



WOKING COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of a meeting of the Woking College Board of Trustees held on
Wednesday 6th November 2024 at 6.00pm in W09 Conference Room

Present:	Gary Botha Katherine Dunleavy Erica Ehoru Brett Freeman Principal Tracy Hampton Anne Middleton Ben Ramdhony Nawal Raza-Malik Rosh Sellahewa Vice Chair Tim Stokes Chair
In Attendance:	Nuweed Rasaq Deputy Principal Laura Cook Assistant Principal Helena Clarke Assistant Principal Barbara Maude Clerk to the Board of Trustees

Item	Agenda Description	Action
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence & Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Alastair MacAulay and Charlotte Eker, both of whom had prior work commitments. The apologies were agreed.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Helen Flower, who was due to be appointed as part of the next agenda item had been unable to attend and her apology was noted. Cullum Mitchell was absent.</p> <p>No Trustee or member of the Senior leadership Team (SLT) declared any pecuniary or other direct or indirect personal interest in any item on the agenda.</p>	
2.	<p>Appointment of New Trustees: Katherine Dunleavy & Helen Flower</p> <p>The Board considered the appointment of Katherine Dunleavy and Helen Flower as co-opted Trustees for a term of four years with immediate effect. Both had previously attended the College for an interview with the Principal, Chair and Vice Chair of the Board, all of whom unanimously recommended their appointment as co-opted Trustees. Helen Flower had also attended the September Conference as an observer. Their respective CVs had been circulated to all Trustees and were available on GovernorHub.</p> <p>Although it was unfortunate that Helen Flower had been unable to attend the meeting, the Board were happy to approve her appointment in her absence.</p>	

	<p>The Board resolved: To approve the appointment of Katherine Dunleavy and Helen Flower as co-opted Trustees for a term of four years with immediate effect.</p> <p>In terms of re-appointments, the Clerk confirmed that the terms of office of both Anne Middleton and Rosh Sellahewa were due to expire. Both had indicated their agreement to standing again for a further term of office. Again, the Board were unanimous in endorsing their respective re-appointments.</p> <p>Both Trustees had originally been appointed by the Members and it was confirmed that the Members had passed a written resolution approving their appointment for a second term of office.</p> <p>The Board duly endorsed: The re-appointment of Anne Middleton and Rosh Sellahewa by way of a Members' Resolution for a second term of office to run from 11th November 2024 to 10th November 2028.</p>																										
<p>3.</p>	<p>Introduction to the Board Meeting</p> <p>The Chair outlined the strategic intent of the meeting which was the review and challenge by the Board on the College's Self-Assessment Report for 2023/24 and the Quality Improvement Plan for 2024/25.</p>																										
<p>4.</p>	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meetings</p> <p>The Board received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th September 2024. The minutes were agreed and approved for signature by the Chair via the marked as signed facility on GovernorHub.</p>																										
<p>5.</p>	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>To note matters arising from the previous meeting as set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="193 1361 1343 1664"> <thead> <tr> <th>Item</th> <th>Action</th> <th>By whom</th> <th>By when</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>9.</td> <td>Include student numbers for cohorts such as disadvantaged and safeguarded students in future reports</td> <td>SLT</td> <td>All future reports</td> <td>Actioned</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11.</td> <td>All Trustees to complete the recommended online Safeguarding training</td> <td>All</td> <td>ASAP</td> <td>Ongoing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12.</td> <td>Update Cyber Security training record for Gary Botha on GovernorHub</td> <td>Clerk</td> <td>ASAP</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12.</td> <td>Circulate details of College events for the remaining term</td> <td>Clerk</td> <td>ASAP</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In terms of matters arising, Trustees were reminded to complete their annual safeguarding training via the link already provided to the online training module. It was a statutory duty to complete safeguarding training regularly and the recommendation was that this was defined as annually and that it should be sector relevant; role specific and should also take into account changes introduced by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.</p> <p>In addition, Trustees were also reminded to update both their business declarations and</p>	Item	Action	By whom	By when	Status	9.	Include student numbers for cohorts such as disadvantaged and safeguarded students in future reports	SLT	All future reports	Actioned	11.	All Trustees to complete the recommended online Safeguarding training	All	ASAP	Ongoing	12.	Update Cyber Security training record for Gary Botha on GovernorHub	Clerk	ASAP	Completed	12.	Circulate details of College events for the remaining term	Clerk	ASAP	Completed	
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	<p>the respective confirmations relating to KCSIE 2024; Code of Conduct; and Gifts and Hospitality. All confirmations and declarations should be dated post 1st September 2024 for the current academic year.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>College Self-Assessment Report 2023/24 The Board reviewed the College’s Self-Assessment Report for 2023/24 concentrating on the College’s key strengths and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Trustees had been tasked to review specific sections of the SAR prior to the meeting and to pose questions to Laura Cook, Assistant Principal. The answers to those questions were then discussed during the course of the meeting.</p> <p>In terms of Behaviour and Attitudes Pg 44-46 SAR and 60-61 QIP Trustees had asked how is attendance and punctuality measured? A register is taken within the first 10 minutes of each lesson, enrichment and some compulsory workshops. If a student arrives late for the lesson they will be marked late on the register.</p> <p>How does the college support students with attendance issues, and have those interventions been successful? A range of interventions can be put in place for students, depending on why they are finding it difficult to attend. This can be disciplinary, for example attendance warnings are sent home to parents and if attendance does not improve, they are warned they may be removed from the course or it can be supportive where attendance is negatively impacted by mental health. The College had seen an increase of this over the last 5-10 years but certainly exacerbated by the impact of Covid/lockdown on mental health in the last few years. Last year, the College introduced progress mentors, a part time role, chasing some of our worst attenders and getting them back into class, this year this has expanded into two full time roles in order to support attendance further. Attendance warning letters are successful for most students, who often don’t realise how poor their attendance has become. The impact of Progress Mentors is under constant review, this is more difficult to track due to the complex nature of the non-attendance.</p> <p>Do we have a list of what volunteering students undertake? The College had lots of students who volunteer in local schools, for example reading with children, working at Woking food bank, volunteering with Scouts/Brownies/Rainbows/Beavers. College students also volunteered with a range of charities.</p> <p>What did the College do if a parent is uncooperative in the stage meeting process? Has this happened? Yes, the Assistant Principal advised this happened regularly and usually involved non-attendance to meetings and resistance to phone calls etc. Stage 1 meetings no longer required parental attendance, parents are informed of the meeting taking place and the outcome. Stage 2 and Stage 3 meetings do require parents to engage. This is being tackled this year in a different way, if students do not attend the meeting they are immediately suspended and not allowed to return until they have met with their Head of Year.</p>	

How many students have used the in-house counselling services? Are there enough services available for the number of students?

The College had counsellors available onsite every day of the week. It was confirmed that there were waiting lists for counselling but not for wellbeing support, which was a different support channel. Counselling referrals are from various sources including self-referral but due to the confidential nature of counselling, this list is held by the Lead Counsellor. Unfortunately, the Lead Counsellor is not in until Friday so the Assistant Principal could only estimate at this time that around 40 students each year accessed counselling. All students met with the Lead Counsellor shortly after referral in order for her to triage support and to assess their suitability for counselling. Currently the waiting time is about 2 months from initial assessment to being allocated a counsellor. The Board were reminded that this did not apply to wellbeing support which was via a different channel. The College were able to signpost to external counsellors where necessary.

For the targeted workshops, had the College measured the success or usefulness of these workshops? Had the College put on any other targeted workshops beyond organisation and revision skills?

The College had 88 different subject specific workshops that ran every week by staff most often during lunch hours. It was reported that it difficult to measure the success of these because they have existed for over 15 years and the College didn't have a control group of students not invited – they're open to everyone, those who attend may be more motivated or have specific reasons one week to attend but not the next – the groups are often in flux. The Assistant Principal advised that usefulness and success tended to come through feedback from students and their ongoing popularity with students.

Organisation and revision skills are targeted one off workshops that students attend (separate from the range of mentoring schemes that include ILM, Learning Support and peer mentoring)

What is included in the new student induction?

The Assistant Principal advised that there was an 'Expectations' assembly led by the Principal and the Assistant Principal, the Careers lead and Learning Support to set the tone for the year and to introduce key staff. IT induction also took place which involved getting students logged on and explaining the rules around the use of IT, discussion of the respect charter and the student code of conduct, tour of the college, introduction to the Woking Way and key information that students require in terms of health and safety, first aid, reporting absences, safeguarding, mental health support, wellbeing, financial support, learning support an access arrangements, use of AI, careers and work experience and key dates.

There was also a Community Inclusion event where students have the opportunity to meet members of both the College community and the wider community. In attendance this year were representatives from Surrey Police, Engage, Woking People of Faith, Student Assistance Programme - 24 hour counselling helpline, Surrey Health Promotion Immunisation Team, Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum, Surrey Sexual Health Outreach Team, Blossom LGBT support, East to West Transition Support, Action for carers, Steps to Work, Woking College Student Union, Woking College GSA, Woking College Peer Mentors, Woking College Wellbeing.

The College had also introduced this year a 'Welcome to Woking Day' with a fair and BBQ, which was very popular with students and added a sense of fun and community.

How did the College plan to further develop a culture of collective responsibility towards sustainability?

The Board were advised that 10 members of staff were now Carbon Literacy certified having completed a course, and across college all departments have made sustainability pledges. Last year 29 students completed the Carbon Literacy course and this year we plan to build on that further with the aim to at least triple that number. Tutorial sessions will be dedicated to sustainability (last year we had a tutor session on Veganuary and a screening of a documentary on diet and climate change – The Game Changers). A staff and student sustainability survey has been conducted, paper-free research conducted by Emerson Hawkes, Climate and Environmental Lead across the College leading to a discussion with staff and a review in some departments. Flowing from that, for example Registry was now nearly paper-free. The College would be adding a pond to the Sensory/Wildlife garden and Emerson Hawkes was working with a range of staff and students across College making further plans to reduce paper and increase sustainability.

Personal Development Pg 46-49 SAR and 67-63 QIP

Who makes up the Self Esteem Team and what training do they get?

The Self Esteem Team are an external organisation of mental health school speakers, they are from a diverse background and talk about their own experience while also giving practical advice. More information can be found here: [School Speakers | Self-Esteem Team | United Kingdom](#)

Have you received any feedback for those who were not satisfied with their child's safety and wellbeing (e.g. free text box in questionnaire asking why or for suggesting improvements). If so, were any useful insights noted?

7% of respondents reported being dissatisfied, in the open text boxes some referred to feeling at though there was not enough support for their young person in College. Unfortunately, there is sometimes a mis-match between parental expectations of what can be provided in a sixth form setting for a student without a diagnosed need or EHCP. Sometimes parents are not aware of what has been offered to students, which they have chosen not to engage with. As an aside, it was important to note that not all parents responded to the survey, despite it being sent to all parents three times.

Same question as above for parents who were unsatisfied with the support offered to students in making next steps after College.

16% of parents reported being dissatisfied with the support for next steps. Only two parents mentioned this in the free textboxes provided (9 parents mentioned it as a strength), both saying a lack of support for those not going to university. Management found this frustrating as so many opportunities were advertised to students throughout their time at the College and all students not applying to university were invited to a meeting with the Careers Adviser for support (if they didn't respond to the initial two invites, parents are informed). The College were looking at re-introducing an additional event for students looking at degree and higher apprenticeships. Management recognised that they could try to do more regarding degree and higher apprenticeships

but it was a highly competitive market and students looking at apprenticeships needed to have a very clear idea as to the route they wanted to take.

General question in relation to the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), what specific metrics have been established to define and measure success? Given the breadth of proposed improvements and the complexity of multi- step initiatives, how do you usually track and assess progress across multiple development and implementation phases?

Under the overall College QIP, each member of SLT has a personal QIP. All sub-targets allocated to them on the QIP appear and are broken down into individual actions the completion of which will enable the target to be completed. These are reviewed first individually by each senior leader and sent to the Assistant Principal for collation before wider discussion. SLT meet five times throughout the College year to discuss progress towards each of the targets and review the QIP as a whole (SLT had already met this academic year). QIP targets are also used as the basis for some professional review targets for SLT. Targets also form the basis for discussion during line management meetings.

Questions on ED&I (across both areas)

When you refer to coordinating ED&I better across departments, do you mean with a focus on benefits for students, staff or both? Are there specific plans on how to 'ensure a coordinated approach'?

The Assistant Principal advised that this had been discussed in the first meeting of the year - management felt that so far they had been largely focusing on outcomes for Students – so this is an area they would like to look at for Staff inclusion as well, and more work was planned.

How are the college's vision and values for ED&I defined?

Mission Statement:

At Woking College, we strive to reach out and include everyone within our community. As a transformative and progressive environment, we take pride in accepting and celebrating all aspects of our diverse cultural base.

Maintaining and promoting our inclusive community is a top priority and we are committed to promoting/encouraging Equality and Diversity in all our students and staff enriching how they perceive the world around them.

For more information on this, the Assistant Principal suggested looking at the website:

<https://woking.ac.uk/edi/>

Do you measure staff and student understanding of ED&I values and what strategies are in place to address gaps in understanding?

A questionnaire was conducted last year and this has been used as a basis to start identifying areas to develop. One area that emerged was staff understanding of how best to discuss and teach about neurodiversity and also refugees. This will be something that management would look at through the year, possibly during Diversity week.

The questionnaire would be repeated at the end of year to gauge how understanding has developed and what the next targets need to be.

How often are the vision and values reviewed to make sure they reflect the current needs and diversity of the college community?

It was confirmed that these are discussed at every meeting (half termly). The aim to keep these agile - changing and adapting as needed, when issues arise.

This is also something that management were looking to develop with the Student EDI council.

What specific training/resources are provided to ED&I champions to enable them to promote relevant initiatives? Do all staff have to do some form of ED&I training?

All staff receive EDI training through the INSET programme across the academic year. The College have previously had guest speakers on issues of race and equality as well as staff led sessions on LGBTQ matters. Last year there were sessions on Conscious Inclusion, Celebrating Diversity, Supporting learners with ASD and Understanding Access Arrangements. Lindsay Ammar, Director of Enhancement and Cultural Capital was in the process of looking into further training for ED&I champions this year.

Are there visible representations of ethnic diversity (e.g. guest speakers, events), that reflect and celebrate backgrounds of ethnic minority students?

The Assistant Principal advised that this was something the College aimed to focus on across all areas of college - some examples being a range of Big Talk topics and speakers; a range of groups invited for the Community Welcome fair at the start of the year; focus on ensuring all displays and schemes of learning focus on key figures from a variety of backgrounds; focus on different theme weeks including Black History Month which shared resources digitally and also through tutor group; an EDI notice board which is regularly changed and updated to reflect different key events; focus on diversity in Pop up enrichments - for example making Diwali tealights.

How does the college evaluate whether students from ethnic minority backgrounds feel included and valued in the College community?

We have a student questionnaire and verbal feedback through our Student Union. EDI Champions also conduct focus groups with the students, although these are more wide-ranging rather than focusing specifically on ethnicity. This will re- launched in our next EDI Champions meeting and needed further developing.

Where can I find information on the demographics of the student and staff populations?

This can be found in our Equality Duty Report, which was currently being drafted by Helena Clarke, Assistant Principal but last years can be found on Governor Hub here: <https://app.governorhub.com/document/65b69f0c81fb52c0b7b9a6ca/view>

How are diverse gender identities and sexual orientations integrated into curriculum (e.g. health and history classes)?

This happens in a range of ways, depending on the subject. For some subjects it is part and parcel of the course, for example in health and social care there is a compulsory unit on Equality and Diversity and this theme is found embedded throughout the course, for example in the safeguarding unit looking at vulnerable adults. In sociology it forms the basis of pretty much every lesson. In business and law they look at the impact of social policy and lawmaking in this area. In Sport there are units on ED&I and students explore

who is more likely to take up sport and why as well as disability sport.

It is more difficult to include these topics within maths and science, however teachers ensure that where relevant EDI themes are incorporated into lessons, without making them feel tokenistic and a range of role model examples will be used.

We have themed weeks throughout the year focusing on different areas (Cultural Diversity Week, Black History Month, LGBTQ+ History Month, Women's History Month, Diversity awareness, tying in with Autism awareness). Displays, lessons and Schemes of Work encourage the focus on each of these during Theme week. However, the College was also working on how to develop this across the whole year/curriculum, so it is not something that is just tokenistic for certain times of the year

P5 – G-scores graph. What conclusions do you draw from this information?

The College's overall average G-Score has gone up in comparison to last year, despite last academic year being the final year of CAG uplift, suggesting that more higher achieving learners have enrolled. The main takeaway though is more of the learners have a lower G-Score when compared to other sixth form colleges locally. This is due to our inclusive, comprehensive approach and that we still offer a Foundation (Level 2 retake) programme, which all other local Colleges have either stopped entirely or are phasing out.

P7 - When considering the comparability of results over time, are 22/23 and 23/24 the only years to consider when comparing to 18/19?

The College usually uses three years of data to make comparisons. Due to the inflated grades from 19/20 to 21/22, management made comparison last year to 17/18 and 19/20 and this year to 19/20 and 22/23 in terms of pass and high grade. Attendance and retention are also difficult to compare, where we had periods of lockdown these would have been enhanced. The Assistant Principal advised that next year management will once again have 3 year's worth of data, so they will need to make a decision as to whether they keep 7 year's worth or move to just the 3.

P7-8 – What does 'Achievement' relate to in the tables?

Achievement is the 'old' Success Rate – Pass / Retention x 100

P34 Observation – I could not see anything on A-level curriculum planning and review in the intent section.

The Assistant Principal advised that she had added A Level curriculum planning and review – and reassured Trustees that it definitely did occur every year.

P41 – "Excellent and sustained Level 3 Vocational value-added." Is this statement consistent with an ALPS 5 score?

ALPS unfortunately did not seem to have updated its calculations for Applied General courses since the QCF courses last ran and the introduction of RQF, despite the courses becoming 50% exam based (this varies slightly between BTEC/CTEC courses). In order for a course to achieve an ALPS 3, every single student on the course needs to achieve a D or D*. Bearing in mind on the College's biggest Applied General Qualification type, the Extended Certificate, our students had a G-Score of 4.4 (nationally for comparison this is

5.1). Students on A Level programmes with a G-Score of 4.4 would meet ALPS 3 with a C or D in most courses, equivalent to a Merit/Pass.

Sixth Sense data unfortunately breaks VA data down to qualification size and therefore is less easy to use, however it places us between 0.08 and 0.51 (a score of 0 would mean they met expectation based on prior achievement).

The Board commended management on the fact that a G-Score of 4.4 resulted in students achieving outcomes of a C for University entry, although management commented that despite this often students weren't able to get into the University of their choice.

P41 – Are the VA scores shown (e.g. 0.93) DfE provisional scores?

Yes. Except where specified that the data is from sixth sense VA.

P43 - Subjects with ALPS of 6-8 addressed in SAR effectiveness of leadership (P54) and by QIP target 9. A few courses seem difficult to shift (Philosophy, Classical Civilisation, Health and Social Care). Is anything different being done for these courses? Did actions last year have an impact on these subjects?

The Assistant Principal confirmed that management's biggest concern was Philosophy. The pass rate increased by 7%, but high grades decreased by 5% and ALPS decreased from 7 to 8. The College had employed an additional teacher in this area and they were monitoring both very closely. A number of learning walks have taken place already and before half term all folders and marked work was taken in by the Assistant Principal and Terry Wilkes (Director of Learning and Teaching Innovation) for review. On the basis of this a number of recommendations were made to the teacher and an action plan put in place. On Friday they would discuss this with the Principal in a meeting with the teacher. This level of scrutiny will be applied throughout the year.

In Classical Civilisation the pass rate was maintained at 100%, and high grades increased by 7%, ALPS maintained at 7. Only 12 students were enrolled on the course and if one or two perform below their target grade this greatly impacts the ALPS scores. Last year two students underperformed, the remaining 10 achieved A*-C. All scripts were requested back from the exam board. Unfortunately, some students had made errors in the structure of their answer that limited their marks. This is something that was a focus last year but this year the teacher is ramping up the focus on this even more.

Health and Social Care Extended Certificate – Pass rate maintained at 100% but high grades decreased by 16%, ALPS improved from 8 to 7. In the Diploma – the pass rate maintained at 100%, HG decreased by 10%, ALPS maintained at 7. Health and Social Care has suffered the last three years with staff ill health and long term absence, staff leaving mid-year and a lack of high quality leadership. There are three new members of teaching staff in this area this year and a new Head of Department. Lesson observations that have taken place so far indicate very high quality teaching from those staff with a much greater focus on exam preparation and skill.

P43 - Retention remains good but is in decline. I could not see an area in the QIP explicitly linked to this.

The Assistant Principal acknowledged that the link could be more explicit. The QIP Target is Target 7 – support for students mental health and wellbeing. Many students who left College before completing their courses do so due to poor mental health which often impacts on their attendance and can make continuing to study impossible. In order to address this two new full time Progress Mentors have been employed (this was previously part time) and the College was further developing the wellbeing offer, working with more outside providers and increasing mentoring provision both peer mentors and staff mentors, eg ILM and ELSAs.

P43 - High grades is referenced related to students with FCM. However, is there a wider issue with the decline in % of higher grades, with the exception of A-levels? VA appears strong, is this therefore down to less able cohorts? Is it possible to see overall VA over time to gauge progress judgements year on year?

The % high grades has increased across both Applied General and A Level courses has increased this year:

A Level

18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
48.6	63.1	58.4	66.3	50.6	54.0

Applied General

18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
72.3	73.8	72.3	48.8	49.2	50.2

Foundation (Level 2)

18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
68.3	79.6	73.1	38.5	51.7	53.1

Comparison cannot be made for Applied General courses up until 2021 because this was a different qualification type (QCF rather than RQF). The RQF is substantially more difficult due to changes in assessment.

P60 Observation – Target 4 (P60) has no success criteria.

The Assistant Principal confirmed that she would include something similar to the following:

High standards of behaviour exhibited by students across the College both inside and outside of lessons.

Limited increase in stage meetings, only proportional to increased number of students.

Significant increase in number of students taking up enrichments from 431 students 2019/20 to 1421 in 2023/24.

Given that was over lockdown and people having to isolate / not mix / be outside for more than an hour a day, surely that was the reason for the low numbers? Or were enrichments still offered online / via zoom during this time? What was it the year before, as a true comparison?

	<p>The Assistant Principal confirmed that this was perhaps not the best comparison. Therefore, she had removed the years in between to enhance readability and amended as follows:</p> <p>431 students 2019/20, 790 students 2020/21, 1252 students 2021/22, 1388 students 2022/23, 1421 in 2023/24.</p> <p>Effectiveness of Leadership and Management Strengths</p> <p>10.12 To review and develop mechanisms to enable staff to balance their marking workload in relation to increased student numbers. Are you considering any AI solutions to this?</p> <p>Management had briefly looked at some of them, this is potentially a next step for the College. The issue will be accuracy.</p> <p>11.2 Run a community event. I'd be interested to hear what the thoughts are on this as it is something that we (my school) have really struggled with.</p> <p>The Principal advised that he had set up a half termly meeting with residents. At the last meeting, only 3 residents attended but he was hopeful that with the support of the local councillor he would be able to make them into a more meaningful community event.</p> <p>12.1 To investigate, install and develop new MIS Which system are you currently using and which are being considered? We in the process of moving from SIMS to Bromcom.</p> <p>The College currently uses Portal but were looking to move away from this because it's outdated, difficult to use and doesn't do the things the College needed it to do. Management were looking at Tribal EBS and Unit-e/CEDAR. All of these are specific to FE, Unit-e and CEDAR are specific to Sixth Form Colleges</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal Curriculum & Quality for the presentation and both the Board and management acknowledged the immense amount of work involved in completing such a comprehensive SAR and QIP.</p> <p>The Board resolved: To approve the College Self Assessment Report 2023/24 and the Quality Improvement Plan 2024/25.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Destination Data 2023/24</p> <p>The Board received a report from Helena Clarke, Assistant Principal Support for Learning and Wellbeing on the destination data for learners from 2023/24.</p> <p>In summary, the Assistant Principal advised that fewer students had taken a gap year, down from 25% in 2023 to 19% (or 105 students) in 2024.</p> <p>Destinations that had seen increased changes were the options of University (up from</p>	

	<p>51% to 54%); or accepting an apprenticeship (up from 9% to 11%) and also those going into employment had increased from 11% to 14% in 2024.</p> <p>The most notable headline was perhaps the destination by gender which had seen 63% of female students opting to go to University, compared to only 44% for male students. Male students were opting to go into employment (19%) or apprenticeships (18%) compared to female students where the figures were 9% for employment and 5% in terms of apprenticeships.</p> <p>Whilst it was difficult to draw any definitive explanations, the gender gap was large enough to warrant careful monitoring.</p> <p>With the appointment of a new Careers Lead, the Board also discussed the new careers bulletin which was now in the form of a Padlet and this had recently been shared on GovernorHub for Trustees' information.</p> <p>The Board thanked the Assistant Principal Support for Learning and Wellbeing for the destination data report for 2023/2024.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Finance & Estates Update</p> <p>The Board received a summary on enrolments, funding and an overview of the latest Management Accounts together with an update on estates and capital projects from the Principal.</p> <p>The Board were advised that the College currently had 1,713 students on roll, which was an increase of 230 students compared to the same time in 2023 and 350 more students than in 2022.</p> <p>Retention had increased from 94.3% to 97.1% which was pleasing.</p> <p>In terms of applications, to date the College had received 1,403 applications for 2025/26 and this compared favourably to 1,214 applications at the same time last year and 906 in the year 2022.</p> <p>However, whilst pleasing to see the growth in student numbers it did have the direct knock-on effect that as a result of lagged funding, the College were currently carrying £1m worth of unfunded students. Whilst there was the possibility that the College may receive in-year growth funding there was no guarantee it would be successful.</p> <p>In terms of the recent Open Evening, the Chair commended SLT on the success of this event which had been really well received and had showcased the vibrancy of the College and all its facilities to the highest level and had resulted in a record number of attendees.</p> <p>In respect of the College financials, the Principal advised that there had been a pay rise agreed for teaching staff that was defined as fully funded but again, the College were not sure at this stage if it would be 'fully' funded and the College were also waiting on confirmation as to the impact of the NI hike for employees and whether this would have to be paid by public sector employees.</p>	

	<p>The latest Management Accounts would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee meeting. In headline terms, the College were hopeful of reducing the year end deficit to a smaller amount than originally anticipated.</p> <p>With reference to the recent fire suppression CIF bid project then the complicating issue over asbestos removal had been resolved with the asbestos, where disturbed, having been safely extracted and it now presented no hazard to members of staff or students.</p> <p>The Principal advised that in terms of other ongoing site issues, the Finance and Estates Director was currently overseeing some remedial works to the ventilation systems that had been installed in both the new block and the OWCC which had proved to be problematic.</p> <p>A further attempt to gain a CIF bid to tackle the main block roof was in hand (two previous attempts had been unsuccessful). Ideally, as the weather changed, more indoor social space became a priority but the Principal advised that in the view of management, as winter approached, the main block roof was the number one priority.</p> <p>The Principal advised the Board that he would be having a catch-up session with the Chair and Vice Chair at the start of the following week.</p>	
Policy Review		
<p>9.</p>	<p>Policy Schedule Review</p> <p>The Deputy Principal had conducted a review of the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admissions Policy 2. Complaints Procedure 3. Data Protection & GDPR & Privacy Notices 4. Freedom of Information Policy 5. Whistleblowing Policy <p>In terms of the Admissions Policy this had been updated in preparation for the intake of new students. The changes were highlighted with the notable emphasis now on students being invited to enrolment in order of acceptance and not order of application. This message was made clear from Open Evening through the entire process so that all students were fully aware that there was a risk that some courses could be full. Any appeal, under the terms of the Admissions Policy would be made to the Principal, whose decision was final.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal advised that the Data Protection Policy (which now incorporated Privacy Notices) had been completely rewritten, based on sector leading templates.</p> <p>The Freedom of Information Act had also been completely re-written and included a very clear publication scheme.</p> <p>In respect of the Whistleblowing Policy, the revised policy now incorporated the ability for an individual to raise a concern directly with a number of identified external agencies,</p>	

	<p>such as the internal and external auditors and an independent whistleblowing charity.</p> <p>In terms of the Complaints Procedure this had been updated and simplified to 3 stages. The first was Stage 1 which was an informal resolution through discussion; Stage 2 was a formal complaint to the Deputy Principal who would complete an investigation; and Stage 3 which was a referral to the Principal. If the Principal determined that there were sufficient grounds for an appeal then that would be referred to a panel of three Trustees who would be appointed to hear the complaint.</p> <p>The Board thanked the Deputy Principal for pulling together the re-writing of the various policies and welcomed their clarity. The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee had noted a few typographical errors which he would draw to the Deputy Principal’s attention outside of the meeting.</p> <p>Subject to those comments, the Board resolved to approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admissions Policy 2. Complaints Procedure 3. Data Protection & GDPR & Privacy Notices 4. Freedom of Information Policy 5. Whistleblowing Policy 	
Governance		
<p>10.</p>	<p>Governance Self-Assessment Report 2023/24</p> <p>The Clerk advised that unfortunately the combined Skills Audit and Board Evaluation which had been planned to be launched by Governor Hub and which the Board had agreed to utilise had not been finalised and no launch date had as yet been identified by Governor Hub.</p> <p>As such, in proposed discussions outside of the meeting with the Chair of the Board and the Principal, it was suggested that an alternative format would be identified and circulated to Trustees to complete outside of the meeting. The results of this Board evaluation would feed into the Trustees Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan for 2024/25 which would need to be signed off at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>In terms of governance, the Clerk advised that there had been a conscious decision to seek to recruit more skills-based Trustees as the Board and in particular the Finance and Audit Committee had been affected by retirements, resignations and members’ availability.</p> <p>Currently, the Board’s Standing Orders reflected that the constitution of the Board consisted of 8 skills-based Trustees, 2 parent trustees and the Principal (therefore 11 in total).</p> <p>Following the appointments made earlier in the meeting, the Board currently had 14 appointed Trustees, which would reduce to 13 when Alastair MacAulay’s term of office concluded at the end of the calendar year.</p>	

	<p>The Articles of Association allowed for members to appoint up to 11 Trustees but did not place a maximum on the number of co-opted Trustees that could be appointed by the Board.</p> <p>The Board currently had 6 member appointed Trustees and 5 co-opted Trustees appointed by the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Therefore, from 1st January 2025 the Board would consist of 13 Trustees, made up of 10 skills-based Trustees, 2 Parent Trustees and the Principal.</p> <p>The Board's proposed constitution of 13 Trustees with effect from January 2025 therefore fell comfortably within the parameters outlined in the Articles of Association. It was acknowledged for a brief time the constitution would be 14 until the year end.</p> <p>The Board resolved: To endorse the change to its current constitution by increasing its total membership of Trustees from 11 to 13, with effect from 1st January 2025.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Deputy Principal was pleased to announce that four Trustees had confirmed that they would be attending the Staff Quiz Night.</p> <p>The Principal reiterated that Trustees involvement in the self-assessment process was always encouraged as it was an opportunity to really see how the process worked in practice and to evidence the rigour and challenge in operation.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday 4th December 2024 at 5.15pm. The earlier start time was due to the Christmas production.</p>	