



Cheshire College
South & West

MINUTES OF FULL CORPORATION MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 09 JULY 2024 – 14:00HRS
VIA TEAMS & CREWE CAMPUS

Governors in attendance in person or via Teams as stated:

Mrs Maggie Ayliffe	(MA)	Associate Governor	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Sarah Bailey	(SB)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Beverley Barlow	(BB)	Associate Governor	Ellesmere Port
Mr Fintan Bradley	(FB)	Vice- Chair of Governors	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Margaret Cheshire	(MC)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Claire Clayton	(CC)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Paul Colman	(PC)	Associate Governor	Ellesmere Port
Ms Lesley Davies	(LD)	Chair of Governors	Ellesmere Port
Mr Jasbir Dhesi	(JSD)	Principal/CEO	Ellesmere Port
Mr Shane Guildford	(SG)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Sue Harrison	(SHar)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Sean Herbert	(SHer)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Davinder Lotay	(DSL)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Kenny Murray	(KM)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Clive Roberts	(CR)	Associate Governor	Ellesmere Port

In attendance:

Mrs Michelle Huntley	(Clerk)	Clerk to the Board	Ellesmere Port
Mr Andrew Tyley	(AT)	Interim Chief Financial Officer	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Helen Nellist	(HN)	Deputy Principal/Deputy CEO	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Ruth Szolkowska	(RS)	Vice Principal Curriculum, Quality & Innovation	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Sarah Williams	(SW)	Assistant Director eLearning & ILT – Item 02 only	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Lisa Woodman	(LW)	Executive Director OD&HR – Items 1-3 only	Ellesmere Port
Mr Len Tildsley	(LT)	Observer	Ellesmere Port

PART A MINUTES

Minute Reference	
FC 20/24	<p>Apologies for Absence & Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone; attendance was as recorded above.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Mr John Kiely, Mr Jerry Green, and Mr Mike Braun.</p> <p>There were no additional declarations of interest made.</p>
FC 21/24	<p>Corporation Membership – Part I</p> <p>The Chair reminded governors that the Board has been looking for a new Chair of Curriculum & Quality (C&Q) for 12months. The Chairs’ Committee interviewed Len Tildsley on 24 June and believe he will be a good addition to the Board as a former Principal with relevant experience especially in curriculum & quality matters. A copy of Mr Tildsley’s CV was included in the Board papers. As Mr Tildsley has commitments to his former employer, he is not available to join the Board until 01 October 2024.</p>

	<p>The Board APPROVED the Chairs' Committee RECOMMENDATION to appoint Mr Len Tildsley as an External Governor for an initial probationary year from 01 October 2024.</p> <p>Mr Len Tildsley joined the meeting, and the Chair confirmed his appointment. Mr Tildsley joined the meeting as an Observer. Other board membership recommendations will be taken under Item 10.</p>
<p>FC 22/24</p>	<p>3-year financial forecast (CFFR)</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Chair introduced Mr Andrew Tyley (AT), Interim Chief Financial Officer, who spoke to the paper and the full minute was recorded as Part B, FC 22/24. Mrs Lisa Woodman, Executive Director Organisational Development & Human Resources also joined the meeting to answer any staffing related questions.</p> <p>The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College Financial Forecast Return (CFFR) includes 1yr actual (current year) and two forecast years – next year in detail and the following year in broad terms. • The meeting noted that the Finance & Resources Committee (F&R) scrutinised the assumptions underpinning the 3-year forecast and asked many questions at the committee meeting on 21 June 2024. These are all recorded in the meeting minutes which are available on the governance portal, and which governors were encouraged to read prior to this meeting. • Governors noted the sensitivities built into the assumptions that underpin the 3year budget. • The F&R committee are recommending the 3-year forecast for approval by the Full Corporation. • The meeting noted a marginal improvement to the forecast 2023-24 out turn since the F&R committee met on 21 June. <p>The Board APPROVED the out-turn for 2023-24 and APPROVED the proposed budget and sensitivities for 2024-26.</p> <p>The Board delegated authority to the Principal to approve any late adjustments that do not have a material impact on the operating surplus.</p> <p>The Board authorised the Interim Chief Financial Officer to submit the budget and financial strategy in the required format, to ESFA by 31 July 2024.</p> <p>Mr Shane Guildford and Mr Sean Herbert joined the meeting.</p>
<p>FC 23/24</p>	<p>Digital Strategy 2024-27</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Chair welcomed Mrs Sarah Williams, Assistant Director eLearning/ILT, who spoke to the paper. The full minute was recorded as Part B, FC 23/24. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overarching aim of the Digital Strategy 2024-27 is to support the College's Strategic Objectives 2022-25 linked to digital technologies and digital skills. • The strategy has been informed by local and national data and labour market intelligence related to digital skills and digital inclusion, including work commissioned by the Cheshire and Warrington LSIP and Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (formerly the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership). • The Digital Strategy has been developed with college staff from curriculum and support areas and learners. External engagement has included feedback on skills needs from the College's Employer Advisory Groups and working with Jisc's Digital Capability team, Jisc's Digital Strategy Support Group and with colleagues from other further education (FE) colleges. Feedback has been provided by Claire Clayton, CCSW governor. • The strategy outlines recent progress in terms of digital linked to the College's Strategic Objectives 2022-25 and both College and FE sector current challenges related to digital technologies. • Specific digital priorities closely aligned to the College's Strategic Objectives 2022-25 have been identified. 1 year and 2–3-year impact measures have been identified for each of the digital priorities.

	<p>Action: SW to review the impact measures to ensure that they are realistic and to include reference to how we will collate data to evidence impact.</p> <p>Q: It is important to note that digital skills are not just about employability, they are also about future study. HE students need to be able to use and critique the information they must access. Can this be noted within the strategy too? Learners should be able to use Google but be able to authenticate and identify 'fake' news'. This is of particular importance with the increased use of Generative AI.</p> <p>A: Yes, we can include reference to the use of digital skills for HE learners.</p> <p>Q: There seems to be lots of mechanistic wordage. Generative AI is a tool, not equipment. Learners and staff need to be proficient at using it instead of search engines. How will we encourage the use of Generative AI by teachers for the delivery of curriculum? We also need to teach learners about the restrictions for use of Generative AI, and benefits for staff use.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the Digital Strategy subject to SW noting the above points; and incorporating them and bringing back a revised document to Chairs' committee in October 2024.</p> <p>Action: SW to incorporate the points from the Board and bring a revised Digital Strategy to Chairs' committee in October 2024.</p> <p>Sarah Williams left the meeting.</p>
<p>FC 24/24</p>	<p>People Strategy 2024-27</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mrs Lisa Woodman, Executive Director Organisational Development & Human Resources, spoke to the paper. The full minute was recorded as Part B, FC 24/24. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This People Strategy is a 3yr document and it includes a People Plan. • Whilst the document includes some targets, some fluidity will be required, and it is likely that the document will be adapted during the coming 3years. <p>Q: Can the document and people plan be adapted to more clearly state the intention of the organisation's culture? Perhaps state more clearly how we want people to feel about working at Cheshire College South & West?</p> <p>Action: LW to develop the section about the college's culture.</p> <p>The Board APPROVED the People Strategy 2024-27, subject to LW updating the culture section.</p> <p>Lisa Woodman left the meeting.</p>
<p>FC 25/24</p>	<p>Minutes of Meeting (26 March 2024), Matters Arising from previous minutes including Action Log</p> <p>The minutes were reviewed for accuracy and approved. It was noted that all governors were present for the full meeting, but some commercially sensitive aspects of the meeting were recorded as Part B (confidential).</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to accept the Part A and the Part B minutes from 26 March 2024 and the Chair signed the minutes.</p> <p>The action log from the 26 March 2024 was reviewed and it was noted that all actions are complete and closed except for 1 (Digital Strategy) and 50 (college space utilisation) which be closed at this meeting. Action 57 – is on target for timely completion by 31 July 2024.</p>
<p>FC 26/24</p>	<p>Confirmation of submission of Accountability Agreement</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mr Jasbir Dhesi, Principal & CEO, made a brief verbal presentation, and the following points were noted:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors were invited to review the revised 2024-25 Accountability Agreement and submit any amendments for consideration. • The College has ensured its Accountability Agreement reflects the local needs of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). <p>The meeting NOTED that the College's Accountability Agreement was submitted by 30 June 2024.</p>
<p>FC 27/24</p>	<p>External Board Review Action Plan Update</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Clerk spoke to the paper and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An External Board Review (EBR) was conducted during term 1 of academic year 2022-23 and the Action Plan to address the recommendations from the EBR was shared with governors at the Governors' Day in January 2023. • Of the total recommendations made, most are now closed. The remaining actions are on target for timely completion. • The next External Board Review will be due in 2025-26. <p>Governors reviewed the action plan and noted the comments and progress. The Board AGREED that the action plan is complete except for the remaining actions which will come to Board at the given times in the future.</p> <p>Q: What do we want from an external board review in the future? They can be very costly, and some providers just do an audit.</p> <p>A: I propose that we ask the executive team to consider what we think would be useful for the next EBR.</p> <p>Action: JSD & MEH to speak with the regional FEC team to get feedback from them about the merits of the EBRs. To identify what improvement would be most useful for CCSW Board to make.</p>
<p>FC 28/24</p>	<p>Chief Executive's Report</p> <p>Governors noted the verbal report from the Chief Executive. The report included reference to the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Election 2024: Two of the three MPs who cover the areas where our campuses are located, are new. The new government will bring change across the areas of funding and curriculum. There is likely to be an increased focus on oracy and the skills devolution will continue. • Sector Financial Health: Pressures will continue for colleges. There are new financial rules to keep capital grant monies separate; staffing pressures/pay costs will continue to be an issue along with inflation, declining income, interest rates, and a militant approach from unions. • Ofsted Inspection: The College is in scope for an inspection in 2024-25, most likely in the autumn term. Our curriculum reflects the needs of the local communities. Careers advice and guidance is key, and the College has a careers strategy in place. There is a section on careers within the 2023-24 SAR. <p>Action: HN to check where governors have referenced careers in their feedback reports from learning walks/focus group meetings.</p> <p>JSD concluded that the College is entering an even more challenging time, and challenges will come on many fronts.</p>
<p>FC 29/24</p>	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>Ms Lesley Davies, CBE, Chair of Governors, gave a verbal report and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chartered Institute of Further Education (CIFE): The College was awarded admission on 4 July 2024 and Mr Fintan Bradley, Vice Chair of Governors, accepted the

	<p>award on behalf of the College. Mr John Kiely also attended to represent the Board. It was a lovely event and was attended by the FE Commissioner, Shelagh Legrave. Membership entitles staff who meet the strict criteria to apply for licentiatehip; and post-nominals were awarded in recognition of apprentices. CIFE runs a leadership programme for potential CEOs. CIFE representatives work with government ministers and with IFATE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington: LD met with Mr P Cox in June. • Governor PDRs: Feedback from the meetings will be used to influence development opportunities in 2024-25. As part of the process, governors were asked ‘what we do well/need to do better’ and the Clerk will bring a report to Board in the autumn term. • Most autumn term governance meetings will be held at the Ellesmere Port campus instead of Crewe campus to better accommodate parking requirements during the building works at Crewe campus.
<p>FC 30/24</p>	<p>Corporation Membership</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><u>Membership</u></p> <p>Mr Paul Colman left the meeting. The Chair made a brief verbal presentation, and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairs’ committee reviewed the expiring term of office, noted Mr Colman’s contribution and recommend the re-appointment of Mr Paul Colman for 1 year as Associate Member from 01 August 2024. Extending Mr Colman’s term of office, as an Associate Member, maintains links with South Cheshire Chamber which is reciprocally beneficial. <p>The Board voted unanimously to re-appoint Mr Paul Colman as an Associate Governor for one year from 01 August 2024.</p> <p>Mr Colman re-joined the meeting and was congratulated on his re-appointment. The Chair thanked Mr Colman for continuing as a strategic partner with the College.</p> <p>Mrs Maggie Ayliffe left the meeting. The Chair made a brief verbal presentation, and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairs’ committee reviewed the expiring term of office, noted Ms Ayliffe’s contribution and recommend the re-appointment of Ms Maggie Ayliffe for 1 year as Associate Member from 01 October 2024. Ms Ayliffe is employed at Liverpool John Moores University and has extensive, current expertise within the Higher Education sector. <p>The Board voted unanimously to re-appoint Ms Maggie Ayliffe as an Associate Governor for one year from 01 October 2024.</p> <p>Ms Ayliffe re-joined the meeting and was congratulated on her re-appointment. The Chair thanked Ms Ayliffe for continuing as a strategic partner with the College.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairs’ committee reviewed the expiring term of office, noted Mrs Barlow’s contribution and recommend the re-appointment of Mrs Beverly Barlow for 1 year as Associate Member from 01 October 2024. Mrs Barlow is self-employed as a part-time Ofsted Inspector and has extensive, current curriculum and quality expertise. <p>The Board voted unanimously to re-appoint Mrs Beverley Barlow as an Associate Governor for one year from 01 October 2024.</p> <p>Mrs Barlow re-joined the meeting and was congratulated on her re-appointment. The Chair thanked Mrs Barlow for continuing as a strategic partner with the College.</p> <p>Subject to the Board’s decision to re-appoint Mr Colman, Ms Ayliffe and Mrs Barlow and to appoint Mr Tildsley, on 01 October 2024 the Board will have the following complement: 1 Principal; 2 Staff Members, 3 Student Members, 11 External Members and 5 Associate Members. We will have the following vacancies: 5 x External Members. The Board agreed to increase the number of External Members to 16 in March 2024.</p>

	<p><u>Committee Chairs</u></p> <p>Members considered and approved the re-appointment of Committee Chairs per the recommendation of the Chairs' Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit & Risk Committee Chair: Fintan Bradley • Chairs' Committee Chair: Lesley Davies • Curriculum & Quality Committee Chair: Lesley Davies then Len Tildsley from 01 November 2024 • Remuneration Committee Chair: Fintan Bradley • Finance & Resources Committee Chair: John Kiely <p>The Board APPROVED the re-appointment of Committee Chairs for the next academic year as above. Vice-Chairs of committees will be elected in the committee meetings.</p> <p><u>Succession Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning has been discussed regularly at the Chairs' Committee, with progress being reported to Board and successful appointments of suitably experienced governors being made. • In April 2024, the Chairs' Committee AGREED that governors and the executive team should be aware of the key skills required by the Board and any recommendations of potential Board members will be investigated and treated in the usual way. • The Board approved the development of a more extensive training programme for new, and inexperienced, governors to ensure the development of governors' greater collective understanding of the FE sector. • During the autumn term discussions will be held with individual governors to involve more people with link governor activities. <p>Action: Governors to advise the Clerk of any potential governor candidates.</p>
FC 31/24	<p>Committee Chairs' Reports & Recommendations</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Chair Approved minutes from each committee meeting are shared with all governors via the governance portal. Each Committee Chair spoke about the points governors should note and the full minute was recorded as Part B, FC 31/24.</p>
FC 32/24	<p>Clerk's Report</p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Clerk spoke to the paper and the following points were noted:</p> <p>Revised Governance Meetings Schedule 2024-25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clerk will send out calendar invites (which will include Teams links) to all planned meetings (including work/personal calendars by agreement with individual governors) before the end of July 2024. <p><u>Board Development Annual Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2023-24 all governors have been asked to complete three mandatory training activities: reading Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) document in Sept 2023 (or on joining) and completing two online modules, one for Safeguarding & Prevent and one for eSafety. • Governors have had access to several AoC training webinars and been encouraged to read a wide variety of reports and articles from the Association of Colleges (AoC), Ofsted and the FE Commissioners Office. • New governors have been given the opportunity to attend AoC Governor Induction training.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training has been provided for the Audit & Risk Committee by our Internal Audit provider (RSM). • In 2024-25 it is proposed to adopt the same approach to Board development i.e., to provide opportunities throughout the academic year via a variety of activities including webinars (College and external providers including the AoC); pre-meeting training sessions led by either external or internal experts; sharing of FE Commissioner reports on colleges; sharing of FE Commissioner’s termly letters. The Clerk will continue to support governors to attend meetings/events in person, and to attend online events remotely. The Clerk will also identify specific training opportunities for the development of individual governors as necessary. • The Board approved the development of a more extensive training programme for new, and inexperienced, governors to ensure the development of governors’ greater collective understanding of the FE sector. <p><u>Annual administration completion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Members noted that several standard forms are completed/updated by governors once a year. These include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consent to Act & Declaration of Eligibility includes reference to being a ‘fit and proper’ person per the requirement from the Office for Students (OfS). ○ Register of Interest declarations ○ Governors’ Data Protection Compliance Statement ○ Governors’ Liability Renewal Declaration • Links to copies of the above forms will be sent to Governors to access and download from the governance portal. Once completed electronic copies should be sent to the Clerk by 31 July 2024. • A copy of a Governor Self-Assessment of the Board Questionnaire is available in electronic form. Once completed the form should be sent to the Clerk by 31 July 2024. • The Skills Matrix Questionnaire is available as an electronic form. Once completed the form should be sent to the Clerk by 31 July 2024. <p><i>Action: All governors to complete annual forms and questionnaires and return to the Clerk by 31 July 2024.</i></p>
<p>FC 33/24</p>	<p>Meeting Review & Feedback</p> <p>FB summarised the impact the meeting will have on the College with due regard to the discussions and the decisions taken:</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed and approved the Digital Strategy 2024-27 and the People Strategy 2024-27 subject to a few minor amendments being made. An annual progress report with the action plans will be made. • Discussed and approved the 3-year College Financial Forecast Return (CFFR) and agreed submission will be made to DFE. • Approved the appointment of Mr Len Tildsley as an External Governor; and the re-appointment of Mr Paul Colman, Ms Maggie Ayliffe and Mrs Beverley Barlow as Associate Governors. • Noted the submission of the governor approved College’s 2024-25 Accountability Agreement. • Noted the Principal’s update on the new political landscape and the potential implications for Further Education and the sector’s financial health. • Noted the College was awarded membership of the Chartered Institute of Further Education (CIFE) in July 2024.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the update on governance matters of Performance Development Reviews (PDRs); training and development; succession planning; the meeting schedule for 2024-25; and annual paperwork completion. Chairs of committees were also approved.
FC 34/24	<p>Confidential/Commercially sensitive business</p> <p>It was agreed that several discussions during the meeting will need to be noted as confidential information due to commercial sensitivities. Full minutes for item FC 22/24, FC 23/24, FC 24/24, FC 31/24 and FC 36/24 can be found in Part B minutes for this meeting.</p> <p>Action: Clerk and JSD to review meeting minutes for commercially sensitive items and record separately as necessary.</p>
FC 35/24	<p>Date of future meetings and any other business</p> <p>The meeting noted the dates for Full Corporation meetings from September. It is planned to hold all meetings in person. The Clerk will send out meeting invites and will include Teams invites for all meetings although it is preferable that governors join meetings in person wherever possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuesday 17 Sept 2024, 14:00hrs, Ellesmere Port Monday 11 Nov 2024, 14:00hrs, Ellesmere Port Thursday 12 Dec 2024, 14:00hrs, Crewe (NB Christmas Lunch for Governors 12:00-14:00) Friday 17 Jan 2025, 09:00hrs Governors' Day – Ellesmere Port Thursday 27 Mar 2025, 14:00hrs, Ellesmere Port (NB Lunch with Learners 13:00-14:00hrs) Tuesday 08 July 2025, 14:00hrs, Crewe (NB Barbecue for Governors 17:00)
FC 36/34	<p>Staff Governors and the Executive Team left the meeting whilst the Board received a report from the Remuneration Committee. This full minute was reported as Part B, FC 36/24.</p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 17:05 hrs</p>

Chair's signature:

Minutes produced: 19 July 2024

Chair's approval: 14 August 2024

Report made to Corporation, for approval: 17 September 2024