

Preston College

Redacted and Abridged¹ Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 14 December 2023 at 5.30pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mr John Boydell	Chair
Mr Simon Nixon	Principal and Chief Executive
Mr Steve Browne	
Miss Aoife Cullen	(Until Minute 19)
Mr Marcel Driver	
Mr Malcolm Goulding	
Ms Joanne Jones	
Mrs Sally Little	
Mrs Laura Mason	Remote (Zoom) (Until Minute 19)
Mrs Lynda Mason	
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	
Mr Jose Sedano-Martinez	
Mrs Jen Walters	
Mrs Helen Whittingham	

Absent:

Mrs Georgia Dunn	
Mrs Jane Hilton	
Miss Lisa Keegan	
Mrs Isara McKnight	
Mr Iain Stott	Vice Principal - Corporate Services

In attendance:

Mrs Karen Dunmore	Observer (Until Minute 19)
Ms Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support (Until Minute 19)
Ms Helen Knowles	Director - Beever and Struthers (Until Minute 7)
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board
Ms Gill Thornton	Head of Human Resources (Until Minute 19).

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He welcomed Mrs Whittingham to her first Board meeting in College.

The Chair introduced Mrs Karen Dunmore who would join the College as Vice Principal – Finance in January 2024.

The Board noted that apologies had been received from Mrs Georgia Dunn, Mrs Jane Hilton, Miss Keegan, Mr Stott and Mrs Isara McKnight.

The Clerk reported that Mr Richard Sellars had resigned from the Board.

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

The Clerk reported that as Miss Cullen was under 18 she could not approve any financial or contract related items.

The Chair reported that this would have been Miss Keegan's last meeting as staff governor as she was leaving the College that day. The Chair recorded thanks to Miss Keegan for her contribution to the Board since her appointment as staff governor and wished her well for her new role.

The Chair reported that Ms Helen Knowles, Director - Beever and Struthers, the College's external auditor, would join the meeting on Zoom.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the interest of Senior Post Holders in discussions on succession planning for the Chair of the Governing Body.

The Board noted that the Chair, Principal and Chief Executive and the Clerk would leave the meeting for the Vice Chair's report on the Chair's appraisal.

FOR APPROVAL

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Board approved the Minutes of the Board meetings held on 29 June 2023 (1b) and 19 October 2023 (Part a and b) as correct records.

Resolved: The minutes of the Board meetings held on 29 June 2023 (1b) and 19 October 2023 (Part a and b) were agreed and signed as correct records.

4. Matters arising

The Clerk presented the report on progress of actions from previous meetings.

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

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

5. Report on Decisions Between Meetings

The Clerk reported that no formal decisions had been made between meetings. She reported that an invitation had been sent to governors for the College's Christmas performances and that information on further governor training opportunities and the Safeguarding and Prevent online training for governors had been sent by email. She asked governors to complete the Safeguarding and Prevent training by 7 January 2024.

Resolved: The Board noted the verbal report on information sent between meetings.

Ms Helen Knowles, Director - Beever and Struthers, joined the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Ms Knowles to the meeting.

6. Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report

The Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report at the Appendix A, which outlined the work of the Audit and Risk Committee during 2022/23.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee provided a verbal report on the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23. He reported that whilst he had no concerns to highlight, he could not sign the report until the external auditors had received the Education Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA) reconciliation statement and could confirm that all audit work had been completed.

Ms Knowles reported that the external audit was largely complete and they were awaiting the ESFA reconciliation statement. Ms Knowles also explained that they could not give the final going concern assurance until the date of signing the accounts.

The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee had given its approval for the Committee Chair to sign the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report once all audit work had been completed and therefore, as reported by the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, whilst no concerns had been raised, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee could not sign the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23 until the reconciliation statement had been sent to the external auditors from the ESFA and the external auditors had confirmed that all audit work had been completed.

The Board considered the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2023/24 at Appendix B. The Board noted that at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 22 November 2023 a number of changes had been requested to the plan, as outlined in paragraph 11 of the cover report, and these would be addressed. The Board approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the reason the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee could not confirm that all audit work has been completed at this juncture and noted the draft Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23 as a source of assurance;**
- **approved the internal audit plan 2023/24.**

7. Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Principal and Chief Executive reported on the reason why the College had not received the ESFA reconciliation statement and would be unlikely to receive it before the end of term. He reported that he had requested an extension from the ESFA and it was likely that the Annual Report and Financial Statements could not be signed until January 2024.

The Board noted the draft Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 at Appendix A.

Mr Airey, Head of Finance, reported that the College reported a surplus of £210,000. Following a query, Mr Airey reported that the College remained in the "Requires Improvement" category as a surplus of £245,000 would have been required for a "Good" rating.

The Board noted that the draft accounts were not expected to change. However, this could not be confirmed until receipt of the reconciliation statement.

Ms Knowles reported to the Board on the Management Letter at Appendix B. She reported:

- that the audit work was complete subject to the auditor's receipt of the ESFA reconciliation statement;
- the auditors had not made any adjusted or unadjusted misstatements;
- on a disclosure amendment on a disposal;
- that the auditors had reviewed the recommendations they had made following the 2021/22 audit and were satisfied that appropriate action had been taken by the College to address these;
- that the auditors had made one low priority recommendation following the 2022/23 audit on Individual Learning Record income testing. However, this would have no impact on the funding;
- that the auditors expected to give an unqualified audit opinion.

In response to a query on Wylie and Bisset's experience of undertaking the audit, Ms Knowles provided assurance that the College had been well prepared for the audit and there were no issues.

The Board noted the letters of representation at Appendix C and D.

The Board noted the Regularity Self-Assessment questionnaire for 2022/23 at Appendix E which had been signed by the Chair following review by the Audit and Risk Committee on 22 November 2023.

The Board agreed to approve Chair's action for the Chair to approve the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2022/23 and sign the letters of representation on behalf of the Board, subject to the receipt of the ESFA reconciliation statement and subject to this statement raising no material issues.

Resolved: The Board noted that all audit work had been completed and approved Chair's action to approve the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2022/23 and authorised the Chair to sign the letters of representation on behalf of the Board. subject to the receipt of the ESFA reconciliation statement which raised no material issues.

Ms Knowles left the Meeting.

8. Update Pay Strategy – Pay Award 2023/24: Foundation Living Wage April 2024

Ms Thornton, Head of Human Resources, presented her Update on Pay Strategy – Pay Award 2023/24: Foundation Wage April 2024. She reported:

- the staff pay award had been agreed by unions;

- the Foundation Living Wage (FLW) pay rate for 1 April 2024 had been announced on 24 October 2023 as £12.00 per hour, which was just over a 10% pay increase on the 1 April 2023 rate of £10.90;
- Spinal Column Point (SCP) 9, which was the current FLW rate of pay of £10.90 had been increased to £11.66 per hour with the application of the 7% pay award from 1 August 2023. Therefore, from 1 April 2024, there would be a small increase required of a further £0.44 per hour to bridge the shortfall between the College's new pay rate from 1 August 2023 and the new FLW pay rate;
- the Board had approved a tapered increase to the bottom of the College's Harmonised Pay Spine for SCPs 9 to 14 to accommodate the increase in the FLW from 1 April 2024. The Resources Committee had considered the proposed increases shown in Table 1, paragraph 14 of this report at its meeting on 23 November 2023; and agreed to recommend these rates to Board for approval for local pay negotiations;
- in order to limit the tapering of the pay adjustments from 1 April 2024 to just SCP9 to SCP14, the pay differential between SCPs would drop from £0.16, as at 1 April 2023, to £0.13 per hour up to SCP14 from 1 April 2024.

In response to queries from members, management reported:

- that the number of staff vacancies had decreased and the College was using agencies less frequently than the previous year;
- that many of the teaching staff that had left the College had returned to industry roles;
- on professional development for existing staff.

The Board noted trade union agreement to the pay offer and approved the recommendation from Resources Committee for the proposed pay rates to SCP9 – 14 for local pay negotiation, as tapered changes to the bottom of the pay spine in order to maintain pay differentials following the announcement of the new FLW rate of pay from 1 April 2024.

Resolved: The Board:

- **noted the trade union agreement to the pay offer;**
- **approved the recommendation from Resources Committee for the proposed pay rates to SCP9 – 14, for local pay negotiation, as tapered changes to the bottom of the pay spine in order to maintain pay differentials following the announcement of the new FLW rate of pay from 1 April 2024.**

9. Policy Approval – Resources

a) Financial Regulations

The Principal and Chief Executive outlined the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations shown in track changes at Appendix A which had been considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 23 November 2023 and recommended to the Board for approval. He reported that the key proposed amendments were required due

to the reclassification of colleges as public sector or where required in readiness for the introduction of the Vice Principal – Finance role in January 2024.

The Principal and Chief Executive outlined the proposed change to Appendix E (Summary of Financial Limits) to allow the use of framework arrangements as an acceptable alternative to full tendering for contracts exceeding £50k in some circumstances. The Principal and Chief Executive reported that the Resources Committee had discussed the proposed amendment at its meeting on 23 November 2023 and requested that specific criteria for the use of framework arrangements without a full tender was added to the Financial Regulations to ensure that this option was only used in extenuating circumstances. He confirmed that revised wording had been added to Appendix E.

Members considered the proposed changes to Appendix E and considered the risk that this amendment could result in a change in culture at the College with the practice of using framework arrangements without tendering becoming more frequent. A member highlighted the possibility of alternative ways of working, including rotating a list of suppliers. Members discussed with management that use of this proposed provision required Board approval and therefore the Board would maintain oversight and control on the frequency of its use. Members also highlighted the importance of the Board challenging management if usage became more frequent, particularly as in practice the risk of losing funding as a result of delayed procurement decisions was unlikely.

The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee highlighted that the process could be included in the College's procurement strategy which was under currently under development.

Following discussion, the Board approved the proposed amendment to Appendix E to allow the use of framework arrangements and reiterated that this provision should only be used in extenuating circumstances should be reiterated in the minutes.

The Board approved the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations and noted that the changes related to the introduction of the Vice Principal - Finance role would come into effect on the Vice Principal – Finance's start date in January 2024.

b) Disciplinary Policy and the Disciplinary Procedure

Ms Thornton outlined the proposed changes to the Disciplinary Policy and the Disciplinary Procedure shown in track changes at Appendix B and C. The Board noted that the proposed changes had been considered by Resources Committee at its meeting on 23 November 2023 and recommended to the Board for approval.

Ms Thornton reported that the main change was to amend paragraph 16.2.7 to reflect ACAS guidance that an appeal should not impose a sanction greater than that of the hearing and the Diversity and Inclusion section had also been updated.

A member referred to the proposed changes to paragraph 5 of the Disciplinary Policy regarding Diversity and Inclusion and his view that the original wording provided a clearer description of the College's approach to diversity and inclusion i.e. treating all staff equally, than the proposed revision. Ms Thornton explained that the revision had been made to align the policy with ACAS Code of Practice for Disciplinary and

Grievance Procedure. Following discussion, the Board agreed to retain the original wording for this paragraph. Ms Thornton undertook to review the wording of this paragraph when the next policy document was reviewed for consideration by the Board.

Following discussion, the Board agreed to approve all other changes to the Disciplinary Policy at Appendix B and the Disciplinary Procedure at Appendix C.

Resolved: The Board approved:

- the updated Financial Regulations (Appendix A) and noted that the changes related to the introduction of the Vice Principal – Finance would be implemented on the start date of the Vice Principal;
- the Disciplinary Policy (Appendix B) and Procedure (Appendix C), subject to the retention of the original wording for paragraph 5 of the Disciplinary Policy.

10. Data Protection Policy

The Principal and Chief Executive outlined the proposed changes to the Data Protection Policy which had been reviewed by the Resources Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee. The Clerk reported that unlike most other policies the Data Protection Policy was not assigned to a particular committee.

The Board discussed the proposed changes. A member queried that if a learner took a photograph of another learner would they be aware that they needed to ask the learner's permission by posting the image on social media. The Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that learners should be aware of the College's rules regarding social media. He undertook to review whether the policy should be amended to include reference to guidance to learners regarding posting images on social media.

The Board approved the Data Protection Policy, subject to the review of learners' use of social media.

Resolved: The Board approved the Data Protection Policy, subject to the review on whether a further reference was required on learners' use of social media.

Action: The Principal and Chief Executive to review if a reference was required on learners' use of social media.

11. College Self-Assessment Report 2022/23

Ms Haworth, Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support, referred members to the College's Self Assessment Report (SAR) 2022/23 at Appendix A which had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 30 November 2023 and recommended to the Board for approval.

Ms Haworth reported that the SAR had been informed by individual College School SARs and had been aligned with the Ofsted report following the College's Ofsted inspection in January 2023 and a review of Centre of Excellence outstanding practice.

Members discussed the potential risk for a college to become complacency after it had received a good Ofsted inspection and discussed with management the College's progress

made since the inspection. The Board noted that following the Ofsted in January the College had developed action plans and updated the Quality Improvement Plan to reflect the Ofsted recommendations and progress was reviewed by Quality and Standards Committee and the Board.

Some members were of the view that the College did not necessarily have to align with the Ofsted inspection gradings for its SAR if it could evidence progress since the inspection. In response to a question on whether the College was outstanding in any provision, management were of the view, whilst there were examples of outstanding provision across the College, in their view this would not currently justify an overall “1” grade in a particular Ofsted category.

Following a query, management explained the reason that the grading for Provision for Learners with High Needs had been assessed as a “1” for the SAR 2021/22 and a “2” for the SAR 2022/23. It was noted that at the Ofsted Inspection in January 2021 Provision for Learners with High Needs had been graded as a “2” and the reasons for this, including that the College did not record incremental progress of individual high needs learners towards their Education, Health and Care plan outcomes. Management reported that whilst progress had been made in this area since the Ofsted inspection the impact of changes could not be demonstrated at this time and for this reason management had recommended to Quality and Standards Committee that this grading for Provision for Learners with High Needs should be graded “2.” However, management were of the view that the position might be sufficiently improved by the end of 2023/24 to recommend increased gradings.

Members of Quality and Standards Committee referred to a significant discussion at the meeting on this matter and reported that the Committee had agreed with the grading of “2” for 2022/23 but requested that information was added to the narrative of the report to highlight areas which were moving towards a “1” where this could be evidenced.

Following discussion, the Board approved the College Self Assessment Report.

Resolved: The Board approved the College Self Assessment Report 2022/23.

FOR DISCUSSION

12. Principal and Chief Executive’s Report

The Principal and Chief Executive presented his Principal and Chief Executive’s Report and highlighted:

- that an independent report, which was available on the Governors’ Portal, confirmed that following an external inspection there was no Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in College buildings. However, the inspection had highlighted some other issues which would be addressed;
- that a 12 month trial of Attendance Officers would also start in January 2024;
- that the College was dealing with issues relating to at least one case of TB amongst its 16-18 English for Speakers of Other Languages learners which had been referred to healthcare professionals. He confirmed that measures had been put in place to

minimise risk and reassure staff, including liaison with health authorities and that the risk of College transmission was low.

A member queried whether the Principal and Chief Executive would meet with MPs in the new year as part of his external networking. The Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that he had been in discussions with Mark Hendrick, MP for Preston, who would visit the College in the New Year.

The Chair asked the Student Governor 16-18, for her views on learner attendance. The Student Governor outlined her views on the reasons some learners did not attend some lessons. Members discussed the legacy of the pandemic and the impact of this on learners' mental health, the importance of instilling in learners the importance of their current studies to gaining future opportunities.

In response to queries from members, members discussed with management:

- whether there was an issue with the accuracy of the texting service for learner attendance, the Principal and Chief Executive responded that he had been made aware of a potential glitch that day and this would be addressed;
- that the College ran a "swap don't drop" programme in the first term to encourage learners to speak to staff if they were unhappy on their course, rather than dropping out of College;
- that some College provision was designed for a specific career and if learners changed their mind about this career pathway during the academic year they were encouraged to speak to student managers about changing pathways;
- that learner attendance progress was relative and for a learner that had not attended regularly in school, a college attendance of 60% was an achievement;
- that the attendance pattern at College had changed from previous years as in 2023/24 to date there had been a lower start date and gradual improvement, in previous years it had started higher but then dropped by half term;
- that discussions with Heads of School at business planning meetings indicated that staff were doing as much as they could to encourage learners to attend lessons.
- the impact of the letter sent by the Principal and Chief Executive to learners with attendance issues;
- that it was evident that some learners were attending College but not always attending their lessons.

The Board noted the report. The Chair thanked Miss Cullen, Student Governor, for her valuable contribution to the discussion.

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

13. Risk Management Register

The Board noted the Risk Managements Register which had been considered by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting on 22 December 2023.

The Board noted the report.

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

14. Strategic Plan 2023/26

The Principal and Chief Executive referred members to the first report on the College's new Strategic Plan at Appendix A.

Following a request, the Principal and Chief Executive undertook to add the management/accountable officer for each deliverable/action to the report.

Resolved: The Board noted current progress on delivery of the first year's deliverables contained in our new Strategic Plan 2023/26.

Action: To add the management/accountable officer for each deliverable/action to the plan.

15. Management Accounts

Mr Airey presented the Period 3 Management Accounts. He reported:

- indications were that Adult Education Budget should be achieved as the College was on target;
- there were no concerns as of Period 3;
- there were no high agency costs as of Period 3;
- the volatility in the IT sector had stabilised.

In response to a query, Mr Airey confirmed that the Board had approved an energy contract for one year based on external advice at that time.

The Board noted the Period 3 Management Accounts.

Resolved: The Board noted the Period 3 Management Accounts.

16. Health and Safety Annual Report

The Board noted the Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23 at Appendix A. A member commented positively on the increased number of near miss reports.

Resolved: The Board noted the Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23

17. Outcome of the QIP

Ms Haworth referred members to the Quality Improvement Plan 2022/23 at Appendix A.
Ms Haworth reported:

- that as discussed earlier in the meeting, improving learner attendance was a key objective;
- that English and maths GCSE attendance and performance remained challenging. Some progress had been seen with English but there were on going challenges with maths and the College was teaching significantly higher numbers of learners than the previous year;
- that the College had entered a high number of learners for November resits. However, many learners had not attended the examination;
- a new member of staff would join the team;
- the College's experiences reflected the national picture.

In response to queries, management reported that:

- confirmed that some learners were unmotivated and others were very motivated but did not currently have the required knowledge or capability. It was noted that to address this some learners had completed a functional skills qualification which had increased their confidence;
- other qualifications at Level 2 for maths and English were under development but would not be operational before 2028;
- the impact on overall learner hours for those learners resitting maths and English.

The Student Governor 16-18, reported that attendance was low in her Maths GCSE class and discussed with members and management the importance of motivation. Members discussed the challenges for colleges across the sector as learners had already been taught maths and English for years and had not achieved. The Board noted the QIP.

The Board noted the performance and progress against key Quality Improvement Plan milestones and final outturn for 2022/23.

18. Higher Education Update

Ms Haworth presented the Higher Education (HE) Update and reported that:

- as required by Office for Students (OfS) Condition F1 - Transparency 2023 information had been published. The College's return had limited information due to the small numbers of HE learners at the College and the necessity to redact;

- due to changes to the University and central Lancashire contract, the College's initial teacher education provision is due to be inspected by Ofsted. It was anticipated that most inspections in the North West would occur in spring or summer terms.

Members discussed with management the areas identified for improvement highlighted in Initial Teacher Education inspections to date included support for Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) learners. The Board noted the report.

Resolved: The Board noted the report and noted that the Transparency 2023 information had been published.

19. People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 Review and Strategic Deliverables 2023/24

Ms Thornton referred members to the People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 Review and Strategic Deliverables 2023/24 which had been reviewed by Resources Committee on 23 November 2023. The Board noted the report.

Resolved: People Strategy Action Plan 2022/23 Review and Strategic Deliverables 2023/24

As this was the end of Part 1(a) the Chair thanked management, staff and the student governor for their contributions to the College during 2023 and wished everyone well for Christmas and the New Year.

Resolved: Mr Airey, Miss Cullen, Mrs Dunmore, Mrs Haworth, Mrs Laura Mason Mr Noblett and Ms Thornton left the meeting.

Part 1(b)

20. Governance Matters

a) Board and Committee membership and succession planning

The Board noted the Board and Committee membership as of December 2023 at Appendix A.

The Clerk reported that, following the resignation of Mr Sellars, there was now one independent governor vacancy on the Board. The Clerk reported that unfortunately no applications had been received for Student Governor HE or FE (Adult) for 2023/24. The Clerk reported that she had conducted all the usual activities to advertise the role but would review if any other further actions could be taken in the summer of 2024 ahead of the 2024/25 student governor election.

In response to a query, the Clerk confirmed that there was not a separate apprenticeship governor constituency but apprentices could stand for election as an FE or HE student governor. The member explained that in his experience, apprentice student governors could provide a useful perspective on FE boards. The Clerk undertook to review before the 2024/25 student governor elections.

The Clerk reported that due to member availability the co-option interviews had not been held between meetings and the interviews had been rescheduled to take place at the next meeting on the Search and Governance Committee on 1 February 2024. She explained that as there was now a vacancy on the Board for an independent governor, it would be helpful for the Search and Governance Committee to review whether any of the people who had expressed an interest in co-option could be asked to apply to be an independent governor before the interviews took place. The Clerk reported that she would progress arrangements with the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee.

b) Annual Whistleblowing Report

The Clerk reported that, as stated in the College's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, as the College's Designated Assessor, she should report annually to the Board on the number of times the procedure had been formally invoked, and of any outcomes. The Clerk reported that she had not received any whistleblowing reports during the 2022/23 academic year and 2023/24 year to date.

c) Governor Induction and Training

The Clerk reported that the Governor Continuing Professional Development and Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities Newsletter – Autumn 2023 included a number of dates early in the new year, including Association of Colleges' finance masterclass sessions. She advised members to contact her as soon as possible if they wanted to attend as places were limited.

d) Agenda for strategic planning evening

The Clerk outlined the possible topics for the Board's strategic planning evening on 25 January 2024 including, time permitting, review of:

- College risk appetite and risk appetite statement and alignment with the College new strategy;
- emerging risks;
- data presented to board and committees, including consideration of new key performance indicator dashboards;
- any urgent matters for approval; and
- subject to time available, to consider initial feedback from Curriculum and Skills Link Governors.

The Board agreed the proposed topics and agreed Chair's action to approve the final agenda.

e) Chair, Board and Committee Effectiveness Reviews

The Clerk referred members to responses she had provided to the comments added by members on the Board's Effectiveness review 2022/23 collated report. She reported that she had reflected on the comment on the College's governor induction programme. She explained that in following good governance best practice of not overwhelming governors on appointment she had shared information gradually during

the first year. However, in light of the comment in the evaluation, and in the interests of transparency, she would share the governor induction programme with new governors on appointment going forward. The Clerk reported that she would contact all new members with a summary of their progress towards completion of the College's governor induction programme. The Clerk explained that most of the induction programme was not mandatory and would also depend on a governor's experience and background.

The Chair, Principal and Chief Executive and the Clerk left the meeting.

The Vice Principal, Mrs Lynda Mason, gave a verbal report on the Chair of the Governing Body's annual appraisal which had been held on 4 December 2023. The Board agreed that they were delighted with Mr Boydell's significant contribution to the Board as Chair since his appointment. The Board agreed to record a vote of thanks to the Chair for his hard work and in particular his contribution over the last few years.

The Board also noted that the Chair was due to retire in July 2024 and it was the role of the Board to appoint a new Chair.

The Chair re-joined the meeting.

The Board recorded a vote of thanks to the Chair for his valuable contribution since his appointment as Chair of the Governing Body and for all his hard work, particularly in recent years.

The Principal and Chief Executive and the Clerk re-joined the meeting.

Further to discussion on succession planning for the role of Chair of the Governing Body, the Clerk suggested that an email could be sent to all independent governors, including those members not present at the meeting, to ascertain expressions of interest of governors in the role of Chair of the Governing Body in the first instance.

Following discussion, including that it was the role of the Board to agree the process and appoint a Chair, the Clerk clarified that if any person expressed an interest, it was for the Board to determine if they were appointed, however it would be helpful for the Board to know as soon as possible if more than one member was interested or if no members were interested.

Following discussion on the importance of the role, the Board agreed that before any communications were sent to board members for expressions of interest the Board needed to have a further opportunity to consider the role and the process in more detail. The Board agreed that this meeting should take place as soon as possible and noted the next opportunity would be the strategy meeting on 25 January 2024. It was agreed that therefore other items might need to be postponed to allow sufficient time for this discussion.

The Clerk highlighted that the Board had previously agreed a role description for the Chair of the Governing Body and that training and support would be provided by the College and externally for new chairs.

The Board noted the report on Chair, Board and Committee Effectiveness Reviews.

The Board noted that the request for the Principal and Chief Executive to join the Friends of Harris as treasurer in a volunteer capacity would be considered under Part 2.

Resolved: The Board:

- noted the Board membership and succession planning update;
- noted the Clerk's annual whistleblowing report;
- noted the update on governor training and development;
- approved Chair's action to confirm the final agenda for the Board strategic planning evening on 25 January 2024;
- noted the report on Chair, Board and Committee Effectiveness Reviews.

Action: The consider Chair succession planning at the strategic planning evening on 25 January 2024.

21. Committee Minutes

The Board noted the minutes from the following Committee meetings:

- Search and Governance 28 September 2023
- Resources Committee 5 October 2023
- Quality and Standards Committee 12 October 2023
- Audit and Risk Committee 22 November 2023 - Redacted
- Resources Committee 23 November 2023
- Quality and Standards 30 November 2023

Resolved: The Board noted the minutes from Committee meetings.

22. Any other business

There was no other business.

23. Date of the next meeting

The Board noted that the next meeting would be held on 25 January 2024 at 5.30pm.