. Mr Stott reported:

- on a proposed submission of a T Level capital application with potential match funding contribution. The match funding would be funded from a separate energy grant and would therefore not impact on underlying College cash;
- that the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) no longer required colleges to submit their full College Estates Strategy with bids;
- on the rationale for the projects proposed by management and how they would benefit T Level learners.

The Board noted the proposal report, the draft Preston College Estates Strategy 2023/28 (the draft Estates Strategy), at Appendix A, and the Concept Plan, at Appendix B.

Mr Stott referred members to the draft Estates Strategy which had been updated following feedback from the Board at the Deep Dive meeting on 3 November 2022. Members commented positively on the improvements made to the draft Estates Strategy and welcomed the introduction of a curriculum led focus. A member suggested it would be helpful to add a curriculum led table to the appendix which summarised the resources the College had and areas which required development.

In response to queries from members, the Board noted:

- most T Level learners would have already achieved their GCSE maths and English before starting their T Level course at the College;
- the Executive Leadership Team had been guided by management at Fusion Project Management on the structure of the proposal and the bid as they were experienced in submission of successful bids to ESFA. Fusion Project Management had also effectively conveyed the College's ambitions.

The Board agreed that in order to meet the tight timescales for submission of the bid, the proposal should be considered by written resolution.

In response to a query on identifying T Level placements for learners, Mr Noblett confirmed that whilst some progress had been made, finding appropriate placements for T Level learners remained challenging. He explained that this was a sector challenge and there had been some discussions with the Department for Education about the possible relaxing of expectations on placements. Mr Noblett also referred to how the Strategic Development Fund projects had helped the College test models and so far the projects were progressing well.

The Board provided feedback on the draft Estates Strategy. During discussion members agreed it would be beneficial to add more information on:

- how the proposal would help meet local skills needs;
- reference to T Levels;
- the College's role in the Strategic Development Fund pilot.

Resolved: The Board:

- **provided feedback the draft Estates Strategy; and**
- **noted the proposed submission of the T Level capital application together with the potential match contribution which would be funded from a separate energy grant;**
- **agreed to consider the proposal by written resolution.**

Action: To update the draft Estates Strategy to include: a 'curriculum led' table which summarised the resources the College had and areas which required development, how the proposal met local skills needs, reference to T Levels and the College's role in the Strategic Development Fund pilot.

Mr Boydell assumed the Chair.

5. Deep Dive Topics

The Clerk presented her report on proposals for the next Board Deep Dive Session on 23 March 2023. The Board agreed that the session should include an opportunity to meet with learners (stakeholder engagement) and some Board Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions.

Resolved: the Board agreed that topics for the next Board Deep Dive meeting on 23 March should be stakeholder engagement activity and CPD.

6. Review of Governing Documents

The Clerk referred members to her report which outlined the proposed changes to the College's Governing Documents. The Clerk reported:

- that the majority of changes had been reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee and were recommended to the Board for approval;
- the proposed changes to the terms of reference of committees had been reviewed by the relevant committees;
- that a small number of further proposed changes had been made since the Search and Governance Committee meeting and were outlined in the report.

The Board noted the report and agreed the proposed changes to the Instrument and Articles, Standing Orders, Schedule of Delegation and the Terms of Reference of: Audit Committee, Resources Committee, Search and Governance Committee, Senior Post Holder Remuneration Committee and Quality and Standards Committee.

Resolved: The Board noted the report and agreed the proposed changes to the Instrument and Articles, Standing Orders, Schedule of Delegation and the Terms of Reference of: Audit Committee, Resources Committee, Search and Governance Committee, Senior Post Holder Remuneration Committee and Quality and Standards Committee.

7. Committee Minutes

The Board noted the Committee minutes from the autumn meeting which had been deferred from the December Board meeting.

Resolved: The Board noted the: draft Audit Committee 16 November 2022 – redacted, draft Quality and Standards Committee 17 November 2022, draft Resources Committee 24 November 2022 and draft Search and Governance – 29 November 2022.

Strategy Development

8. A Board's Role in Strategy Development – CPD

The Clerk delivered a presentation on 'A board's role in strategy development.'

The session covered:

- terminology and definitions of mission, vision and educational character;
- the importance of engaging with stakeholders during strategy development;
- the role of a board in formulating strategy and how this could be achieved;
- the importance of horizon scanning and considering risk when developing strategy;
- the role of a board in formulating strategy within an FE college;

- case studies.

Members discussed the ideas raised in the presentation and how the mission and vision examples and case studies exemplified good and bad practice.

9. Development of the College's Strategy 2023

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Development of the College's Strategy 2023 session. He referred to:

- the College's curriculum intent which had been last agreed by the Board in January 2020 and summarised the College's educational character;
- the College's strategic objectives which had been last approved by the Board in March 2022;
- the College's current values and behaviours;
- the Board should explore whether or not the College should introduce a formal vision;
- priorities for 2023/26.

Members and management discussed the College's educational character and role in the community. Members and management agreed that diversity and inclusion at the College had a wider meaning than demographics.

a) Mission and vision

The Board noted the College's current mission and that the College did not currently have a formal vision. Members completed an exercise on the suggested three words which described the College and discussed what should be the College's future thinking and aspirational ideals.

The words suggested were: first choice, supportive, acceptance, valued, technical, ambitious, diverse range of education, nurturing, community, everybody better always, vocational, ambition, caring, confidence, every learners' future, skills, success, enjoyment, values, change ready and students for today for the challenges of tomorrow.

The Board discussed with management:

- that it was evident that the College cared about learners;
- the emotional and mental health support learners received at the College and how this translated to economic wellbeing and learners securing employment;
- possibly having a mission to make learners the 'most sought after;'

- that the College was a place where learners developed change readiness and resilience;
- that the College was a centre of excellence with a culture of care with equality of opportunity;
- that the fact that 40% of learners required additional support and were integrated into the College should feature more strongly in the College's strategic communications;
- recognition that employability was not the ambition for all learners at the College and destinations included: developing life skills, further study at the College or a HE level or volunteering opportunities;
- that it would be helpful to seek insight and feedback from employers on whether the College was producing stable, productive, content and knowledgeable staff;
- to consider the College's role in the Lancashire and Cumbria's Institute of Technology going forward which would mean greater collaboration between colleges and how this could impact on the College's ambitions;
- it would be helpful to understand the College's HE provision and how this connected to the College's FE provision. It was suggested that a Venn diagram could exemplify this;
- that the College prepared people for learning and getting the best out of life.

Members reviewed destination data as it was agreed this would assist the formulation of the College's mission. Members suggested that the College could be described as a stepping stone on learners' "educational journey".

The Board reviewed the feedback from staff who had also completed this exercise. Members noted that similar phrases and themes had been suggested such as inspire, educate and support and comments that the College was a community place which made a massive difference in people's lives.

Members discussed with management whether or not the College would benefit from introducing a formal vision. Members noted that one of the Ofsted inspectors had commented on the fact that the College did not have a formal vision during a meeting with governors. Members discussed that a vision could be that the College was destination of choice for an outstanding education. Members agreed that a vision should include both learners and staff.

b) Strategic Objectives

Management and staff reviewed the College's objectives, which had been approved in March 2022. Members discussed that whilst the content of the objectives were appropriate, the tone of the objectives could be revised to make them more dynamic. It

was also suggested that some of the wording could be revised e.g. “maintain” was not dynamic enough and there should be an objective about supporting and investing in staff to empower them to deliver to students. Words such as influence, innovate, elevate and inspire were suggested.

Some members queried the focus on building surplus and others were of the view that an objective of a strong business model meant the College would be able to invest with surplus growth.

Management and staff also discussed the importance of the College celebrating its identity.

c) College Values and Behaviours

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive referred to the College’s current Values and Behaviours and the feedback from staff. Members discussed with management suggestions including:

- references to trust and empowerment;
- being honest and fair in all dealings including with customers and suppliers;
- being guardians for future generations;
- introducing environmental values and Corporate Social Responsibility;
- negative feedback from staff on the use of the term ‘Customer Focused’ and a preference for ‘people focused’. It was noted that use of ‘customer’ stemmed from when the College referred to itself as an enterprise College;
- viewing the College as a community of staff, learners, governors and employers;
- the importance of the College being more vocal about its role in the local community.
- that some organisations had chosen a single word to exemplify their values and whether the College’s values could be made into an acronym which all stakeholders could easily remember and articulate.

d) Priorities 2023/26

Members discussed what ‘outstanding’ should look like for the College. The Board reviewed the feedback from staff.

Members and management discussed that when the adjective ‘outstanding’ was used in an educational context to describe a College’s ambition there was an immediate association to the Ofsted grading rather than the dictionary definition.

Members suggested focusing on:

- an ambition for the College to be a 'stand out' college which was the first choice for learners and parents;
- being excellent in everything we do;
- the supportive role the College played with learners and employers.

Members discussed with management the target of improving attendance at the College and how more stretching attendance targets could be reached. Members noted the approach to date, the interventions that had been put in place in the autumn term and the advantages and disadvantages of introducing more disciplinary interventions. Members also noted the important role the College provided in supporting young people and the potential consequences within the community if the College introduced a tougher approach on attendance issues.

Following a suggestion from management, members agreed it would be helpful to review how learner attendance data was presented. Members agreed it would be helpful to produce dashboards which enabled staff and governors to assess if or when incremental attendance progress had been made, and by which cohorts of learners, even if targets had not been met.

Members discussed that strategic success would be achieved when stakeholders, such as local schools and other stakeholders, recommended the College to young people. The Board noted that the continuing trend of increased learner numbers, the College's increased market share and feedback from learners indicated that this was already happening and this was testament to the College's reputation and the successful engagement work the College had undertaken with local schools in recent years.

The Interim Principal thanked members for their feedback and undertook to use the feedback to collate proposals for further consideration at a future Board meeting.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that the next meeting would held on 16 March 2023 at 5.30pm.

Preston College

Redacted and Abridged¹ Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 16 March 2023 at 5.30pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mr John Boydell	Chair
Mr Simon Nixon	Interim Principal and Chief Executive
Mr Steve Browne	
Mr Marcel Driver	
Mr Malcolm Goulding	
Ms Nashwa Osman	
Ms Joanne Jones	
Miss Lisa Keegan	
Mrs Laura Mason	
Mrs Lynda Mason	
Mrs Jane Hilton	
Miss Georgia Turner	
Miss Isara McKnight	
Mr Jose Sedano-Martinez	

In attendance:

Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Ms Gill Thornton	Head of Human Resources

Absent:

Ms Safa Dalvi	
Mrs Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	
Mr Iain Stott	Interim Executive Head of Resources

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Board noted that apologies had been received from Ms Safa Dalvi, Ms Marie Haworth, Mr Robert Marshall-Slater and Mr Iain Stott.

The Chair welcomed Mr Jose Sedano-Martinez to his first meeting.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

The Clerk to the Board (the Clerk) reported that Mr Martin Collard had resigned from the Board in January 2023 due to work commitments and read an email from Mr Collard to the Board, management and staff. The Board recorded thanks to Mr Collard for his contribution to the Board and the Quality and Standards Committee.

The Clerk reported that Mr Dipesh Patel had retired from the Board in December 2022 and, as he had been unable to attend the December Board meeting, she had thanked him for this contribution on behalf of the Board. The Clerk read the response from Mr Panel.

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the interest of Mrs Jane Hilton, staff governor (Academic), in Item 12 - Recruitment and Retention of Academic Staff. The Board noted that Mrs Hilton was not required to leave the meeting for consideration of this item.

The Board noted that Mrs Laura Mason would leave the Board meeting for the Board's discussion of her induction review (item 25).

FOR APPROVAL

3. Minutes of the previous meetings

The Board approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15 December 2022 and the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Meeting held on 26 January 2023.

The Board noted the Notes of the afternoon session held on 15 December 2022.

Resolved: The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15 December 2022 and the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Meeting held on 26 January 2023 were approved and signed as correct records.

The Board noted the Notes of the afternoon session held on 15 December 2022.

4. Matters arising

The Board noted the report on the progress of actions from previous meetings.

Resolved: the Board noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

5. Report on Decisions Between Meetings

The Board noted the report on Board decisions taken between meetings and information sent to members between meetings. The Board noted that the following written resolutions had been carried since the previous Board meeting:

30 January 2023 Approval of a Capital Bid Building and Facilities Improvement Grant (T Level)

7 February 2023 Approval of a non-consolidated payment to all staff.

The Clerk report that, as detailed in her report, the Board had previously agreed to award a contract for a Sustainable Construction Strategic Development Fund project which was paid for with grant funding. The Clerk reported that as this contract was executed as a deed, the College Seal was applied on 21 February 2023 in the presence of the Interim Principal and Chief Executive and the Chair of the Governing Body.

Resolved: The Board noted the Report on Decisions Between Meetings including matters approved by written resolution and the use of the College seal between meetings.

6. Fees Policy Update

Mr Simon Nixon, Interim Principal and Chief Executive, presented the updated Fees Policy which had been recommended to the Board for approval by Resources Committee.

The Board approved the Fees Policy 2023/24.

Resolved: The Board approved the Fees Policy 2023/24.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learner Review

Mr Mick Noblett, Vice Principal Curriculum Delivery and Planning, referred members to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Learner Review report. The Board noted that the report exemplified the College's diversity work and contribution to the local community. Members noted that the College's contribution to the local community had also been recognised at the College's Ofsted inspection.

The Clerk reported that an abridged version of the EDI Learner Review, the Workforce Profile Data and governor demographic information would be combined to produce the College Quality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2021/22 which would be published on the College's website.

Resolved: the Board noted the College's EDI Learner Review 2021/22.

8. Workforce Profile Data 2021/22

Ms Gill Thornton, Head of Human Resources, presented the Workforce Profile Data 2021/22 report. Ms Thornton highlighted that the ethnic composition of the College workforce had remained relatively static in the last three years. However, the College had met its target to increase employment of Asian or Asian British – Pakistani staff.

In response to queries from members, Ms Thornton reported:

- on the attrition and retention rates for staff and the main reasons staff left the College. Ms Thornton reported that all staff were invited to complete an exit survey but this could not be made mandatory. Ms Thornton explained that staff tended to leave for higher salaries or to join bigger employers and that the College had a reputation locally as a talent pipeline, with a number of large local employers regularly employing the College's staff;
- that there was a mix of new starters and long serving staff at the College. Ms Thornton undertook to provide details on average length of service;
- that the age profile of staff in the FE sector was generally older as many FE staff began teaching as their second career;

- that staff turnover had returned to pre-pandemic levels and was comparable to the FE sector.

Following discussion with management, the Board also noted that in most areas of the College staff turnover was stable and it was in certain areas, such as construction, where retention and recruitment was more challenging. A member suggested it could be helpful to look at sector salary banding to see if there were any trends. Ms Thornton undertook to review.

The Board noted the Workforce Profile Report 2021/22.

Resolved: The Board noted the Workforce Profile Report 2021/22.

Actions: Ms Thornton to review salary banding to see if there were any trends and to provide details on average length of staff service.

9. Gender Pay Gap

Ms Thornton presented the Gender Pay Gap report and gave an update on the College's progress against the 2021 Continuous Improvement Action Plan.

Ms Thornton reported that management had anticipated a higher gender pay gap for 2021/22 because the majority of the recruitment leading up to the relevant reference date had been for shortage curriculum areas in traditionally male industries, such as construction, and new staff had started higher up the pay scale than in previous years.

In response to a query, Ms Thornton estimated it could take two years for the College's gender pay gap to drop below 5%. She referred to the ongoing challenges of recruiting in some subject areas and the impact this had on the College gender pay gap as they were traditionally based on curriculum area such as construction which were male dominated.

Mr Noblett provided an update on the College's gender related recruitment initiatives such as a project to support females joining the construction sector.

Members discussed with management that the College's gender pay gap data was skewed by the fact that a higher proportion of the College staff were female and this was consistent with the FE sector. i.e. the College's Gender Pay Gap would improve if more male staff were employed, particularly on lower pay scales. Members discussed:

- if more male staff took advantage of shared parental leave and part time working initiatives this would improve the College's gender pay gap;
- the importance of reviewing job descriptions and job titles to ensure that they did not inadvertently deter male or female candidates.

Following a query on why pay was disproportionately higher for males in Quartile 3, Ms Thornton explained that there were staff in Q4 and Q3 earning the same salary i.e. the maximum of the lecturers' salary scale and the College had more males on SCP34 than females.

The Board approved the Gender Pay Gap Report for publication within the legislative timeframe; and noted the proposed actions arising from the Gender Pay Gap data contained within the Continuous Improvement Action Plan.

Resolved: The Board approved the Gender Pay Gap Report for publication within the legislative timeframe; and noted the proposed actions arising from the Gender Pay Gap data contained within the Continuous Improvement Action Plan.

10. Governance Matters

The Clerk presented the Governance Matters for consideration. The Clerk reported:

- the current Board and committee membership, at Appendix A, and succession planning update, including a forthcoming shortlisting meeting and interviews for independent governor vacancies. She reported that Peridot would support the Board with identifying two independent governors and if the other independent governors already appointed by the Board joined the Governing Board all independent governor vacancies would be filled;
- the Search and Governance Committee's suggested approach to hybrid meetings going forward;
- on the progress of the appointment of an external governance review and reasons it had been delayed;
- plans for the next Deep Dive session on 23 March 2023 which would include an engagement session with learners;
- a proposal that the Deep Dive session scheduled for 27 April 2023 should be cancelled as the Principal and Chief Executive recruitment interviews would be held that week;
- that the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) had published bite sized guides to assist colleges following the decision of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) to reclassify FE and sixth form college corporations as public sector organisation;
- revisions to the DfE Governance Guide;
- on a request for feedback from College's on the revised Association of Colleges (AoC) Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and a proposed feedback process.

The Board agreed:

- to minimize the use of hybrid Board/committee meetings where possible going forward. However, if a member could only attend on Zoom then for inclusivity reasons this option should continue to be available;
- to cancel the Deep Dive scheduled for 27 April 2023;
- that members' feedback on the draft AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges should be sent to the Clerk and that on behalf of the Board, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chair of Search and Governance should review the feedback prior to submission.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the membership and succession planning update;**
- **agreed to minimize the use of hybrid Board/committee meetings where possible going forward;**
- **noted the update on the progress of the identification and appointment of an external governance reviewer;**
- **approved the cancellation of the Deep Dive session scheduled for 27 April 2023 should be cancelled;**
- **noted the update on the ONS reclassification of FE and sixth form college corporations as public sector organisations and ESFA publication of bite sized guides to assist colleges;**
- **noted the update on the revisions to the DfE Governance Guide;**
- **approved arrangements for the submission of the College's feedback on the draft Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.**

11. Local Skills Impact

Mr Noblett referred members to his report on the Local Skills Impact and the Board's statutory duty to review how well the education and training provided by the College met local needs.

Mr Noblett referred members to the draft Curriculum Skills Link Governor Role Description at Appendix A which had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee and recommended to the Board for approval. The Board noted that it was proposed that only independent governors would be Curriculum Skills Link Governors. The Board noted the report and approved the Curriculum Skills Link Governor Role Description.

In response to a query on the anticipated time commitment for a member becoming a Curriculum Skills Link Governor, Mr Noblett estimated it would be three meetings a year; one each term. A member was of the view that, based on the questions asked by the Skills Inspector during the recent Ofsted Inspection, members might require more time to develop good links with the College School they had been assigned to and gain a good understanding of how the School addressed local skills needs and also. A member suggested that some meetings, particularly one to one meetings, could take place remotely to provide flexibility for members.

The Board noted that the role was new and would evolve over time.

The Clerk reported that the College's draft Accountability Agreement would be sent to the Board via email as it must be submitted to Department for Education (DfE) by the end of May 2023.

Resolved: The Board noted the Local Skills Impact report and approved the Curriculum Skills Link Governor Role Description.

12. Recruitment and Retention of Academic Staff

Ms Thornton presented the Recruitment and Retention of Academic Staff report. Following discussion, the Board approved the proposed approach.

Resolved: the Board approved the proposed approach.

13. College of Sanctuary

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented a proposal for the College to re-apply for accreditation as a College of Sanctuary proposal. He outlined the benefits to date and the cost of application. The Board noted that the proposal had been recommended to the Board for approval by the Resources Committee.

The Board approved the College's re-application for accreditation as a College of Sanctuary.

Resolved: The Board approved the College's re-application for accreditation as a College of Sanctuary.

14. Risk Management Register

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Risk Management Register. He reported that, following discussion at the Audit and Risk Committee, the Risk Management Register had been rationalised and:

- the number of overall risks reduced and some risks removed;
- two new risks had been added: risk of increased energy prices and challenges with recruitment and retention of staff;
- the risk of achieving 16-18 recruitment numbers had been removed.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive reported that the ESFA had announced funding changes to Adult Education Budget (AEB) which would positively impact the College in year and in 2023/24 and would mitigate some of the risks related to achieving AEB and dealing with rising energy costs.

A member suggested that, as rising energy prices were a certainty, whether this should be budgeted in the accounts rather than included as a risk. The Interim Principal and Chief Executive explained that whilst rising energy prices were inevitable, the College could mitigate the risk by reducing energy consumption and timing the agreement and length of new energy contracts carefully. Members commented that there was a possibility that gas prices would stabilise and it would be helpful to take external advice. The Board noted that College management were taking advice.

The Board reviewed the Risk Management Register, including the risk items that had been amalgamated, embedded or removed and agreed the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed.

Resolved: The Board reviewed the Risk Management Register, including the risk items that had been amalgamated, embedded or removed; and agreed the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed.

15. Higher Education Update

Mr Noblett referred members to the Higher Education Update which included an update on additional student hardship funding for 2022/23. He referred members to the proposed changes to the Student Protection Plan, at Appendix A, which were shown in track changes. The Board noted that the changes had been reviewed by Quality and Standards Committee and recommended to the Board for approval.

The Board noted the Higher Education Update report, approved the proposed changes to the Student Protection Plan and noted the additional student hardship funding for 2022/23.

Resolved: The Board noted the report, approved the proposed changes to the Student Protection plan and noted the additional student hardship funding for 2022/23.

FOR DISCUSSION

16. Principal and Chief Executive's Report

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Principal and Chief Executive's Report. He reported:

- that the unexpected ESFA announcement on AEB funding was welcomed and would reduce the risk of AEB clawback during 2022/23;
- that the College had won the AoC Edge Award in The City and Guilds Award for College Engagement with Employers and, alongside the Ofsted sub-judgement of 'Strong' for Skills Needs and the move from Requires Improvement to Good for Apprenticeships, it was apparent that the College's continued good work with employers as key stakeholders was being recognised externally;
- that the College's annual strategic conversation with DfE/FE Commissioner officials, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Executive Leadership Team had been held the end of January 2023. He referred members to correspondence from the DfE, at Appendix A, which summarised the matters discussed;
- that the College had intended to start offering T Levels in Digital Production, Design and Development; Media, Broadcast and Production; and Hairdressing, Barbering and Beauty Therapy from September 2023. However, the DfE had recently written to all providers to announce that these subjects will be deferred to September 2024 in order to allow more time for the quality of the qualifications to be better guaranteed;

Following a query, Mr Noblett confirmed that everyone who had registered for a T Level which had been postponed had been informed and supported.

The Chair reported positively on the format and content of the Principal and Chief Executive's report which clearly stated the key issues for the Board's attention.

The Board noted the Principal and Chief Executive's Report.

Resolved: The Board noted the Report.

17. Ofsted Inspection Report

The Board noted the Ofsted Inspection Report which had been published on Ofsted's website on 2 March 2023. The Board noted that a presentation had been given to the Board on the feedback from Ofsted at its meeting on 26 January 2023.

Resolved: The Board noted the Ofsted Inspection Report.

18. Five Year Plan Update

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Five Year Plan Update report, making reference to ongoing consultation with staff and learners on the College's mission, vision and values and feedback to date.

The Board noted the report and provided feedback. Members:

- commented on the importance of winning hearts and minds of staff and commented positively on the Interim Principal and Chief Executive's consultation with stakeholders to date and the "bottom up" approach which would help staff and learners to feel ownership in the strategy development;
- commented positively on the content of the report which provided useful material for the Board and management to consider as the new strategy developed;
- reiterated the importance of using ambitious vocabulary rather than words such as maintain;
- commented that the vision could be tweaked to: "We will be the College of choice *for* transforming lives;"
- the two suggested visions could be combined;
- suggested including reference to being the "college of choice" within the community.

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive thanked members for their feedback. It was noted that the draft would be considered at the next Board meeting.

Resolved: The Board noted the Five Year Plan report including progress against the priorities for 2022/23 and the update on developing the new 2023/26 strategic plan.

19. Management Accounts

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive presented the Period 6 Management Accounts. Members noted that a small deficit had been forecast with the long term strategy to build resources.

Resolved: The Board noted the Period 6 financial position.

20. Quality Improvement Plan 2022/23

Mr Noblett presented the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2022/23. He reported that the Post Inspection Action Plan following Ofsted had been incorporated in to the 2022/23 QIP.

The Board noted the QIP.

Resolved: The Board noted the QIP report, including:

- **the current performance and progress against key QIP milestones;**
- **what the College needed to do following the Ofsted Inspection.**

21. Estates Strategy Update

The Interim Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the Estates Strategy Update. He reported that following of the approval of the Board (by written resolution) the College had submitted a capital bid T application to the ESFA for Wave 5 Building and Facilities Improvement Grant (T Level) application. He explained that the bid had included a match funding contribution which had been funded from a separate energy efficiency grant, and therefore there was no impact on underlying College cash. He reported that the next draft of the Estates Strategy would be considered at a future Resources Committee meeting.

A member reiterated the suggestion discussed at the previous meeting that it would be helpful to add a 'curriculum led' table to the appendix which summarised the resources the College had and curriculum areas which required development.

The Board noted the Estates Strategy Update.

Resolved: the Board noted the contents of the draft Estates Strategy and the submission of the Wave 5 Building and Facilities Improvement Grant (T Level) application together with the match contribution (funded from a separate energy efficiency grant).

22. Safeguarding and Prevent Update

The Board noted the Safeguarding and Prevent Update and the Updated Prevent Action Plan.

Resolved: The Board noted the Safeguarding and Prevent Update and the updated Prevent Action Plan.

23. Committee Minutes

The Board noted the Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 2 February 2023 and the Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 2 March 2023.

Resolved: the Board noted the Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 2 February 2023 and the Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 2 March 2023.

24. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Mr Noblett, Ms Haworth and Ms Thornton left the meeting.

25. Governance Matters

Mrs Laura Mason left the meeting.

The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance Committee had completed an Induction Year Review for Mrs Laura Mason. She reported that the Search and Governance Committee had agreed that Mrs Mason had completed a successful induction year and recommended to the Board that Mrs Mason should complete her term of office. The Clerk referred members to the report at Appendix B which summarised Mrs Mason's Board and Committee attendance, training completed during 2022 and 2023 and other activities during her first year on the Board.

The Board approved the induction year review for Mrs Mason.

Mrs Laura Mason re-joined the meeting.

The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance Committee had completed an Induction Year Review for Mr Robert Marshall-Slater.

The Board noted a report on the potential conflict of interest discussed by the Search and Governance Committee and how this would have been managed.

The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance had agreed that Mr Marshall-Slater had completed a successful induction year and recommended to the Board that he should complete his term of office.

The Clerk referred members to the report at Appendix A which summarised Mr Marshall-Slater's Board and Committee attendance and training completed since his appointment to the Board.

The Board approved the induction year review for Mr Marshall-Slater.

Resolved: The Board approved Induction Year Reviews for Mrs Laura Mason and Mr Robert Marshall-Slater.

26. Date of Next Meeting – Deep Dive Session 23 March 2023

The Board noted that the next meeting would be the Board's Deep Dive Session on Thursday 23 March 2023.

Preston College

Redacted and abridged¹ Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 29 June 2023 at 5.30pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mr John Boydell	Chair
Mr Steve Browne	
Mr Marcel Driver	
Mrs Georgia Dunn	
Mr Malcolm Goulding	
Ms Joanne Jones	
Miss Lisa Keegan	
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	
Mrs Laura Mason	
Mrs Lynda Mason	
Miss Isara McKnight	
Mr Simon Nixon	Principal and Chief Executive
Mrs Jen Walters	
Mr Jose Sedano-Martinez	Remote (Zoom)

Absent:

Miss Safa Dalvi
Mrs Jane Hilton
Mrs Nashwa Osman

In attendance:

Mr Mark Airey	Head of Finance
Mrs Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Mrs Rebecca Paley	Principal's Executive Assistant (minutes)
Mr Iain Stott	Interim Executive Head of Resources
Ms Gill Thornton	Head of Human Resources

Part 1 (a)

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, making specific mention to Mrs Jen Walters, who was attending her first Board meeting and to Mr Simon Nixon, at his first full formal Board meeting since being appointed as the permanent Principal and Chief Executive.

The Board noted that apologies had been received from Mrs Jane Hilton, Ms Safa Dalvi and Mrs Nashwa Osman.

It was noted that a quorum was present, with Mr Jose Sedano-Martinez attending via zoom.

¹ Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted that Mr Marcel Driver and Miss Lisa Keegan would leave the Board meeting for the Board's discussion of their induction reviews (Item 23). Miss Keegan's interest was also noted regarding item 14a, review of the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, as the College's Health and Safety Officer, but that there was no requirement for her to leave the meeting at that point.

FOR APPROVAL

3. Minutes of the previous meetings

The Board noted the Notes of the Deep Dive Session held on 23 March 2023 and approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 16 March 2023.

Resolved: The Board noted the Notes of the Deep Dive Session held on 23 March 2023 and the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 16 March 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising

The Board noted the report on the progress of actions from previous meetings.

Resolved: the Board noted the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

5. Report on Decisions Between Meetings

The Board noted the report on Board decisions taken between meetings and information sent to members between meetings. Written Resolutions approved by the Board between meetings were confirmed as:

- 18 April 2023 – an amendment to the Instrument and Articles regarding the minimum size of the Senior Post Holder Selection Panel for the appointment of a Principal and Chief Executive;
- 9 June 2023 – to note the capital grants received and approve the proposed capital works and expenditure of capital grant funds scheduled for summer 2023;
- 9 June 2023 – to note the minor restructuring plan and approve the use of the voluntary severance scheme for this plan.

Resolved: The Board noted the Report on Decisions between Meetings including matters approved by written resolution.

6. Strategic Plan 2023/26

Mr Simon Nixon, Principal and Chief Executive, presented the proposed Strategic Plan 2023/26, with Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members providing further information on their individual areas. The following key points were highlighted:

- the Strategic Plan 2023/26 was the culmination of work undertaken over the last year with the Board and staff;
- the plan proposed a new Vision and Mission for the College and updated values;
- the strategic objectives for the College had not changed significantly, as they remained valid and up to date;
- the Curriculum and Quality strategies had both been discussed at Quality and Standards Committee and would underpin the overall Strategic Plan;
- other strategies would be presented to Board over the coming year – e.g. People Strategy, Estates Strategy;
- the Resources section of the deliverables remained focused on finances, including points related to reclassification, the IT Strategy, artificial intelligence and digital references;
- the Curriculum section of the deliverables was drawn directly from the Curriculum Strategy, with eight key areas that focused on responsiveness and local skills needs. The College aimed to embed sector specific digital skills, sustainability, employer encounters and to enhance the learner experience;
- the Quality deliverables were outlined as celebrating the diversity, growth and development of individuals, with a focus on Centres of Excellence and looking at outstanding practice. The deliverables also looked to facilitate apprenticeships and outcomes to progression, a focus on maths and English, digital skills and the Higher Education offer. The College aimed to drive continuous improvement, with a focus on staff skills including pedagogy and self-development which would link to the People Strategy going forward.

Members queried how Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets were developed and whether they were sufficiently challenging to ensure the College continued to progress following the Ofsted “good” inspection. Management explained that the KPIs targets had been proposed by management following an assessment of what was realistically achievable for the College in the current context whilst also being sufficiently aspirational to stretch the College to ensure it continued on its pathway of continuous improvement e.g. improving learner attendance and increasing the percentage of staff costs against income. The Principal and Chief Executive also confirmed that the targets would be reviewed annually.

Following questions from members it was confirmed that:

- progression data had historically included those learners that attended the College to improve their skills from a personal perspective, rather than for employment or

qualification reasons and, if this data was excluded, the progression rates would be significantly improved. Management confirmed that this would be reviewed and addressed appropriately;

- deliverables would be reviewed with the Board every year and targets revised accordingly if required;
- the number of strategic priorities was in line with what had been in place for 2018/23, but they could be reviewed and some combined in order to reduce the quantity;
- all teams had been involved in the creation of the deliverables and ELT was confident that these were appropriate in order to continue to improve the performance of the College;
- all aspects of the reclassification of colleges as public sector continued to be worked through by government and the College awaited further information.

A member queried references in the report to the College achieving a 3% surplus in 2025 and 2026 and queried whether this was sufficiently aspirational and whether an incremental target increase to 5% should be included for 2025/26. Following discussion, the Principal and Chief Executive undertook to review the target surplus for 2025/26.

The Board approved the Strategic Plan 2023/26, the Curriculum Strategy 2023/26 and the Quality Strategy 2023/26.

Resolved: The Board approved the Strategic Plan 2023/26, the Curriculum Strategy 2023/26 and the Quality Strategy 2023/26 subject to the changes requested.

Actions: Management to review the:

- the presentation of progression data;
- number of strategic priorities to see if it was possible for some to be combined;
- target surplus for 2025/6 to ensure there was an incremental target increase for 2025/26.

7. Budget and Financial Plan 2023/24

Mr Mark Airey, Head of Finance, presented the proposed Budget and Financial Plan for 2023/24, noting that the plan demonstrated good financial health and that the period 10 figures currently being worked on portrayed an improved picture on the period 9 accounts presented to Board.

. The Board agreed to approve the Budget and Financial Plan, subject to an agreed amendment.

Following a query from a member, management confirmed that detailed robust curriculum planning had been carried out to manage risk.

Resolved: Subject to the caveat regarding the College's catering and sports centre provision, the Board approved the Budget and Financial Plan 2023/24.

Action: Revised forecasts to be presented to Resources Committee during the autumn term.

8. Utilities Renewal

Redacted.

9. Accountability Statement

Mr Mick Noblett, Vice Principal Curriculum Delivery and Planning, presented the proposed Accountability Statement 2023/24. Mrs Clare Rayner, Clerk to the Board, asked that any members wishing to volunteer for the Skills and Curriculum Link Governor role should email her to register their interest.

The Board noted that the draft Accountability Statement 2023/24 had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 15 June 2023 and was recommended to the Board for approval. The Board approved the accountability statement.

Resolved: The Board approved the Accountability Statement 2023/24.

Action: Members wishing to volunteer for the Skills Link Governor Role to email the Clerk to express their interest.

10. Quality and Standards Policy Review

Mrs Marie Haworth, Vice Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support, presented the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and Complaints Policy and Procedure for approval. The Board noted that the policies had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 15 June 2023 and were recommended to the Board for approval. The Board approved the policies.

Resolved: The Board approved the SEND Policy and the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

11. Higher Education Update

Mrs Haworth provided members with an update on the College's Higher Education provision and changes relating to the Office for Students (OfS) and national direction. The Board noted the HE update and approved the Access and Participation Statement, following recommendation from the Quality and Standards Committee.

Resolved: The Board noted the HE update and approved the Access and Participation Statement.

12. Partnerships/Subcontracting Report

Mr Noblett provided an update on the College's partnerships and highlighted detail on the College's subcontracting arrangements for 2023/24. The Board noted that the report had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 15 June 2023 and was recommended to the Board for approval. The Board noted the Partnerships Report and approved the proposed subcontracting arrangements for 2023/24.

Resolved: The Board noted the Partnerships Report and approved the proposed subcontracting arrangements for 2023/24.

13. Resources Policy Review – Employment Policy

Ms Gill Thornton, Head of HR, presented proposed changes to the Pay Principles Policy with the introduction of Appendix Six and asked for approval for the continuation of the Hybrid Working Policy. The Board noted that that the changes proposed had been recommended to the Board for approval by the Resources Committee following review at its meeting on 8 June 2023. The Board approved the proposed changes.

Resolved: The Board approved

- the revision to Pay Principles Policy (i) to include Job Family Group (JFG) 2a to the Business Support Staff and Managers pay framework as set out in paragraph 12, and to include Appendix Six to Pay Principles Policy, Appendix A to this report;

The Board agreed that the occasional hybrid working and regular/ specified period hybrid working is retained in its current policy and procedure format; and that requests for specified periods of hybrid are reviewed annually.

14. Resources Policy Review - Other

Mr Stott outlined proposed updates to the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy which included a Statement of Intent. Mr Stott reported that this policy had undergone a detailed review 12 months ago and therefore the changes proposed at this time were minimal. He reported that the policy had been reviewed by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 8 June 2023 and recommended to the Board for approval. The Board approved the amendments to the Policy and agreed that the Chair and Principal and Chief Executive should sign the Statement of Intent.

Resolved: The Board approved the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and agreed that the Chair and Principal should sign the Statement of Intent.

15. TU Facilities Time Report

Ms Thornton referred members to the Trade Union Facilities Time Report, noting the valuable discussion with the Resources Committee meeting on 8 June 2023. She confirmed that the additional information requested by the Committee had been included in the cover report. The Board noted the report and approved the statutory report for publication on the government portal and the College website, as recommended by the Resources Committee.

Resolved: The Board noted the report and approved the statutory report for publication on the government portal and the College website.

16. Risk Register

Mr Stott presented the Risk Register which had been discussed at the Audit and Risk Committee on 14 June 2023. The Board noted the Risk Register and agreed the current risks, actions completed and actions still to be completed, as recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Resolved: The Board noted the Risk Management Register and agreed the current risks, actions completed and further actions still to be completed.

FOR DISCUSSION

17. Principal and Chief Executive's Report

The Principal and Chief Executive presented the Principal and Chief Executive's Report. He confirmed that since writing the report, the outcome of the College's T Level Capital Bid had been confirmed and the College had been successful in receiving funding for the project submitted. Members congratulated the College management on this outcome.

Following a request from a member for additional information on the review of the Learner Voice process, management confirmed that a full review had been carried out and discussed at Quality and Standards Committee and changes to the process included changing the meeting cycle and creating an ongoing electronic survey for staff members to access at any time whilst talking to learners, in order to record and address any issues in a timely manner.

Resolved: The Board noted the Principal and Chief Executive's Report.

18. Five Year Plan Update

The Principal and Chief Executive presented the Five Year Plan Update report, noting that this plan had now reached its end point and, despite a challenging few years, mainly as a result of the Covid pandemic, the College had broadly accomplished what it set out to achieve and should be proud of this journey. Mr Nixon noted this was an important milestone for the College. He outlined the context in which the plan had originated and the achievement of many goals as the College was a viable stand-alone College, with improved quality of provision, financial health and learner numbers.

Members echoed the comments made by the Principal and Chief Executive and commented on the significant improvements made at the College over the last five years in a challenging context, highlighting the strength of the plan and the management team leading the plan.

Resolved: The Board noted the Five Year Plan report including progress against the priorities for 2022/23.

19. Management Accounts

Mr Airey presented the Period 9 Management Accounts as discussed at the Resources Committee on 8 June 2023. Mr Airey noted that with work continuing towards the period 10 management accounts since these papers were written, and reported the forecast outcome surplus. Members congratulated College management on achieving a surplus much higher than previously forecast, recognising the work of staff to achieve this result.

Resolved: The Board noted the Period 9 financial position.

20. Quality Improvement Plan 2022/23

Mrs Haworth presented the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2022/23, reminding members that it included the areas highlighted for improvement by Ofsted, including attendance, English, maths, and monitoring incremental steps of high needs learners.

Following questions from members on management efforts to improve attendance, the Board discussed the strategies that had been introduced throughout the year in order to improve

attendance rates of learners. It was reported that these had positively impacted on some cohorts, but that specific areas of challenge remained. These areas had also been highlighted as being national issues across the FE sector e.g. engineering and maths. Members discussed with management the advantages and disadvantages of contextualising maths and English GCSE provision.

Resolved: The Board noted the QIP report, including:

- **the current performance and progress against key QIP milestones;**
- **College actions following the Ofsted Inspection.**

21. Safeguarding and Support for Learners Annual Report

Mrs Haworth provided members with the Safeguarding and Support for Learners Annual Report, highlighting the following key points:

- it had been a challenging year with an increased number of learners within each category requiring safeguarding and/or additional support;
- increasing numbers of unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers had been seen, with a recruitment session taking place recently. This had resulted in an additional group of 16-18 learners for a September 2023 start who had experienced trauma and would require additional support;
- trauma informed training had been provided during 2022/23 and this was planned to be broadened to all teaching staff for 2023/24 as part of the annual safeguarding training.

Mrs Lynda Mason, Safeguarding Link Governor, confirmed that she had regular meetings with Mrs Haworth throughout the year and had seen the progress made in challenging circumstances, noting that meeting the needs of all these learners was a strength of the College. She commended the Learner Support team for their work and emphasised the importance of balancing learner numbers against the resources available.

Following questions from members it was confirmed that:

- the Learner Support team had requested additional resources through the College's business planning process and these had been approved and provided;
- there was expected to be additional pressures at the start of the new academic year as learners would require extra support as they settled into College life;
- five years ago the College had c20 education, health and care plan (EHCP) learner and it was expected that c120 would be enrolled for 2023/24;
- each EHCP learner was individually assessed and the College was realistic as to whether support could be provided or not with location and age of learners as factors taken into consideration;

- the College's EHCP learners flourished, with very high achievement rates (87%) which were c20/25% higher than the national average and rates of progression were also high. As the College had a reputation for supporting high needs learners this meant that learners with high needs were choosing the College over other providers.

Resolved: the Board noted the report.

Mr Noblett, Ms Haworth, Ms Thornton, Mr Airey and Mrs Rebecca Paley left the meeting.

Part 1 (b)

23. Governance Matters

The Board noted the Governance Matters report including the Board and Committee membership updated at Appendix A.

The Clerk reported that, subject the Board approving the recommendations of the Search and Governance Committee, and assuming that the members appointed joined the Board, there would be no independent governor vacancies by September 2023.

The Clerk reported that a number of people had contacted the College expressing an interest in joining the Board and the Search and Governance Committee suggested that the Board consider appointing co-opted members to committees. The Clerk outlined the benefits of co-options as they would increase the size and experience of committees and potentially support succession planning ahead of a number of Board retirements in 2024. The Board were supportive of this approach. The Clerk undertook to develop a role description for co-opted members over the summer. The Clerk explained that as the Search and Governance Committee had conducted a high number of governor interviews during the 2022/23 academic year it might be necessary to invite other members of the Board to form co-option interview panels.

The Clerk reported that:

- whilst the timetable had been delayed due to the Ofsted inspection and the Principal and Chief Executive recruitment process, the invitation for tenders for the external governance review had been issued and the Search and Governance Committee would consider bids received on 5 July 2023;
- due to time constraints, the Board would be asked to approve the external governance review by written resolution;
- the training and development opportunities for governors were detailed in the Governor Continuing Professional Development and Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities Newsletter - Issue 3 Summer 2023 and in particular highlighted the availability of the a recording of a webinar on 'Equality, diversity and inclusion: current developments and emerging trends for the sector' delivered by Eversheds Sutherland. She advised interested members to watch the webinar as soon as possible, as Evershed's webinars were not permanently available.

The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance Committee had interviewed five candidates for the independent governor vacancies and recommended:

- the appointment of Sally Little as an independent governor and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee;
- the appointment of Richard Sellars as an independent governor and a member of the Resources Committee;
- the appointment of Helen Whittingham as an independent governor and a member of the Search and Governance Committee.

The Board approved the governor appointments as recommend by the Search and Governance Committee.

Mr Driver left the meeting.

The Clerk reported that Mr Marcel Driver's second term of office was due to end in October 2023. She explained that in normal circumstances a governor would retire after serving two terms. However, Mr Driver was Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee which was a small committee with two new members. The Search and Governance Committee had discussed the possibility that Mr Driver remain on the Board for a further year, in particular to support the Audit and Risk Committee with succession planning and recommended this to the Board. The Clerk reported that Mr Driver had indicated that he would be willing to serve for an additional year. The Clerk explained that whilst the Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance for English Colleges stated that "*Governors should not normally serve for more than two terms of four years or three terms of three years (a maximum of either eight or nine years)*" under 'comply or explain' there was flexibility if there was good reason to extend a member's term of office. The Board noted a summary of Mr Driver's Board and Risk Committee attendance, training and other contributions since October 2019 was at Appendix E.

The Board agreed to extend Mr Driver's term of office until July 2024.

Mr Driver re-joined the meeting.

Miss Keegan left the meeting

The Clerk reported that, whilst staff governors were elected by staff, the Board was required to complete an induction review for staff governors after one year. The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance Committee had completed an induction year review for Miss Lisa Keegan and referred members to report at Appendix F. The Clerk reported that the Search and Governance Committee recommend to the Board that Miss Keegan's induction year review should be approved.

The Board approved Miss Keegan's the induction year review.

(Miss Keegan re-joined the meeting)

The Board approved the governance meeting dates for 2023/24.

The Clerk referred members to the draft Governance deliverables for 2023/24 which had been reviewed by the Search and Governance Committee and recommended to the Board for approval. The Clerk reported that the deliverables included introducing a separate

appraisal process for the Chair of the Governing Body in summer 2023 as a pilot. The Board approved the governance deliverables for 2023/24.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the Board membership and succession planning update, including the progression of co-options;**
- **noted a progress report on the appointment of an external governance reviewer;**
- **noted an update on governor training and development.**

The Board approved the:

- **appointment of Sally Little as an independent governor and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee;**
- **appointment of Richard Sellars as an independent governor and a member of the Resources Committee;**
- **appointment of Helen Whittingham as an independent governor and a member of the Search and Governance Committee;**
- **extension of Mr Driver's term of office until July 2024;**
- **induction review for Miss Keegan;**
- **governance meeting dates for 2023/24;**
- **governance deliverables for 2023/24.**

24. Date of next Meeting

It was noted that the next Board meeting would be held on 21 September 2023.