

**Board Minutes of the Corporation meeting
held on 4th July 2023 at 4.30pm in 4H01, UCG, Grimsby**

Governors Present: Kai Adegbembo (KA - Vice-Chair – via Teams), Paul Barker (PB – Chair- via Teams), Josh Greaves (JG), Sharon Green (SG – via Teams), Tracey Gyte (TG – via Teams), Ann Hardy (AH – Chief Executive Officer), Kerri Harold (KH – part attendance via Teams), Jim Harris (JH – part attendance via Teams), Cain Matthews (CM), Liz Parry (LP)

Apologies received from: Andrew Lindley (AL), Guy Lonsdale (GL), Keith Pearson (KP) and partial apologies received from Kai Adegbembo and Jim Harris.

In Attendance: Steve Butler (GVP – Employee Services), Adrian Clarke (GVP Corporate Services), Beth Curtis (GVP – Strategy and Business Development), Nathan Michael (NM – Group Vice Principal Curriculum, Quality & Standards – (GVP CQS)), Maria Turnbull-Kemp (GVP Finance), Antonia Praud (AP – Director of Governance).

Apologies received from: Danny Metters (DM).

1	<p>Welcome and Apologies for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed members and staff to the meeting and governors recorded their thanks to Mark Smith who had stood down as student governor and recorded the excellent contribution he had made. Thanks were also noted, in his absence, to Keith Pearson who had reached the end of his term of office and confirmed he would not be standing again. Recognition was given for Keith’s support to the TEC Partnership.</p> <p>As the chair was attending virtually, it was confirmed that LP would chair the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Andrew Lindley, Guy Lonsdale and Keith Pearson, which were accepted, with consent. Jim Harris and Kai Adegbembo registered potential partial apologies, which were also approved.</p>							
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>AH and LP declared their roles at Modal for the last time. LP, KH, KA, JH and PB also declared interests in Item 11, and agreed to leave the meeting for their part in the item.</p>							
3	<p>Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 19th May 2023</p> <p>Governors approved the minutes and confidential minutes of 19th May 2023 as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Matters Arising:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="242 1930 1334 2083"> <tr> <td data-bbox="242 1930 343 1973">1</td> <td data-bbox="343 1930 743 1973">Lady Edith Drive</td> <td data-bbox="743 1930 1334 1973">An update is in the CEO’s report today</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="242 1973 343 2083">2</td> <td data-bbox="343 1973 743 2083">The Curriculum and Quality Committee recommended the Audit Committee</td> <td data-bbox="743 1973 1334 2083">The Audit Committee received a report on 15th June, covering IT security, training for</td> </tr> </table>	1	Lady Edith Drive	An update is in the CEO’s report today	2	The Curriculum and Quality Committee recommended the Audit Committee	The Audit Committee received a report on 15th June, covering IT security, training for	
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Governors also presented challenge, questioning the impact on the curriculum of revised plans, made to ensure the project was delivered within budget. It was confirmed that changes made would not impact curriculum delivery and there would be options for future growth and development.

Lady Edith Drive:

Progress has been made with North Yorkshire Council who agreed that the areas are suitable for adoption and are only looking for payment for s.38 approval. This process should be completed with 12 weeks, and the purchaser is now being contacted to confirm intent, and progress activities concurrently.

NET:

A number of funding bids have been submitted to extend the range of areas that NET deliver in and the team are working closely with ERC to support their offer in the Bridlington area.

Appointments and restructures:

Beth Curtis has joined as GVP Strategy and Business Development, and is the group Skills Lead. Beth is already pulling together a range of activities to engage with employers into a cohesive package, focussing on our engagement activities and developing our links with employers.

The restructure of the Grimsby senior and middle managers is now complete and the new team will be in post for September. A full programme of staff development will support new managers in their roles.

Further restructuring continues to develop group support functions as the group focusses on implementing new systems and processes.

Teaching and Learning Conference:

Governors were invited to attend the first group wide teaching and learning conference on 6th July, bringing together functions and also incorporating a number of prominent key note speakers.

Research Projects

The Academy Grimsby has taken part in an Association of Colleges research project looking at how 14- 16 provision is delivered by further education establishments.

T Levels:

We were asked to share best practice with the DfE and an event run at Scarborough TEC was highlighted as being particularly innovative. (A simulated car crash with support from the NHS and Fire Service). A costed project update will be shared with governors in the autumn.

Governors requested the report includes an update on external factors and developments, noting their popularity is not as high as the government had hoped.

Staff awards:

Governors noted plans for the events for the North and South Banks.

Grants:

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	<p>The Savoy Trust has awarded a grant of £138K to develop the catering facilities in Grimsby.</p> <p><u>Student shows and events:</u> Governors noted the excellent performances and end of year events by students. Governors who attended the national seafood awards noted the outstanding skills and enthusiasm shown by young people, and noted pride that students from Scarborough TEC had reached the finals.</p> <p>Challenge: Governors noted that in May they had received presentations from the LEP on skills priorities in the region and concern had been raised about the ability to recruit and retain staff in some priority areas. This is compounded by the cost of living driving up costs and salaries, and industrial action being seen within the sector.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that recruitment continues to be challenging and it was imperative to secure enrolments to provide the financial foundation needed for future awards. Some provision is already within the budget and an update would be provided in the autumn when numbers are known.</p> <p>Recruitment is challenging, and the intent is to recruit directly, rather than an over reliance on agency staff.</p> <p>The link with staffing and retention was also acknowledged.</p>	
5	<p>Curriculum and Student Experience</p> <p>Governors noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Development Curriculum plans are in place for all sites. • Provisional timetabling is being finalised, dependent on recruitment. • Some changes are being trialled e.g. streaming in English and Maths delivery at Grimsby and trialling blended learning approaches for English and Maths at ERC. • Higher Education: the vast majority of programmes have been validated or amended in a timely manner. • One programme did not meet the expectations and has not been validated, as employer feedback was not strong enough. Details are in private business. • Our first Master’s qualification – an MA in Education has been validated and signed off by the University of Hull. Delivery will incorporate blended learning, and weekend delivery, enabling students to achieve a L7 course whilst working full time. • Governors were informed about a number of “at risk” courses, in HE at Scarborough, East Riding and Grimsby. Governors expressed concern about the offer and choice for students, and were reassured that where recruitment was low and not hitting recruitment targets, they could look at consolidation or alternative course provision. It was acknowledged that the student experience on a course with small numbers can be impacted too. • Learner surveys – governors were pleased to see the satisfaction rates (in May) but raised concern about the disappointingly low completion rates. The group were tasked to see if this could be improved, through communication or timing, and asked for a plan for student engagement opportunities next year. 	6

	<p>Governors challenging the results from The Academy and how they compared to prior years, were informed it was the first time the students had completed this survey. (90%+ satisfaction across the group with the exception of The Academy which only had a 35% completion rate). The quality team will support the reviews next year.</p> <p>Governors asked what Scarborough was doing differently, to have such a high completion rate and how this could be replicated across the group. It was confirmed that the team continually look for best practice and there will be an expectation of higher completion rates next year. A number of developments are planned – including emphasis at huddles/ registers, and introducing a QR code and sending reminders.</p> <p>(JH left the meeting)</p> <p>Governors also requested that reports include both student numbers and percentages, so it is possible to understand how significance of results.</p> <p>Complaints: Learner complaints remain low. One complaint has been escalated to DFE, having exhausted our internal processes.</p> <p>Higher Education students have completed the NSS (National Student Survey) from the OfS, with a response rate 65%. Whilst a reduction is seen in response rates from previous years, it is still a positive response rate in the sector.</p> <p>Governor challenge: Governors questioned the processes that the partnership used to forecast and anticipate demand for courses and the accuracy of this compared to systems used at other colleges. It was confirmed a number of processes are used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour market analysis and employer feedback • Trends in student numbers • Progress on lower-level courses and potential pathways • Student enquiries • Feedback from feeder schools • History from prior years is also considered. 	
Finance and Resources Updates		
6	<p>Financial report from the TEC Partnership</p> <p>Governors noted that the financial reports have been adapted following guidance from the ESFA and content in the bite size reports. Detailed reports had been reviewed at the Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p>Governors were informed the forecast in the accounts showed a surplus of £316k and it was expected to increase. The most significant changes are utility costs, staffing due to difficulty in recruitment, and the reduction in HE funding. Governors noted the reports on the loan position, and capital funded projects.</p>	

Modal:

Governors were reminded that Modal costs would be a cost centre within the TEC Partnership accounts moving forward, and assurance was given that costs and revenue would be closely monitored and reported.

The year-to-date loss, prior to the TEC corporate services allocation, saw a loss of £254,884 against a surplus budget of £61,849, a negative variance of £316,733.

When corporate costs were taken into consideration, the respective loss was £379,474 against a budgeted loss of £102,386, a forecasted loss of £332,578. There was, however, an increase in income since the last report and it would be revised further to account from income from boot camps.

Budget:

The TEC Partnership had taken a “bottom up approach” and it was confirmed that it had been a positive experience, requiring only a small amount of challenge at departmental level. The draft budget was forecasting a surplus for 2023-2024 of £289,783, the revaluation of pensions funds omitting.

Governors reviewed the report, noting the drop in 16-18 income, increase in staffing costs, drop in HE and apprenticeship income, and reduction in utilities (18% reduction to actuals in year). Governors also noted that the group had erred on the side of caution and had increased the budget for salary increases for the annual review, noting that the amount would need to account for a number of staff on the national living wage, in addition to a cost of living increase.

Governors questioned how risk averse the budget had been and noted the group had taken a conservative view on HE, where numbers had been gradually declining. Income was also anticipated to be down in adult education and advance learner loans as the cost of living impacts on household affordability.

It was difficult to forecast revenue grants as it is a moving feast, so again a cautious approach had been taken, and utilities continue to be an unknown.

Governors questioned the communications on the cadet programme and noted that it was disappointing that numbers had not been stronger by 15th June. The team were in communication with potential providers to ensure that the student experience was not impacted.

The chair of the Finance and Resources Committee confirmed that all papers had been reviewed by the committee, which reinforced the recommendations within the paper.

Governors approved the budget for the 2023-4 year.

Governors questioned if the group was on variable or short term utility rates and it was confirmed that the group use the combined purchasing power from Yorkshire Purchasing, who purchase on behalf of a number of colleges and public sector groups/ local authorities.

Projects, Estates and Skegness Campus Update

Governors received the reports for the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) 2, new Skegness Campus and new Animal Care facility.

SDF2: The auditors have given a clean audit.

Skegness: They have exchanged contracts and will complete after the harvesting of the crops and the archaeological dig results have been received.

They are hoping a minor amendment request is all that is needed by the planning team, as the LA are supportive of the changes. It is hoped this can all be completed by mid August.

Animal Care: This has been validated, with a start date planned of 11th September. It should be a 42 week build and therefore ready for the next academic year.

Governors questioned if there was flexibility to extend classroom spaces to adapt to demand in the future . It was confirmed it would be possible to extend the classroom or workshop spaces, and that in the contract there was an option to purchase additional acreage.

Self funded capital: ERC was allocated £234k to spend of which £52k has been spent to date with estates-related changes in progress. In addition, instead of capital investment, a lease for a substantial number of replacement PC's was agreed for ERC to the value of £420k over 5 years. This has been very well received by the staff and learners, as a substantial investment in up-to-date IT equipment. GIFHE had £869k of self-funded capital allocated for spend in 2022/23 academic year, of which £536k has been spent. Scarborough TEC had been allocated £146k and has spent £161k of its allocation so far. Across the Partnership we have spent over £895k with much more planned. The focus has been on grant funded capital for curriculum areas, IT and Estates.

Revenue bids: Governors reviewed progress on the bids and expressions of interest.

Summer works: Governors noted the plans for summer works. Following a challenge based on the location of many projects, governors noted that the group had spent a significant amount on Scarborough in previous years. The benefit of a large group is being able to focus support on the areas of the estate in most need. They noted buildings survey across the group has commenced, which will inform the prioritisation of future activities.

A governor questioned the need to spend £600k on the FE reception at Grimsby. It was noted that the college are aiming to create a heart to the college and it would improve safeguarding, with a clear entrance and improved security. It was a priority to safeguard learners.

Funding would also be used to improve classrooms too.

A governor questioned if it was an opportunity for a clear out too, and streamlining what is retained as classrooms were redecorated. It was confirmed the team wish to set expectations, and have high standards.

	<p>Additional Updates from the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee reviewed the latest management accounts. Grimsby trading is doing better than expected, thanks to private hire income. • Modal – a decision was made on the 15th June to no longer continue the cadet programme. They had expected 12-24 students, but had only secured between 10 – 12 students so the team are working with students registered to find suitable alternatives. There will be a Reportable event for the OfS and the team are managing this process. • The chair added to the update on Animal Care, the slippage back was due to sickness from contractors. • Recognition was given to the Finance team and Audra Oldridge (MI) - this is the first time in a number of years the group have had a budget ready to go out to staff, at this point in the year. • They reviewed the VAT report from Mazars for Skegness and also recommend this to the board. The committee confirmed the staff are aware of which costings can be submitted. • The committee received health and safety and staffing updates. <p>The board approved the high-level plans for the FE Capital Grant of £8m., but allowing the ELT the ability to via between lines as the final cost of works is identified.</p> <p>The corporation also approved a self-funded capital budget of £500k for curriculum and I.C.T. equipment for 2023/2024.</p> <p>The corporation also approved the recommendations within the VAT report from Mazars and associated project lead recommendations from MKT.</p>	
	<p>HR Update</p> <p>Restructuring: The restructure has continued on the South Bank, and two Deputy Principals have been appointed (one internal and one external). Jo Wallace has been appointed to the HE role and Carl Bee to the FE role.</p> <p>10 new Heads of Area posts were also advertised. 8 staff have been appointed and the two vacancies will be advertised internally and nationally. These replace the Associate Principals and 19 Curriculum Management roles.</p> <p>A thorough staff development programme has been devised to support staff in their new roles.</p> <p>Job evaluation: The exercise evaluating all roles within the new TEC National Minimum Wage (£20,250), continues to progress. It is hoped that the majority of roles will have been evaluated by the end of the summer and where roles score significantly higher than the normal range, HR will take recommendations to ELT. Governors questioned if there was a plan to evaluate all roles and it was confirmed that the next stage in the process would be to review roles that are deemed as particularly challenging to recruit to.</p>	

	<p>Audit in recruitment and selection: An audit in June received reasonable assurance, however identified some staff who needed to update their safer recruitment training. The department have tightened up processes and communicated to staff, to ensure training is refreshed within the two-year cycle.</p> <p>Audit in use of casual staff: the group are moving to employ temporary staff on fixed term contracts and not rely on casual staff. This is better for the employee and group longer term.</p> <p>Casework: It continues to be a busy period for the team with 19 current cases, and meetings with Modal staff for their TUPE transfer into the TEC Partnership on 1st August.</p> <p>The statutory Trade Union duties and activities annual report for the year ending 31 March 2023 was completed and submitted, and is available on the corporation website.</p> <p>Recruitment update: Governors reviewed the reports, contrasting movements with the prior year. Governors challenged the reason for sickness absence, noting the rise in mental health grounds, and questioned the support for staff. A number of initiatives are available and a 24 hour counselling service is available for staff and members of their household.</p> <p>Governors noted interest in how this compared to pre Covid and it was confirmed that the annual report would show a 5-year comparison. They also noted the level of long-term sickness, and how this was impacting overall results.</p>	
7	<p>Hive Up and transfer of Modal</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Finance and Resources Committee received the final confirmation from our advisors, Mazars. One change had been recommended, changing the dates by one day (to 31st July and 1st August). The corporation gave their final approval for the hive up and transfer of Modal, following the latest guidance.</p> <p>Governors confirmed there was no cost implication of moving the dates into August and MKT was able to complete the needed returns.</p>	
8	<p>Strategy and Business Development Update</p> <p>BC provided the board with a snapshot of her assessment, after 4 weeks in post. Her main objectives would be to maximise employer engagement, develop skills communications in curriculum planning, focus on rebranding, and develop and restructure the marketing team which was overstretched on the North Bank.</p> <p>BC reiterated there were great opportunities, already identified and a more detailed report and plan would be shared at the next meeting.</p>	7
9	<p>Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>Governors were reminded that the ELT and GLT groups reviewed the register in 6 weekly cycles.</p> <p>TEC 4: The recruitment challenges continue to be a significant risk, and some specialist areas are proving particularly challenging. Reward and development</p>	

	<p>routes are amongst options being considered. A decision on some courses will need to be made in the short term, if recruitment is unsuccessful.</p> <p>TEC 7: Governors noted the activity being undertaken to secure 16-18 recruitment.</p> <p>TEC 11: A new HE strategy will be a key element in ensuring that all aspects of the provision is reviewed, as numbers are declining. A year zero has been reintroduced which allows students to take out loans for the activity rather than having multiple access to HE options, where there is limited funding available.</p> <p>TEC 19: The staff survey was delayed that was planned in June. Governors asked for an update on alternative timings in the autumn, reinforcing the importance of staff engagement and views.</p> <p>There is a new financial handbook expected in March 2024, and it is anticipated this will have a number of similarities to the Academies Handbook. The risk for the financial year to change, is still on the horizon.</p> <p><u>Update from the Audit Committee:</u></p> <p>Financial Regulations: As a result of the ONS reclassification, the financial regulations have been significantly updated to reflect the requirements and recommendations in the new bite size finance guides. It was confirmed that the revised regulations had been reviewed and were recommended by both the Audit and Finance and Resources Committees. The corporation approved the amended financial regulations.</p> <p>External Auditors annual plan and fees: The corporation received and confirmed support for the recommendation to agree the annual plan and fees for the coming year.</p> <p>Other updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable assurance was received for the audit on casual staff, and the group are awaiting guidance before payment is made for holiday pay. • The recruitment and retention audit was underway. • The committee noted the “good” financial health (ESFA) score, having narrowly missed “outstanding”. • The governors took assurance from the new fixed assets register. • The committee received a cyber security update and took assurance from the report of activities - including testing and training and additional security being introduced. • The committee reviewed the strategic risk register and noted some recommendations for the next edition. • The committee agreed it may recommend some specialist audits (rather than internal auditor) 	8
10	<p>Safeguarding report</p> <p>Student Support: Across the partnership, 649 learners have received support this year from a safeguarding perspective, with the majority of support being focussed</p>	

	<p>towards mental health. Students received in house support, with some also referred to external agencies.</p> <p>The teams are closing off students where they are ready and able, but also concentrating on organising support for students leaving the partnership. They are also producing a ‘staying save over summer’ newsletter, that will also be shared online.</p> <p>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023: New guidance from September 2023 has been released. All staff will undertake safeguarding training in the September CPD days, and will be required to complete online assessments to confirm they have both read and understood the guidance.</p> <p>Governors noted they must also read and understand the guidance and were informed that a face to face safeguarding session would be led by members of the safeguarding team, on 19th September, focusing on the responsibilities of governors.</p> <p>The safeguarding policy would also be updated to reflect the new guidance, and would be recommended to the board for approval in October.</p> <p>CPOMS: The Partnership have purchased this system which will enable a more effective way of transferring student documents from feeder schools to the Partnership. This means staff will be able to see a student’s history, and need for support, and prepare in advance. The system is used in many feeder schools. It also supports immediate communications to relevant staff.</p> <p>Partnership working: Governors noted the latest update from the Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (SCP) Education subgroup and heard how the group are engaging in their latest consultation.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>10</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Governance report</p> <p>Governor membership</p> <p>The board noted the recommendations from the Search Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They noted thanks to Mark Smith and Keith Pearson who had reached the end of their term of office. • The corporation approved Neil Carrington joining the Audit Committee. • They approved the appointment of Heather Pepper as Co Opted Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality and Higher Education Oversight Committee. • The board approved the chairs of the Employment and Skills Advisory Groups to be: Hull and East Yorkshire – Andrew Lindley Greater Lincolnshire – Jim Harris York and North Yorkshire – Paul Barker. <p>LP, KA and KH left the meeting in turn and the corporation supported the recommendations from the Search and Governance Committee supporting LP and KA to continue as governors, with a term extension until July 2024, as chairs of committees and experienced members of the board.</p> <p>KH left the meeting again.</p>	

	<p>See confidential minutes.</p> <p>KH rejoined the meeting.</p> <p>KH confirmed her intention to stand down and left the meeting. The board noted their thanks and recognition to KH for her time on the group board and previously on the board of East Riding College.</p> <p>Governors noted KH had been the Lead Governor for Safeguarding and gave their approval for Heather Pepper to become Lead Governor for Safeguarding, subject to her acceptance of the role.</p> <p>Sharon Green was approved to be the Lead Governor for Apprenticeships.</p> <p>External review of governance: The corporation agreed to delegate responsibility to the Search and Governance Committee for the process to interview providers for the external review of governance, and confirmed their support for the suggested timetable.</p> <p>Policies: The corporation approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the updated Grievance and Mediation Policy, subject to HR revising the wording so that concerns are investigated as quickly as possible. • the updated Access to Corporate Information Policy. • the re-adoption of the Partnership’s Disciplinary Policy <p>HEOC and Curriculum and Quality Committee: The corporation confirmed their support for the proposal to consider bringing these committees together as the remits are similar in many ways, as is the membership. It was agreed to begin plans, and discussion with the OfS, with a view to potential transition in the Spring term.</p> <p>Terms of Reference, Standing Orders, Instrument and Articles and Link Governor roles: The board confirmed it’s support for the recommendations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow flexibility in membership to support recruitment and transition with “up to 20 members”. • To allow co-option to all committees. • To tighten up the role of the Search and Governance Committee, with responsibility for recommending all appointments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update guidance to staff and student recruitment to allow representation from the North and South Bank. • For a possible Co Vice Chair role, or Senior Independent Director. • Support for the recommended appraisal process. • To include a clause on disqualification. • To update the information on public access. • To support the recommendation for Link Governor roles. • To adjust the quorum in the standing orders so it reflects vacancies on committees. 	<p style="text-align: right;">11</p>
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	The board approved the immediate updating of the minimum quorum, so the Instrument and Articles and Standing Orders were consistent, with a 40% minimum quorum for the corporation, or the smaller of 40% and the minimum numbers required for committees. Governors acknowledged the annual report on written resolutions.	
10	Date of next meeting The next meeting is on 24 th October. Thanks were noted to LP for chairing the meeting.	

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Signed _____

Date _____

Chair of the Corporation

Action Schedule – Corporation meeting 4th July 2023

Action	Minute Title	Action by	Action required	Timescale
1	Matters Arising	AP	Re-align agendas and terms of reference to acknowledge the new committee structure	September 2023
2	Matters Arising	AH and ELT	Present the KPI for the 2023-24 year for approval	Autumn 2023
3	Update from the CEO	AC & BC	The Digital Strategy and Income Diversity Strategy are both being developed for review by the corporation next year.	2023-24
4	Update from the CEO	BC	Present reports to the Curriculum and Quality Committee and corporation in October	October 2023
5	Update from the CEO	NM	Present a detailed report on T Levels	Autumn 2023
6	Curriculum and Student Experience	NM & AP	Share plan for engagement activities	Autumn 2023
7	Strategy and Business Development	BC	Share detailed report at the next meeting	Autumn 2023
8	Strategic Risk Register	SB	Provide update on plans for staff surveys	Autumn 2023
9	Safeguarding	ALL	Complete the safeguarding training	September 2023

10	Safeguarding	ALL	Approve the updated safeguarding policy	October 2023
11	Governance	AP	Update the Standing Orders and Terms of reference	October 2023