

ACTIVATE LEARNING FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION CORPORATION BOARD

Meeting date: **Tuesday 4 June 2024**

Venue: **Microsoft Teams**

PRESENT:	Sue Sturgeon	Chair of the Corporation
	Alison Blight	
	Lesha Chetty	
	Gary Headland	Chief Executive Officer
	Natalia Malczewska	Student Governor
	Smitha Nair	
	Cathie Prest	
	Emma Shipp	
	Kathy Slack	
	Dan Willis	Staff Governor
IN ATTENDANCE:	Cheri Ashby	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
	Jon Adams	Chief Strategy Officer
	Louise Basu	Chief People Officer
	Neil Brookes	Executive Director Faculties and Colleges (North).
	Steve Ball	Chief Operating Officer
	Peter Ryder	External Governance Reviewer, Rockborn.
	Lauren Ward	Governance Officer / Governance Professional / Minute Taker.

MINUTES

The meeting started at 17.01

<u>MINUTE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION/ RESOLUTION</u>
1.	Apologies.	
	1.1 Apologies for absence were received from David Goosey, Latifah Taha and James Voûte.	
	1.2 The Board agreed for Lauren Ward to act as the Governance Professional for this meeting in the absence of Amy Gleeson, Head of Governance.	
	1.3 The Board confirmed that they were happy for the meeting to be recorded.	
2.	Declarations of gifts, interests, and hospitality.	
	2.1 There were no declarations of gifts, interests, or hospitality.	
3.	Accountability statement	
	<i>Lesha Chetty joined the meeting.</i>	

- 3.1 The Board received the 'Activate Learning 2024/25 Accountability Statement' which was taken as read.
- 3.2 The Chief Strategy Officer (CSO) provided a summary of the Accountability Statement's purpose and emphasised the Board's responsibility to ensure that Activate Learning meets local skills needs. The Local Needs Duty review occurs every three years to assess if the organisation is successfully meeting these needs, with an annual Accountability Statement outlining actions for the following year.
- 3.3 The CSO indicated that the key areas for attention were section C, which highlighted actions that the organisation took from the previous year's objectives; and D, which outlines the organisations objectives for the following 12 months.
- 3.4 The CSO reminded the Board that the Accountability Statement was an external-facing document, which will be uploaded to the Activate Learning website. Local authorities and employer-representative bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce may review the document, however, it is mostly for Governors to seek assurance on the colleges impact and for a select number of other stakeholders.
- 3.5 The Board noted that the Accountability Statement must be submitted by 30th June 2024, following approval by the Corporation Board and signature from the Chair of the Corporation.
- 3.6 The Board commended the CSO and his team on the Accountability Statement and recognised the improvements since the previous year's version. The document highlighted the hard work and dedication that the team had demonstrated throughout the 2023/24 academic year.
- 3.7 One Governor advised that they had emailed the CSO with some suggested minor amendments. In their view, the statement meets the DfE requirements, but it could benefit from some more storytelling to illustrate what has been done and the impact.
- 3.8 One Governor referred to the DfE guidance and suggested that the 'Our Purpose' section should link back to the Strategic Plan and its relationship to the Accountability Statement. Additionally, the longer-term strategic outcomes and actions arising from the Local Needs Duty should be included in this section. They also recommended that the 'Approach to developing the annual Accountability Statement and meeting our Local Needs Duty' section could include more details on the engagement with relevant education providers outside of the FE sector, such as independent training providers and universities.
- 3.9 One Governor questioned how often the Accountability Statement needed to be reviewed and sent to the DfE, and whether any feedback would be

supplied. The CSO clarified that the review was an annual process with an approximate deadline of June each year, with no direct feedback from the DfE. The Board noted that progress against the agreed objectives would be monitored by the Quality & Relevance Committee.

- 3.10 One Governor questioned the omission of Health and Social Care from the priorities table, despite its national and regional importance. The CSO explained that the Local Needs Duty paper guides the prioritisation process and compared it to having a list of problems to solve. This year the organisation has focused on areas such as Construction, Digital, and Sustainability but the Board may wish to prioritise Health and Social Care in future statements.
- 3.11 One Governor requested clarification on the green economy and sustainability element, specifically regarding the launch of the suite of courses, which currently has a target of 150 starters for the new academic year. The CSO advised that the organisation has avoided including speculative information. He confirmed that some skills boot-camp funding had been secured for the sustainability courses, in addition to developing commercially funded courses by individual businesses. The Board noted the challenges in predicting attendance numbers for new courses and acknowledged that there would be improved benchmarking after the first year.
- 3.12 One Governor requested clarification regarding the performance status on the recruitment for T-Level students and the possibility of a revised forecast for the next academic year. The CSO advised that while T-Levels will be launched, predicting demand for individual qualifications is challenging due to many of them being new courses and new campuses. Additionally, curriculum reforms and the potential impact of the general election add complexity. The Board noted that next year's targets are based on profiles from individual faculties and their recruitment expectations. With the expansion of T-Levels at each campus, the numbers are expected to increase naturally.
- 3.13 One Governor questioned the benefits of reviewing other colleges' Accountability Statements. The CSO confirmed that statements from other local colleges, including those in a national pilot, had been reviewed to ensure that Activate Learning's Accountability Statement was sufficiently ambitious. He expressed satisfaction with the statement and its level of ambition.
- 3.14 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) thanked the CSO and his team for the high-quality, detailed work alongside navigating the challenges of curriculum reform. The CEO also expressed thanks to Kathy Slack and David Goosey for their considerable governance support throughout the process.

Natalia Malczewska left the meeting.

**MINUTE
NO.**

**ACTION/
RESOLUTION**

3.15 The Board agreed to approve the 2024/25 Accountability Statement, subject to the suggested minor amendments and agreed for the finalised version to be approved by Sue Sturgeon as Chair of the Corporation Board and Kathy Slack as the lead Governor for Skills.

RESOLUTION: The Board agreed to approve the 2024/25 Accountability Statement, subject to the suggested minor amendments and for the finalised version to be approved by Sue Sturgeon as Chair of the Corporation Board and Kathy Slack as the lead Governor for Skills.

Board.

4. Minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 30th April 2024.

4.1 The Board approved the minutes from the Confidential meeting on Tuesday 30 April 2024, as an accurate record.

4.2 The Board approved the minutes from the main meeting on Tuesday 30 April 2024, as an accurate record.

4.3 One Governor expressed that she was satisfied with the increased amount of detail included in the minutes, in response to the feedback provided at the Corporation meeting on 30 April 2024.

5. Matters Arising from the meeting on Tuesday 30th April 2024.

Confidential Matters Arising.

5.1 The Board noted that there were no confidential matters arising from the meeting on Tuesday 30 April 2024.

Matters Arising from the main meeting.

5.2 The CEO informed the Board that item 5.8, 'Produce an example in the Balanced Scorecard of a current project or pursuit and the desired outcome,' had been completed. He referred to the Balanced Scorecard report, which now includes a new column in the projects table.

5.3 The CEO updated the Board on item 5.10 'Provide data on the staff turnover alongside the staff survey results'. The Board noted that the staff survey had been completed and the data would be sent to York for analysis, comparing Activate Learning's data with other colleges. The findings will be analysed internally over the Summer and reported to the Board in October, with correlating HR data.

6. Organisational Objectives and Strategic Risks (Balanced Scorecard)

6.1 The Board received the Balanced Scorecard report which was taken as read.

6.2 The CEO advised the Board that the organisation was having a good year, with innovation, energy, and dynamism evident throughout, however, there were still issues and risks which have been outlined within the Balanced Scorecard.

- 6.3 The CEO informed the Board that the staff survey results were positive including increased participation and significant improvements across most of the questions compared to the previous year. He thanked the Chief People Officer (CPO) for achieving the 10% increase in participation during a busy time in the academic year. The Board acknowledged that there would be some data variations due to the increased staff numbers and staff turnover. The CEO expressed satisfaction that the data reflects the leadership team's efforts and the Board's investments over the past year. The Board noted that as the organisation now had two years of data, correlations could be made between staff exit and attrition data which will build a picture of the improvements to the Staff Journey. The CEO commented that the organisation feels vibrant and a change in culture is starting to be felt across the colleges with hard data to support the progress.
- 6.4 The CEO highlighted the success of the recent Shynefest festival at the Merrist Wood campus. Held during half-term, the event provided hundreds of students with valuable work experience in a commercial setting. He praised the commitment of staff and the leadership by Pete Reynolds in particular. The Chair shared her positive reflections on the event, noting the opportunity to interact with students and staff and the community's chance to engage with Activate Learning. The CEO thanked the Chair for her attendance and support.
- 6.5 One Governor requested further details regarding the planned infrastructure review for the Activate Academy Rugby Club. The CEO explained that the academy, had been identified as an area of concern due to its lower contributions compared to other curriculum elements and concerns over accommodation and readiness for Ofsted inspection. He emphasised that it is a reputational growth area, and a thorough review will be conducted in the Autumn to assess the improvements required for commercial viability and curriculum alignment. No capital will be invested currently as the activity does not make the requisite contribution. The Governor also suggested exploring sponsorship opportunities with the Rams Rugby Club in Reading. The CEO asked the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and the Director of Faculties and Colleges (North), to investigate the possibility and to keep the DCEO informed.

ACTION: Explore the possibility of developing a sponsorship with the Rams Rugby Club in Reading.

COO / DFCN

- 6.6 One Governor queried the link between Cybersecurity and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in teaching. The DCEO responded that the Digital Team was working on setting up a secure interface for staff on the SharePoint page following a discussion with Windsor Forest Group. Partnerships with Teachermatic and the internally developed AI Tutors which had both been mentioned in the quality update, also provide secure environments for teachers to use AI. The COO assured the Board of the organisations ongoing focus on cybersecurity, including discussions with the Audit & Risk Committee and RSM to conduct an internal audit during the next academic year and routine testing by the IT Team. The Board

noted the organisation's commitment to the safety of staff and students when using AI technology and the provision of continuous training.

6.7 The Chair of the Corporation questioned the status of Activate Learning's market share, and whether the Guildford campus had improved. The COO advised that this area was still being researched, however, the growth in student numbers had outstripped the demographics. There is yet to be data on the shift between different education options and how many students moved into further education. The CEO confirmed the current lack of hard data and provided an anecdotal overview. The CEO informed the Corporation that he had commissioned some data science analysis in relation to market share which would be shared and discussed during the next Corporation Board strategy event. The Board noted significant progress in Berkshire and that Oxfordshire was doing well. Surrey showed promising signs of growth but there was more work to do with some missed opportunities in Guildford and Farnham, where potential students opt for longer commutes to other colleges. Regarding Higher Education, there has been a slight decline in market share due to competitive pressure and initiatives have been introduced to counteract this trend, such as expanding online offerings into HTQs. The market share in Apprenticeships has seen a three-year decline, which was deliberate so that the organisation could focus on enhancing the quality, but the organisation is optimistic that the decline would stabilise and eventually reverse. The Online Faculty has been a significant success.. The CEO advised the Board that when asking about the market share, it was important to be precise and to understand the market dynamics beyond the 16-18 age group.

6.8 One Governor questioned whether the Capital Funding that was requested from the DfE for the Merrist Wood campus had been signed off prior to the announcement of the General Election. The COO informed the Board that as the project had received a green RAG rating, the funding would not need additional political approval because the overspend is within the tolerance that officials can pursue. There has been heightened engagement from the DfE to get the project over the line and confirmation has been received from both the project and funding teams that the match funding for the project continues to be robust, at £2.4M over five years. The COO advised that the organisation was getting to a contractual position, and he hoped to receive an additional update over the coming weeks.

7. Learner Journey Update.

Quality Performance Update.

7.1 The Board received the Quality Performance Update paper which was taken as read. The DCEO advised that due to the short gap between the last update on the KPI forecasts on the 30th of April, the update would focus on the organisations efforts to improve quality and the feedback on the outcomes from the student conference.

- 7.2 The DCEO updated the Board on the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Lead Practitioner roles which were introduced after the Learner Journey Review in response to teachers' requests for peer support and grassroots CPD. There are 21 roles across the organisation, with teachers able to apply via an expression of interest to support another teacher one day a week. Additionally, English and Maths Lead Practitioners provide extra support. The support requested has mainly focused on behaviour management, planning, and giving feedback.
- 7.3 The DCEO informed the Board about the new Teachermatic AI pilot, which functions like a personal assistant for teachers. The pilot began in January with 50 teachers and has since increased to 70. Positive feedback indicates that the system has helped teachers with lesson planning and assessments, reducing prep time. Due to the positive response, the Board noted that all teachers will have access to Teachermatic as part of their toolkit.
- 7.4 The Board was informed about Activate Learning's internally developed AI Maths and AI English tutors for online GCSE courses. The DCEO demonstrated how the AI tool challenges thinking and builds learners' confidence with an example of a Maths question. The Board noted positive feedback from students, who reported that the AI tool helped them stay motivated and better understand the questions.
- 7.5 One Governor questioned the cost of teachers having access to Teachermatic and the Activate Learning AI Tutor. The Board noted that the total annual cost was £18,000 for Teachermatic. There were no associated development costs for the AI Tutor since it was created internally by the Digital Team during their working hours.
- 7.6 The DCEO provided an update on the randomised control trial conducted in partnership with Newcastle College Group to improve the understanding of students' mental health. Early data analysis from the 1800 participants indicates signs of depression and anxiety, particularly among female students. Additionally, wellbeing and resilience levels are as expected, but there are some reports of eating disorders. The Board noted that the data collected from the trial will help develop Activate Learning's personal development curriculum and student support offerings.
- 7.7 One Governor asked whether participants who received referrals and completed their trial period of support were assessed on a case-by-case basis or predefined criteria. They also inquired about evidence showing the EQuoo app's impact on students' mental health. The DCEO explained that the analysis is still in the early stages, but initial results indicate that students' assessments were more positive after completing the game compared to their initial self-assessments. She offered to provide additional data once it becomes available.

7.8 One Governor referred to the report data, noting that while depression and anxiety levels among women were reported as high, a majority of students indicated they had good mental health. The CEO explained that the trial had been challenging due to a smaller than expected participant pool. Activate Learning has not yet received the full report from the psychologists analysing the trial data, so the data included in the DCEO's report was based on the organization's anecdotal understanding from briefings. The Board noted that at a recent Association of Colleges conference, it was recognised that Activate Learning was in a favourable position regarding the amount of evidence collected on early challenges related to student mental health. While it is too early to draw conclusions, once the trial is completed, the evidence will be used to inform the organisation's investment decisions.

7.9 The Board received an update on the KPI data for Apprenticeships. The DCEO reminded the Board that the current performance rates were at 58%. The Apprenticeship provision remains under review by the DfE until the organisation exceeds the minimum performance level of 60%. The Board noted optimism that the current performance could surpass the minimum required performance rate. Compared to the previous year, there are more achievements and double the number of apprentices at Gateway ready to complete the endpoint assessment (EPA). There are no notable problems with employers.

7.10 The DCEO informed the Board that an expected OFSTED inspection on the Level 5 Learning & Skills Teacher provision was expected imminently. The Board noted that 17 out of 21 Apprentices had successfully passed their EPA, with a total of six distinctions, three partial distinctions, eight passes, and no fails. The remaining four apprentices have their EPA booked by the end of June. The Board noted that the forecasted achievement rate is 81%, which excels the minimum achievement rate of 60%.

Student Conference Outcomes & Follow Up.

7.11 The Board received the 'Student Outcomes and Follow up' report which was taken as read. The DCEO extended her thanks to the staff and Governors who participated in the 2024 Student Conferences.

7.12 The DCEO highlighted seven emerging themes from the conferences: Safeguarding, Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA), the importance of Digital Education, Careers, Student and Learning Support, Student Experience, and Advice and Admissions. The Board noted that under Safeguarding, students expressed concerns about student conduct and increased vaping, and requested better signposting to support services and more social spaces for safety and collaboration. The COO is investigating ways to create these spaces. 'You Said, We Did' posters will be created and displayed across all campuses to show actions taken based on student feedback. The DCEO shared examples of the posters.

Curriculum Manager Appointments.

7.13 The Board received the 'Curriculum Manager Report' which was taken as read.

7.14 The DCEO provided an update on the recruitment of the new curriculum managers following the Learner Journey review which was conducted last year. The Board noted that the Faculty Manager roles were found to be ineffective according to staff feedback, leading to challenges in retention primarily due to workload and compensation issues. In response, the roles have been redesigned over the past year, culminating in the recent appointment of new curriculum managers who are set to commence their roles on 1st August. A substantial investment of £500,000 has been made towards the development of a leadership programme named "Making the Shift." This programme, led by the Saskia Larson, Group Director of People & Development and Paul Newman, Executive Director Faculties and College (North) and other colleagues from HR. The transition to new curriculum managers aims to provide 10,000 leadership hours at this level, with further plans to appoint curriculum leads in the upcoming term. The DCEO advised that this was probably the most significant leadership transformation initiative that the organisation had made in some time, and it was extremely positive.

7.15 One Governor questioned what mechanisms would be used to track the Lead Practitioner roles. The DCEO explained that factors like learning walks and lesson observations will be recorded on the organisation's Clear Review system, which enables objectives and performance to be reviewed by line managers and the individual. The organisation is also able to report from the system which will indicate development areas.

8. Finance, Information, Estates and Equipment.

8.1 The Board received the Finance, Information, Estates and Equipment paper which was taken as read.

8.2 The COO reminded the Board of the strategic objective to remain at an ESFA financial health rating of 'good,' and confirmed that the organisation remains in the good rating and on target. The rating is influenced by EBITDA as a percent of income, solvency in terms of cash ratio, cash balance, and borrowing.

8.3 The Board noted that the organisation had forecasted to close out the year with £18M in cash, with some variability particularly around capital expenditure over the Summer. The organisation has had a schedule of Summer works for many years, much of it is funded by grant funding from the LSIF but some is self-funded. The timing of the grant funding is subject to some variability depending on the activity which could lead to a shift, if any, to the closing cash balance.

8.4 The COO highlighted that the long-term unrestricted cash balance is placed at £10M, which is at the top of the sector benchmarks.

- 8.5 The COO reminded the Board that there was a current forecast of £300k better EBIDTA than the budget. He explained that this increase was due to solidifying the additional high needs income which had been previously reported to the Board.
- 8.6 The Board was informed that the organisations income was £5M above budget and that staff costs had increased due to the high needs spend on dedicated resources to support these learners. The COO advised that the non-pay and investment pot offset each other as a majority of the investment spend was non-pay, and there has been a lower depreciation spend, at £850k better than budgeted.
- 8.7 One Governor requested clarification regarding the unbudgeted expenditure related to high needs funding, despite the organisation having some prior notification on the number of students. The COO advised that it was as a result of extensive negotiations with local authorities to secure funding commitments, which often proved challenging both contractually and financially. He acknowledged that while early notifications are received, securing actual payments remains problematic, necessitating ongoing efforts from faculty and finance teams. The CEO added that prudent financial management and cautious forecasting played key roles in handling the unpredictability associated with high needs funding. He praised the diligent efforts of Hannah Thomas, Director of High Needs Commissioning and Delivery and Laura Lewis, Group Finance Director, in managing these complexities effectively. The DCEO also emphasised the improved commissioning strategies and negotiations spearheaded by Hannah Thomas and advised that other factors included higher retention rate among students with money held back in case we lost them in year and additional enrolments received later than anticipated.
- 8.8 One Governor queried if the £4.7M loan for Bracknell and Wokingham campus was due to be paid back by a certain date. The COO clarified that repayments were due to start in 2027 for a seven-year period, however there were plans to negotiate the repayments.
- 8.9 One Governor commended the COO on the positive outcomes presented in the financial papers, particularly noting the increase in EBITDA and cash balances from the previous forecasts. She sought clarification on the factors contributing to the improved cash balance, specifically referencing the phasing of capital payments. The COO confirmed that the increased cash balance was influenced by the timing of capital expenditures. He explained that the current surplus is also bolstered by higher income streams that do not immediately outflow into additional costs like teacher expenses. He emphasised that capital spending is a primary driver of the cash balance increase. The Governor further queried the impact of these financial dynamics on net income, particularly regarding depreciation of assets not yet capitalised. The COO advised that there was a slight nuance relating to funded projects where external grants cover expenses, affecting

depreciation calculations due to capital grant releases and timing differences.

- 8.10 The COO highlighted that the negative variances on Apprenticeships, Higher Education, and commercial income had been significantly offset by improvements made by the 16-18 income, particularly through exceptional growth funding due to a 10% increase in learner numbers and specific growth on high needs elements two and three.
- 8.11 The Board noted that half of the £1.8M investment fund had been allocated in response to the increased learner numbers in the 2023/24 academic year, and in return to push income growth for the 2024/25 year. The other half had been awarded to process improvements, such as the EQuoo Mental Health randomised control trial.
- 8.12 The COO informed the Board that a portion of the investment fund was being held back to invest in the early recruitment of staff for the 2024/25 academic year. The Board noted that there is a chance that it won't get committed this year depending on the timing of the recruitment so there is an opportunity for an upside to the bottom line. The COO highlighted the potential for EBITDA to improve further before the end of the year, though opportunities were now limited due to the high needs income and funding held back for potential withdrawals. If the investment fund remains uncommitted, it could positively impact EBITDA and the cash balance. While this might place the organisation at the top end of financial health and potentially at "outstanding," the COO would prefer to maintain a steady financial performance to avoid a temporary peak followed by a return to "good."
- 8.13 One Governor requested further information on the £1M capability investment into data science, and how it would be established. The Board noted that the capability was being internally built, with the aim to have better data analysis to enhance the planning processes and the organisations understanding of student learning behaviours. Long term, there may be some opportunities to link it to the curriculum and to support the wider sector.
- 8.14 One Governor queried whether changes to car parking in Oxford would have a negative effect on the organisations commercial income, and the future impact. The COO informed the Board that Oxfordshire County Council had challenged the organisation's use of the Oxford campus car park for public use on weekends and college holidays, due to a planning issue on a small part of the campus. The Board noted that as a result, the organisation was at risk of a £70K annual income and £50k of contribution, The matter was being discussed with the council and a planning appeal had been submitted. Although the car park was currently still operating, considerations will be made for next year's budget.

- 8.15 The Board discussed the match funding for Merrist Wood. The COO informed the Board that although no contract had been signed yet, the organisation was to commit £2.4M out of a £22M project being phased out over five years from completion of the project so the organisation would not begin paying for at least another two years. One Governor advised that it would be useful to understand some of the possible funding risks and the obligations. The COO provided assurance regarding the funding structure. He clarified that the project is fixed at £2.4M, primarily allocated for maintenance and refurbishment grants focused on the college building's condition. He emphasised that the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to student numbers are not applicable in this contract, given its condition-based nature. Lesha Chetty offered to contribute insights based on her experience with past DfE projects. The CEO acknowledged the importance of addressing any material conditions during the approval process, ensuring thorough consideration at the Board level.
- 8.16 The Board noted that the £200K under achievement of income in the property area was a stretch budget target that hasn't been a priority for the team as they have prioritised on trying to improve the state of the organisations facilities and responding to issues rather than seeking that external income. It was flagged early in the process and offset.
- 8.17 The Board discussed the utility costs. The COO advised that during the energy crisis the organisation was largely shielded from the worst of it due to long-term contracts at fixed rates. Now, there are challenges because these long-term contracts are expiring or becoming less favourable leading to increased utility rates. The Board noted that despite the challenges with rising rates, there are positive developments such as better utilisation across the campuses, introduction of tracking systems and upgrading of the boilers in Guildford. Overall, the organisation has managed to keep the usage under control.
- 8.18 The CEO reported significant improvements in the refectory operations, highlighting a substantial reduction in the amount of money spent on subsidised food and catering for learners. He highlighted that last year's subsidy exceeded £650K, but through the leadership efforts of the COO and Group Finance Director, this figure has been reduced by over £100K pounds this year. The Teams have also recently provided catering services for events such as ShyneFest and a triathlon at Blenheim Palace, aiming to generate alternative revenues. The CEO praised the team's efforts in moving away from traditional sourcing methods and focusing on quality and budget management to benefit learners.

9. Annual Health and Safety Update.

- 9.1 The Board received the Annual Health and Safety Update which was taken as read.

**MINUTE
NO.**

**ACTION/
RESOLUTION**

- 9.2 The Board noted that it was the first health and safety report for the Corporation, and it was considered best practice within the sector to provide Governors with assurance on the organisation's ongoing health and safety efforts. The report contains a summary of the activities completed over the year, highlighting achievements, risks, and statistics.
- 9.3 The Board noted that the Health and Safety Team had increased the quality of audits, which had received a good response from employees across the organisation and resulted in more accurate reports and the capturing of actions.
- 9.4 Andy Stone advised that although health and safety was no longer a formalised Link Governor role, he had enjoyed working with the Health and Safety Team so he will continue to meet with them on a regular basis to undertake campus tours to provide additional assurance to the Board.
- 9.5 The Board noted that in future, following a discussion with the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, the report would be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee prior to being presented at the Corporation Board.
- 9.6 One Governor questioned if there was a cost involved in the implementation of the terrorist bill, Martins Law. The COO advised that there was most likely no cost to be implemented due to the organisations ongoing considerations for safeguarding, security and data protection.

10. Committee and Link Governor Recommendations and Updates.

Search and Governance Committee Update.

- 10.1 The Board received the Search and Governance Committee update paper which was taken as read.

Daniel Willis left the meeting

- 10.2 Emma Shipp (ES), Chair of the Search and Governance Committee, provided an overview the committee's recommendation to reappoint Daniel Willis as the Staff Governor for a second term of office, until 31st July 2026. The Board approved the recommendation.

Dan Willis re-entered the meeting.

Andy Stone left the meeting.

- 10.3 ES provided an overview the committee's recommendation to reappoint Andy Stone to the Audit and Risk Committee for a third term of office until the 19th July 2027. The Board approved the recommendation.

Andy Stone rejoined the meeting.

- 10.4 ES provided an overview the committee's recommendation to appoint Kathy Slack, Cathie Prest, David Goosey, Alison Blight and Gary

**MINUTE
NO.**

**ACTION/
RESOLUTION**

Headland to the Quality & Relevance Committee. The Board approved the recommendation. ES extended her thanks to the Governors for joining the Quality & Relevance Committee whilst presently maintaining significant roles. The Board noted that there would be three further membership recommendations which will include two external governors once the recruitment process had been concluded and a Student Governor once they had been elected for the 24/25 academic year.

10.5 ES provided an overview the committee's recommendation for the Safeguarding Link Governor role to include Online safety and be renamed to 'Safeguarding and Residential Link Governor. The Board approved the recommendation.

RESOLUTION: The Board approved the reappointment of Dan Willis as the Staff Governor for a second term of office until 31st July 2026.

Board

RESOLUTION: The Board approved the reappointment of Andy Stone to the Audit and Risk Committee for a third term of office until the 19th July 2027.

Board

RESOLUTION: The Board approved the appointment of Kathy Slack, Cathie Prest, David Goosey, Alison Blight and Gary Headland to the Quality & Relevance Committee.

Board

RESOLUTION: The Board approved for the Safeguarding Link Governor role to include Online Safety and be renamed to 'Safeguarding and Residential Link Governor.

Board

Link Governor Update.

10.6 There were no Link Governor updates.

11. Governance.

11.1 The Board received the Governance Update paper which was taken as read.

Contracts.

11.2 In accordance with the Framework for Governance, the Board received a copy of the following contracts which had been signed by the Chair due to exceeding £200k in value:

- Unilateral Undertaking Contract for the Merrist Wood campus
- Telephony Contract
- Windows 11 Replacement Project - Phase 1
- Windows 11 Replacement Project - Phase 2, Bracknell
- EDF Energy
- LSIF Project Funds

**MINUTE
NO.**

**ACTION/
RESOLUTION**

11.3 The Board retrospectively approved the use of the Corporation Seal for the Unilateral Undertaking Contract for the Merrist Wood campus.

RESOLUTION: The Board retrospectively approved the use of the Corporation Seal for the Unilateral Undertaking Contract at Merrist Wood campus.

Board

Policies.

11.4 The Board received and approved the following policies:

- Health and Safety Policy.
- Statement of British Values.

RESOLUTION: The Board approved the Health and Safety Policy.

RESOLUTION: The Board approved the Statement of British Values.

12. AOB and date of next meeting.

12.1 The Board noted that the next meeting was due to take place Tuesday 9th July 2024. The Chair encouraged all Board members to attend as the budget would be discussed.

12.2 The Chair notified the Board of the Business School Event taking place on 27th June at Reading campus. A Governor was requested to attend the event to support the apprentices and to network with the employers who will be present.

12.3 Lauren Ward reminded the Board that Governors can supply feedback regarding the recent Governance and Strategy Day that took place on Tuesday 14th May 2024. Governors were also encouraged to complete the survey for the ongoing External Board Review which had been resent on Tuesday 4 June 2024.

The meeting closed at 18.50

Chair:

S I Surgeon

Date: 18/07/2024



ACTIVATE
LEARNING

