



Cheshire College
South & West

MINUTES OF FULL CORPORATION MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 26 MARCH 2024 – 14:00HRS
ELLESMERE PORT CAMPUS

Governors in attendance in person or via Teams as stated:

Mr Fintan Bradley	(FB)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Margaret Cheshire	(MC)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Claire Clayton	(CC)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Lesley Davies	(LD)	Chair of Governors	Ellesmere Port
Mr Jasbir Dhesi	(JSD)	Principal/CEO	Ellesmere Port
Mr Jerry Green	(JG)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Shane Guildford	(SG)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Sean Herbert	(SHer)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Davinder Lotay	(DSL)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Kenny Murray	(KM)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Clive Roberts	(CR)		Ellesmere Port

In attendance:

Mrs Michelle Huntley	(Clerk)	Clerk to the Corporation	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Helen Nellist	(HN)	Deputy Principal/Deputy CEO	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Ruth Szolkowska	(RS)	Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum & Quality	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Ruth Paisley	(RP)	Interim Chief Financial Officer – Item 08 only	Ellesmere Port
Mr Tony Lucas	(TL)	Vice-Chair Solihull College & University Centre - Observer	Ellesmere Port

PART A MINUTES

Minute Reference	
FC 06/24	<p>Apologies for absence and declarations of interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all governors.</p> <p>Attendance was as recorded above – apologies had been received and were accepted from Mr Paul Colman, Mr Mike Braun, Mrs Bev Barlow and Mrs Maggie Ayliffe all of whom are Associate Governor and are not required to attend Full Corporation meetings. Apologies were also received from Mr John Kiely and Mrs Debbie Bryce. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Mr Tony Lucas, Vice-Chair at Solihull College & University Centre, joining as an Observer today as part of our collaborative working with SCUC. Members of our Board will have the opportunity to join SCUC meetings as observers.</p> <p>Lesley Davies declared an interest in the Chartered Institute of Further Education which will be mentioned in Item 02 – the CEO’s Presentation.</p>
FC 07/24	<p>CEO Presentation</p> <p>There was no paper for this item as agreed previously with the Corporation. Mr Jasbir Dhesi (JSD), Principal and CEO gave a verbal report, and the following headings were noted and</p>

	<p>discussed. The update which covered the following items was recorded as sensitive information under Part B minute FC 07/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) • Chartered Institute of Further Education • Crewe campus <p>The Board noted the changes within the region and the benefit of having representation from CCSW on the Business Advisory Board.</p> <p>Chartered Institute of Further Education (CIFE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesley Davies declared an interest as she is a Fellow of the CIFE. • Tony Lucas declared that SCUC is a member of CIFE. • CCSW is applying to join CIFE and if admitted will get a Charter Mark. • CIFE serves colleges as it lobbies and influences policy at the highest levels. • Lord Lingfield conducted a review of technical education and is CEO of CIFE. • CIFE offers good development opportunities and runs a technical leader, director-level development course. <p>The Board noted that CCSW is applying to join the Chartered Institute of Further Education.</p> <p>Action: JSD to monitor the Crewe campus space utilisation and initially discuss options with the Chairs' Committee, as necessary, before updating Board further.</p>
<p>FC 08/24</p>	<p>Confidential Minutes of Meeting – 14 December 2023</p> <p>Mr Shane Guildford and Mr Sean Herbert joined the meeting.</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The minutes were reviewed for accuracy and approved.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to accept the Part B minutes from 14 December 2023 and the Chair signed the minutes.</p>
<p>FC 09/24</p>	<p>Minutes of meeting 14 December 2023 & 26 January 2024 and matters arising from previous minutes</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The minutes were reviewed for accuracy and approved.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to accept the Part A minutes from 14 December 2023 & 26 January 2024 and the Chair signed the minutes.</p> <p>The action logs from the meetings were reviewed and the following points were noted:</p> <p>246 – Staff CPD reported at C&Q on 18/3/24. CLOSED.</p> <p>316, 317, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332 – Actioned & CLOSED.</p> <p>318 – Update of governor numbers in Standing Orders. CLOSED. Governor numbers to be discussed at Board on 26/3/24.</p> <p>324 – Student Protection Plan 1.5 wording was updated. CLOSED.</p> <p>325 & 333 – on target for timely completion.</p> <p>01 - Action from Governors' Day to develop a Digital Strategy for CCSW. This is on target for timely completion. Sarah Willams' first draft will be reviewed by ELT then shared with C&Q in June and Full Corporation in July 2024.</p>

<p>FC 10/24</p>	<p>Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Update</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mrs Ruth Szolkowska, Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum & Quality spoke to the paper, which had been presented and discussed in detail at Curriculum & Quality Committee on 18 March. Some additional points were noted under Part B FC 10/24.</p> <p>The Board noted that the college is making good progress with the Continuous Improvement Plan. The management team gave assurance at C&Q that the right actions are being taken.</p> <p>The Chair thanked RS for her presentation.</p>
<p>FC 11/24</p>	<p>Curriculum Planning & the Accountability Agreement</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mrs Ruth Szolkowska, Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum & Quality spoke to the Curriculum Planning paper and the following points were noted. Some additional points were noted under Part B FC 11/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full Curriculum Offer is being planned in line with local and national skills priorities. • The College offer will be impacted by the Government’s Level 3 Qualification reforms. The greatest impact will be in Construction Trades and Health. <p>Mrs Helen Nellist, Deputy Principal & Deputy CEO spoke to the Accountability Agreement paper and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum offer is aligned to national and regional priorities, reflecting local employer and stakeholder needs. • Progress has been made with increasing learners’ digital literacy and their understanding of sustainability and carbon literacy. Adult learners progress has been most notable. • Curriculum is available in green skills; however, employer uptake is slow. Further work with industry bodies, stakeholders and employer partners is taking place to better understand barriers of engagement. • Increased applications have been seen (to date) in priority career routes, for example Health and Science based courses. However, Digital and Sustainability requires further development in profile and reach. • Increased applications from learners to non-traditional areas, for example more males applying for Health Care pathways and females applying for Engineering and Construction pathways. <p>The Board noted that the College is making good progress against the commitments within the Accountability Statement.</p> <p>Q: With the demise of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the setting up of the new multi-council group, will there be a change in regional priorities, or will pressure be put on other areas?</p> <p>A: We expect that the region will have the same priorities which had previously been identified with the LSIP (Local Skills Improvement Partnership) and the LEP. There was no need to make any mid-year changes, and we don’t anticipate much change for 2024-25.</p> <p>A: We are well-linked with key employer groups, and we also have college advisory boards for all curriculum areas.</p> <p>A: It was heartening to hear recently from the new CEO of West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber that she would like to bring businesses closer to colleges. There is a need to encourage employers about decarbonisation – they have been reluctant to date. The CCSW team are always pushing for more employer engagement. There is talk about setting up a Sustainable Advisory Board to explore how employers see themselves.</p>

	<p>The Board NOTED the timeline to produce the Accountability Agreement for 2024-25. It is proposed that the Executive will review the current document, share it with all governors for feedback and then submit the final version to the Chairs' Committee for final approval. Alternatively, the final version can be circulated to all governors to approve via a written resolution. Which would the Board prefer?</p> <p>The Corporation Board AGREED to delegate authority to Chairs' Committee to APPROVE the Accountability Agreement for 2024-25 for timely submission.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting for the Chairs' Committee to APPROVE the Accountability Agreement for 2024-25 for timely submission.</p>
<p>FC 12/24</p>	<p>Careers Strategic Plan 2024-2027</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mrs Helen Nellist, Deputy Principal & Deputy CEO, spoke to the paper, which had been presented and discussed in detail at Curriculum & Quality Committee on 18 March.</p> <p>The C&Q Committee did agree that the targets will be updated to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound (SMART) and will be brought to Board in July 2024.</p> <p>Q: I like the structure. How do you recognise the experience the learners bring? It's not mentioned in the strategy</p> <p>A: We note prior experiences in tutorials and course discussions. Noting prior experiences will be in the delivery plans for tutorials.</p> <p>Q: What advice would a learner get on how to become a pilot?</p> <p>A: We got a pilot from EasyJet to come in and talk to learners. Learners can also get information from student focus groups about their career aspirations.</p> <p>A: Careers guidance is part of learners' personal development activities. Learners have one to one sessions to help them to develop their personal statement. Hairdressing learners for example have both one-to-one sessions and within class groups they discuss opportunities and what the future holds.</p> <p>Action: Governors can ask staff and learners about careers advice and guidance within their respective link areas.</p> <p>The Corporation Board APPROVED the Careers Strategic Plan 2024-27 and noted that an annual progress report will be shared with Curriculum & Quality Committee in March each year.</p>
<p>FC 13/24</p>	<p>Management Accounts to 31 January & Financial KPIs Update</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mrs Ruth Paisley, Interim Chief Financial Officer joined the meeting and gave a brief verbal report to the meeting. Some additional points were noted under Part B FC 13/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors have received the Management Accounts (Period 6) which includes the reforecast based on the position at the end of January. • These accounts were reviewed at the Finance and Resources Committee last week where the Committee also looked at the recent detailed reconciliation of the staffing budget. • The Committee was also briefed on the work that was being undertaken in February, around the reforecasting of certain income lines and particularly the review of non-pay costs that are, in some instances, running over budget due to supporting an increase in learner numbers and high-cost inflation. • This review will be included in the February management accounts which will be finalised by the end of the month. • As always, income and expenditure will continue to be monitored monthly and key variances shared with Governors. • The cash position remains strong, and we do not propose any changes to the financial health risk ratings.

	<p>The Corporation Board NOTED the financial report and the College’s current financial position per the Management Accounts for Period 6.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to upload Management Accounts for Period 7 to GovernorHub once they are available.</p> <p>The Principal asked the Board to note special thanks to RP for stepping in at short notice and for reviewing each line of the full budget.</p>
<p>FC 14/24</p>	<p><u>Verbal reports from committee chairs:</u></p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Some points were noted under Part B minute FC 14/24.</p> <p>Mr Kenny Murray, Vice-Committee Chair of Finance & Resources Committee reported the following items to be noted from the Finance & Resources meeting:</p> <p><u>Finance & Resources – 21 March 2024</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the F&R meeting the Committee was advised of two upcoming significant items of expenditure. • Per the College’s Financial Regulations, the Board is required to approve any expenditure more than £500K. • Each of the two upcoming capital project expenses are more than this amount so the Board are being consulted and asked to note and APPROVE the process to be used to appoint a principal contractor for each of the two projects. <p>The Board AGREED that the F&R Committee will review the detailed procurement paper and after consideration will decide the appointment of a contractor to deliver the Further Education Condition Transformation Fund (FECTF) works at the Crewe campus.</p> <p>The Board AGREED that the F&R Committee will review the detailed procurement paper and after consideration will decide the appointment of a contractor to deliver the T Level Wave 5 funded works at the Crewe campus.</p> <p>The Board NOTED and RATIFIED the F&R Committee’s decision to APPROVE the subcontracting work with Utilita Energy Ltd; TTE Technical Ltd and Adapt UK Training Services.</p> <p>Governors noted that the College’s policy is to only undertake subcontracting when it is essential. The College only subcontracts with companies in niche areas where the college does not have the technical resources to deliver the programme themselves. Appropriate financial and quality due diligence checks are carried out for all subcontracting work.</p> <p>Governors noted that from the meeting the Finance & Resources Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed recruitment, retention & development, focusing on our people, their health, wellbeing, and career progression. • Reviewed our Estate, overseeing investment projects and enhancements, whilst also ensuring our college is safe, secure, and sustainable. • Reviewed the College’s future position in respect of understanding our student applications; and monitored the current position with an in-depth review of the college’s finances. <p>Mr Fintan Bradley, Chair of Audit & Risk, reported the following items to be noted from the Audit & Risk Committee meeting:</p> <p><u>Audit & Risk – 03 March 2024</u></p>

- **The Audit & Risk Committee RECOMMEND** the extension of the Internal Audit Provider contract with RSM for a further 2years after which time a re-tendering exercise will be undertaken.

The Board APPROVED the extension of the internal audit provider contract with RSM for a further 2years until the end of academic year 2025-26.

Governors noted that from the meeting the Audit & Risk Committee:

- Made good progress with understanding how governors can use the college's risk register and tailored reports from the 4Risk system to monitor how the college is managing risk at a strategic level.
- Noted that the appointment of an Interim CFO will impact the workload of both JSD and the Clerk for the next few months.
- **Approved the following policies: Data Protection Impact Assessment Policy; Data Protection Policy; IT Password Policy and CCTV Policy.**

Mrs Lesley Davies, Interim Chair of Curriculum & Quality reported the following points to be noted from the C&Q meeting:

Curriculum & Quality – 18 March 2024

Governors noted that from the meeting the Curriculum & Quality Committee:

- **Approved the following policies: Fitness to Study Policy; Examinations Policy; Examinations Contingency Policy; Word Processing Policy (Examinations); Malpractice & Maladministration Policy; Artificial Intelligence Policy; Non-Examinations Assessment Policy and Academic Appeals Policy.**
- The Artificial Intelligence Policy is a JCQ requirement and CCSW is one of the first colleges to comply with this requirement.
- There has been considerable change to exam submission requirements nationally, particularly for T levels and BTECs. There are now hard deadlines for the uploading of coursework evidence and assessments. This is putting a strain on all colleges. Students must be ready earlier so that staff can mark and upload evidence by the deadlines.

Mrs Lesley Davies, Chair of Governors, reported the following items to be noted from Chairs' Committee:

Chairs – 19 February 2024

- **RECOMMEND** that the Board take action to increase the number of External Governors to 16 – the maximum number permitted under the College's Instrument of Government. **(Item 10 on this meeting agenda).**
- **RECOMMEND** to Board to re-appoint Mr Clive Roberts as an Associate Governor for another 1yr term from 01 May 2024-31 April 2024. **(Item 10 on this meeting agenda).**

Governors to note that from the meeting the Chairs' Committee:

- Approved the new Governance Report cover sheet which requires the report writer to identify any impact the report may have on the College's strategic risks.
- To see if helpful for committees and governors.
- Noted the changes in staffing and the actions to be taken to recruit a new Chief Financial Officer.
- Discussed the scope of governance business and agreed to RECOMMEND that the Board take action to increase the number of External Governors to 16.
- SCUS – have a good record of good governance. Will have opportunities for governor development and training.
- Agreed to develop the collaboration with Solihull College & University Centre (SCUC) for an initial period of 1 year under the agreed terms of reference.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGREED to APPROVE the EP decarbonisation project works, subject to the confirmation given in the meeting. A detailed Ellesmere Port decarbonisation paper was presented to Finance & Resources (F&R) in December 2023 and the F&R Committee APPROVED the delegation of authority to the Chairs' Committee.
<p>FC 15/24</p>	<p>Corporation Membership Update</p> <p>Mr Clive Roberts left the meeting.</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Chair advised the meeting that the Chairs' Committee recommend the re-appointment of Mr Clive Roberts as an Associate Governor after having considered his individual attendance records; commitment to the College over and above attendance at formal meetings; quality of contribution to discussion at meetings and the value of the member's expertise, experience and/or interests to the work of the governing body. A copy of the summary information considered was noted in the meeting.</p> <p>The Corporation APPROVED the re-appointment of Mr Clive Roberts as an Associate Member with effect from 01 April 2024 for a 1 year term of office up to 31 March 2024.</p> <p>Mr Clive Roberts re-joined the meeting, and the Chair confirmed the Corporation's decision to re-appoint him for a further 1 year term of office.</p> <p>The meeting noted that as detailed in the paper to Corporation, the Chairs' Committee interviewed Mrs Sarah Bailey on Monday 25 March 2024 and used a structured interview to ascertain relevant knowledge and skills which the candidate could bring to the CCSW Corporation Board.</p> <p>Mrs Bailey took up the position of CEO of West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce seven weeks ago. Mrs Bailey has been a Board member of the Chamber of Commerce since 2019 and her CV describes her as an experienced Director with a consistent track record of being able to build relationships, analyse businesses and identify products and services to meet their needs. Adept at handling various banking transactions with an extensive knowledge of common financial products and using this experience effectively to lead and coach colleagues across a range of abilities and backgrounds. Possessing excellent communication skills ensures the building of relationships with key influencers whilst leveraging these to deliver a regular flow of high-quality business.</p> <p>Mrs Bailey indicated her keen interest in working with our College to support the learners and to ensure that they are informed about local skill requirements so that they can make informed choices and have access to good local employment opportunities.</p> <p>A copy of the candidate's application, the structured interview format and notes from the interviews are retained by the Clerk.</p> <p>The Chairs' Committee RECOMMEND the appointment of Mrs Sarah Bailey as an External Member initially from 01 April 2024 for 1 year.</p> <p>The Corporation considered and APPROVED the RECOMMENDATION from Chairs' Committee to appoint Mrs Sarah Bailey from 01 April 2024 for a probationary year as an External Governor.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to contact Mrs Sarah Bailey and advise her of the Corporation's decision.</p> <p>The meeting noted that the Corporation said their formal goodbye and presented leaving gifts to Mrs Debbie Bryce at the Finance & Resources Committee meeting on 21 March 2024. Debbie stepped down as a governor on 31 January 2024, but has continued as an Observer until 31 March 2024. Mrs Bryce has made a good contribution to CCSW and will be missed.</p>

	<p>The Board noted that there is considerable pressure on governors to perform their roles. CCSW will be bringing its Institute of Technology on stream from September 2025 and more new areas will be coming on-stream. The Chairs' Committee RECOMMEND that the Board should increase to the maximum number of 16 external governors permitted under its Instrument & Articles. The plan would be to advertise and recruit a selection of individuals with a variety of skills and knowledge to fill governor roles on the CCSW Board or on other educational establishment boards.</p> <p>Q: Are there any specific areas we are looking to strengthen? A: We have no specific areas but would want to involve all the new governors with link duties – initially shadowing experienced link governors. A: We want to take on new governors who can shadow more experienced governors with a view to succession planning as we will have several experienced governors who will be stepping down in the next 18-24 months. It takes time for any new governor to understand the FE sector, so it would be good to bring people in to give them time to assimilate the FE sector information. A: We still must fill the key position of Curriculum & Quality Committee Chair. A: As the regionalisation agenda is becoming more important it would also be good to recruit someone in this area at a senior level with strong political contacts.</p> <p>The Corporation AGREED to increase the number of External Members from 12 to 16 with immediate effect, as recommended in the Corporation paper.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to update the number of External Members from 12 to 16 within the Standing Orders with immediate effect.</p> <p>The meeting noted that Ms Wiki Byrdak and Mr George Jenkinson, our two FE Student Governors will be stepping down from the Board as they complete their A Level studies. Mrs Joanne Stewart, Participation & Learner Resources Manager, will be co-ordinating the recruitment of two new Student Governors and has asked the Clerk and Chair to be involved in the process.</p> <p>The Chair noted the Board's thanks to Ms Wiki Byrdak and Mr George Jenkinson.</p>
<p>FC 16/24</p>	<p>Governance Meetings Schedule 2024-25</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Chair/Clerk made a brief verbal presentation, and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed meetings schedule for 2024-25 has been reviewed and approved by the Chairs' Committee and Board are RECOMMENDED to APPROVE the attached governance meeting schedule for 2024-25. • In 2024-25 there will be two Remuneration Committee meetings to accommodate pay reviews and the approval of Senior Post Holder (SPH) objectives in November and a review of Senior Post Holder objectives in March. • We will encourage all governors to attend meetings in person whenever possible, but we will continue to offer governors the opportunity to join some meetings via Teams rather than be absent. • The Governors' Day will be held in mid-January at the Ellesmere Port campus. <p>The Corporation APPROVED the proposed Governance Meetings Schedule for 2024-25.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to send out meeting invites for Governance Meetings 2024-25 to governors by 31 July 2024.</p>
<p>FC 17/24</p>	<p>Meeting: review and feedback</p>

	<p>Mr Fintan Bradley, Vice Chair of Governors identified the key points to be noted from this meeting. The Board have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted and discussed the use of space challenges linked to the Crewe campus. • Noted that good progress has been made to date in respect of the College's Continuous Improvement Plan. • Been assured that good progress has been made in respect of the targets within the College's Accountability Agreement 2023-24 and agreed a pragmatic approach to approve the Accountability Agreement for 2024-25. • Agreed the Careers Strategy for 2024-27. • Noted the Committee Chairs' reports, recommendations and the policies which were approved by Committees. • Agreed to increase the number of external governors to 16 and reappointed Mr Clive Roberts as an Associate Governor for a further 1-year term.
FC 18/24	<p>Confidential business to be noted</p> <p>The meeting agreed that the Clerk and Principal will identify the confidentially sensitive items from this meeting to be recorded as commercially sensitive information. It was agreed to record minutes FC 07/24, FC 10/24, FC 11/24, FC 13/24, and some parts of FC 14/24 as Part B minutes.</p> <p>Action: JSD and Clerk to identify items from this meeting to be recorded as commercially sensitive information.</p>
FC 19/24	<p>Date of future meetings and any other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 09 July 2024, 14:00hrs, Ellesmere Port (NB Summer Meal for Governors 17:00hrs) <p>The meeting will be held in person.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending and thanked the Executive Team for their work.</p>
	<p>Meeting closed at 16:24hrs</p>

Chair's signature: Minutes produced: 10 April 2024

Chair's approval: 29 April 2024 Report made to Corporation, for approval: 09 July 2024