



MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on **Monday 17 October 2022 at 17.00hrs** in the Boardroom at Medway.

Present: (47% attendance - quorate)

Mrs A Woodhouse	Chair	Mr C Reynolds	
Mr S Cook	Principal CEO	Mr J Williams	
Ms A Currie		Mrs M Woolston	
Mr C Reeves			

In attendance:

Ms C Burkin	Clerk to the Governing Body
Mr C Hare	Executive Director of Employers & Corporate Services
Ms C Hart	Executive Director of Student Experience
Dr Jim Mawby	Executive Director for Curriculum & Quality
Mr M Peat	Executive Director of Finance and Estates
Observers	
Ms E Mernagh	Head of Safeguarding

1 Declaration of Interests

All members' interests are numbered and referenced on the Declaration of Interest log dated 11 October 2022. The register is kept by the Clerk.

Chair

M.P.C.

Date 15 December 2022

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr N Baveystock, Mr M Cook, Mr D Gagie, Miss B Jossi, Mrs A Orhiere, Mrs C Richardson, Mrs L Snedden and Joshua Stratford.

The Chair welcomed Ms Mernagh to the meeting as an observer. The Chair also welcome Christina Hart, Executive Director of Student Experience, to her first meeting of the Board

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 July 2022 - Paper SGB21/1686

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 July 2022 and Confidential minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising Document – Paper SGB22/1687

The outstanding matters were:

- Governor Informal Visit (GIV) – all Governors are encouraged to visit the College at least once a term – **Ongoing**.
- Risk Appetite – the Internal Auditors have sent a survey to Governors and will collate responses as part of the Risk Management Audit – **Ongoing**.
- MKC Training Services (MKCTS) & MidKent College (MKC) synergies – S Cook informed members that the College and Training Services are working together. This was highlighted at the MKCTS Away Day and further development of the relationship will be included in the Governing Body Away Day in 2023 – **Complete**.
- College Ambassadors – College to share events data with Governors – **Ongoing**.
- Ambition and Advocacy – volunteers requested for a task and finish group – **Ongoing**.
- Safeguarding End of year report – presented as item 7 – **Complete**.
- Next Generation Technical Training (NGTT) discussion – included in item 11 – **Complete**.

STRATEGY

5 Key Strategic Risks 2022/23 – Paper SGB22/1688

Simon Cook introduced the paper which reported on the current climate, and the risks that were impacting normal business. The report highlighted three new strategic risks with a focus on the impact on staffing.

The report provided members with a short background; an assessment of the key changes in Risk as a result of the multiple challenges and the subsequent impact, actual or potential on the College; suggested Pay Award proposal for 2022-23 and updates on other known policy changes.

Members debated the staff recruitment, retention and culture risk as outlined in the report. It was noted that the current vacancies were impacting staff and ways in which this can be mitigated.

M.P.C.

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Governors recognised that many organisations were experiencing similar challenges post pandemic and due to the current cost of living crisis. Members discussed the opportunities for staff to progress within the College and the proactive approach taken. They considered the ways in which the College was already supporting staff and students but recognised the need for a balance in terms of resource available and the responsibilities of other agencies. They asked the College to explore any potential external support available from partners and possible charitable organisations.

Action: S Cook

Pay Award – S Cook explained the context of the proposals and the three options outlined in the paper. Members noted that a steer had been given by the F&GP Committee and the cost of all options were manageable financially. Governors were reminded of the non-consolidated payments made earlier in the year and that the College compared favourably as an employer for pay, with other colleges. Members supported the concept of the lower paid staff benefitting most from the award.

Members agreed option 3 as the best option for short and long term but asked F&GP Committee to hold an extraordinary meeting to scrutinise the figures and agree the payments. The authority to agree the amount for payroll was delegated to F&GP Committee who will inform C Hare in time for payroll sign off.

Action: F&GP Committee

Governors thanked S Cook for the report.

SCRUTINY

6 Principal's Report – Paper SGB22/1689

Simon Cook Principal/CEO presented his report to members which included the proposed data dashboard, the Operational Plans for the six pillars of the College strategy and a summary and update for key areas.

The start of the academic year 2022/23 – Members noted a positive start and good enrolment numbers.

Student Disciplinary Annual Summary 2021/22 - Members noted the key areas of focus going forward.

College Complaints Annual Report 2021/22 - It was noted that the numbers are low and below those in 2019/20.

Ofsted Pilot Inspection follow up - the final inspection framework has been updated and reflects the College's experience of the pilot. Exec are looking at how to improve the College's evidence in meeting local need.

LSIP, SDF and IoT Update – Members noted good progress.



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University Partnerships are progressing well with three key Universities in Kent: The University of Greenwich (UoG); Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) and Kent University (UoK).

Members discussed the format and presentation of the data dashboard included in the papers. They agreed the format and noted that hyperlinks would be added.

Governors thanked the Principal and **accepted** the report.

7 **Safeguarding Update/End of Year Report – Paper SGB22/1690**

Marie Woolston, Safeguarding Governor, introduced the paper which highlighted the following:

- Key actions since the pilot inspection and further identification of improvements are in progress to ensure the data gaps are completed, as far as possible. A new system is in place for this year to capture all data where incidents can be picked up quickly and actioned.
- Summary information of safeguarding referrals, including identification of recurrent or prominent themes were noted.
- Summary information of care-experienced students (previously LAC). Governors questioned the number of meetings. They were informed that there is a significant increase in the number of care-experienced students which has led to the increase in the meetings required.
- Summary information of Prevent referrals were noted.
- Summary information of counselling activities were noted.
- Safeguarding training for Governors – members noted feeling more confident due to the training. Extra sessions will be available.

Members thanked M Woolston for the update and felt that some context around the numbers compared to other colleges, would be useful in a future report to gain assurance. They discussed the capacity of the team and recognised the significant amount of support the College offers. They encouraged the team to seek external support where possible.

Members were assured that any concerns were raised with the Safeguarding Governor and the Chair where required.

8 **Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee (QTL) Call notes 27 September 2022 - Paper SGB22/1691**

Chris Reeves introduced the minutes of the QTL Committee where Members discussed the following items:

Achievement rates in English and maths – J Mawby shared live data with members who raised concerns about the achievement rates. Members noted this was an area of focus for the Committee and Governor visits.

Enrolment Update – J Mawby shared live data and reported 16-18 numbers were over allocation with overall enrolment is 99% of target.



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Higher Education (HE) Direction of travel – J LePoidevin reported that full time provision was close to target and an improved position compared to 2021/22. It has been agreed that HE will be reviewed at alternate meetings.

Apprenticeship Update – J Burtenshaw reported a good position with no concerns raised.

Members **accepted** the minutes.

9 Minutes of the Group Risk & Audit Committee Meeting held on 20 September 2022 and confidential minutes - Paper SGB22/1692(a)

Chris Reynolds introduced the minutes and raised the following:

The Committee discussed at length risks associated with the current cost of living crisis. Three associated risks had been added to the register and the Committee requested to be updated with mitigations. It was noted that action had been taken to increase the bursary fund. They also discussed two educational risks and noted these will be monitored by the QTL Committee.

The Information security report was taken no significant concerns were raised

Members noted the completed Internal Audits Reports:

- Income & Debtors – Substantial score – no concerns raised.
- Sub-Contracting – no concerns raised.
- HR Health Check (Recruitment) – Substantial score – members challenged the number of days and Haines Watts explained their process and sampling. C Reynolds reported that he has since met with HR to review the audit findings.

Members noted the Internal Audits in progress:

- Risk Management – an agreement around the Risk Appetite questionnaire has been reached and this has been sent to Governors for completion.
- Environmental Reporting
- Stakeholder Engagement (Learner Voice)

Governors **approved** the minutes.

10 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meetings held on 29 September 2022 and confidential minutes - Paper SGB22/1693 (a-d).

Alison Currie introduced the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and highlighted the following points:

- HR Update – Governors noted sickness and turnover levels continue to rise and that actions are being taken to improve this position.



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- Gender Pay Report 2022 was reviewed, the gender pay gap had increased mainly due to the departure of a senior female member of staff. The work management was undertaking to reduce this was noted. This was presented for **approval**.
- The Annual Equal Pay Audit 2022 was presented with no major areas of concern identified. This was presented for **approval**.
- A deep dive into the employment environment was discussed and will continue at the next meeting.
- The Draft Management Accounts for July 2022 were presented. It was noted that the outturn was an improvement from budget although this was partly achieved by reducing costs alongside reduced levels of learner. MKCTS had a surplus, though it had not achieved any of its growth ambition.
- It was noted that the Financial Statements and Year End Audit was on track for timely completion.
- The CEO sought the Committee's steer on the approach to the Pay Award and proposals were presented in item 5 to the Governing Body to enable the payment to be implemented earlier this year.
- It was noted that student enrolment for 2022/23 was almost in line with expectations, though too early to confirm final figures.
- The Financial Director FD informed F&GP that all the forms, but one, had been completed to enable the new investment fund to open. Further advice will be sought from Charles Stanley on the remaining form regarding risk appetite.
- An updated ICT Policy was reviewed that reflected required changes to include Cyber Security Plus accreditation. This is presented to Governing Body for **approval** under item 12.
- Updates were provided on both Estates and Sustainability.

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

- Gender Pay report 2022 – for approval.
- Equal Pay Audit 2022 – for approval.
- ICT Policy 2022/23 – for approval.

Governors **approved** the minutes and **agreed** the recommendations of the Committee.

11 Update from Chair of MidKent College Training Services Ltd (MKCTS) - Paper SGB22/1694

In the absence of Nick Baveystock, Simon Cook introduced the update regarding the performance of MKCTS since the last meeting.

[This item was minuted as confidential due to the commercially sensitive content.](#)

Governors **accepted** the report.



Chair

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12 Policies for approval - paper SGB22/1695

ICT Policy 2022/23 (F&GP) – scrutinised and recommended by the F&GP Committee – approval. The changes from the previous policy had been identified on the document by colour coding in Yellow highlighted. No outstanding issues were raised by the Committee.

Members **approved** the policy for publication.

Action: P Hogben

GOVERNANCE**13 Search & Governance Committee**

Angela Woodhouse gave members an update regarding Governor recruitment and asked for approval to appoint five new Governors and one co-opted member to the F&GP Committee due to his investment expertise.

She explained the process of engaging with Peridot Partners for the search for Governors to fill some skills gaps on the Board and assist with succession planning. The S&G Committee had delegated authority to the Recruitment Panel to recommend new Governors to the Board. The Panel consisted of A Woodhouse, M Cook, C Reeves and C Hare, on behalf of S Cook. They interviewed 10 candidates on 6 and 7 October 2022. Members noted they have received confidentially the recommended candidates CVs prior to this meeting.

Members **approved** the appointment of the recommended candidates subject to DBS checks. All the successful candidates will be contacted by the S&G Committee Chair and invited to the December 2022 Governing Body meeting.

Action; A Woodhouse/Clerk

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

It was noted that the minutes of the S&G Committee held on 6 October 2022 will be reported to the Governing Body 15 December 2022 however, the Committee requested the following approvals:

- C Reynolds term to be extended for 2 years until May 2025 under exceptional circumstances to enable the Board to retain historical knowledge which is at the risk of being lost with the resignation of E Sallis – **approved**.
- E Sallis to be co-opted to the QTL Committee – **approved**.
- Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) requested a change of name to Finance & Resources Committee (F&R) to encompass their extended remit - **approved**.

Members **approved** the recommendations.



Chair

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14 Any Other Business

Members were requested to action emails recently sent regarding Governor training.

15 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at the College's Maidstone Campus on **Thursday 15 December 2022** at 17.00hrs (room TBC).

16 Training Session

- Data Protection 29 March 2023 - confirmed
- Finance/Funding – to be confirmed
- E&D – to be confirmed

17 Review of the meeting

Members agreed they had sufficient time available in the meeting to discuss matters and debate the items on the agenda.

Staff left the meeting

Confidential Item

18 Minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 26 September 2022 – Paper SGB22/1696

Angela Woodhouse introduced the minutes of the Remuneration Committee.

This item was minuted as confidential.

Members **accepted** the minutes.

The meeting closed at 19.45hrs.

Chair



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