



MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on Thursday 19 October 2023 at 17.00hrs in the Corporate room at the Medway Campus.

Present: (77% attendance)

Mr M Cook	Chair	Mrs J Dyakova		Mrs L Snedden	Staff Governor
Mr M Abdel-Maguid		Miss B Jossi	Staff Governor	Mr J Williams	
Mr N Baveystock	MKCTS Chair	Ms A Orhiere		Mrs A Woodhouse	
Mr A Cole		Mr C Reeves		Mrs M Woolston	
Mr S Cook	Principal CEO	Mr C Reynolds			

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
Mr L Glover	Internal Auditor for item 5 only
Dr J Mawby	Executive Director for Curriculum & Quality
Mr M Peat	Executive Director of Finance and Estates
Observers	
Mr I Beattie	Group Financial Controller
Ms E Byng	Director of ALS

1 Declaration of Interests

All members' interests are numbered and referenced on the Declaration of Interest log available from the Clerk.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms A Currie, Mr D Gagie and Mrs M Quadri

The Chair welcomed Observers to the meeting.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 July 2023 - Paper SGB23/1753

The minutes of the meeting and confidential minutes held on 13 July 2023 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising Document – Paper SGB23/1754

All the outstanding matters were either actioned, completed or on the agenda.

STRATEGY

5 Risk Appetite Statement - Paper SGB23/1755

Lee Glover from the Internal Auditors, Validera, joined the meeting remotely and presented the item with Chris Reynolds, Chair of GR&A Committee.

The paper examined and compared the results of the two risk appetite exercises conducted over the last year. It also showed the current risk appetite. Members were reminded of the process and noted the second exercise showed a suggested tightening of the Board's risk appetite.

Members noted that it is not mandatory to remain within the boundaries of a risk appetite, but identified where sufficient due diligence and risk assurances may be required. They explored the option of rerunning the exercise or providing the Board with extra training around risk. Members did not want to hinder the Exec in exploring and bringing forward ideas to the Board who could then debate and scrutinise the proposals.

Members were reminded that the Board have made several decisions over the last 18 months i.e., Medway School of Arts (MSA), and were concerned a tightened risk appetite could restrict such innovation. They held a full debate regarding the current and proposed appetite and a way forward, supported by the data analysed by the Internal Auditors.

They agreed they were comfortable with the way the Board had behaved in making recent investment decisions which were fully discussed and scrutinised and that this reflected the Board's appetite.

Members agreed the Risk Appetite based on the exercise conducted in August 2023 on the basis that this was taken to mean the balance between innovation, scrutiny and governance that had been applied by the Board over the last twelve months. Members noted that any risk appetite statement might be explicitly noted to that effect. Members agreed that the GR&A Committee would work with management to build Risk Appetite into the Risk Management Process.

Action: GR&A Committee

Members would revisit the risk appetite statement in 12 months to reflect and revise as necessary.

Action: BF GB October 2024

Members thanked C Reynolds and Validera for the paper.

SCRUTINY

6 Principal's Report – Paper SGB23/1756

Simon Cook Principal/CEO presented his report to members which primarily focused on the start of the academic year.

Members noted the Data Report and the following items from the report:

- Student Disciplinary Annual Summary for the last year 2022/23
- College Complaints and Compliments Annual Reports for 2022/23
- Policy Announcement by Prime Minister
- Update on the six strategic pillars.

The Board then discussed the following:

Pay Award proposal as recommended for approval by the Finance & Resources Committee (F&R). S Cook explained this had been discussed at F&R Committee and the context of the additional funding to the College base line and increased student numbers this year. Members discussed the proposal and **approved** the pay award of 6.5% to be backdated to 1 October 2023. S Cook informed members that the College is no longer in a trade union dispute.

S Cook updated members on the positive start to the academic year 2023/24. He reminded Governors that the Level 3 results were positive and supported the College strategy. The GCSE results were also improved on last year. Enrolment numbers had exceeded business planning and evidence from student voice informed the Board that students felt positive about the College as an inclusive environment. Several Governors had visited the College this term and endorsed this view through their conversations with students and observations of the College. Members thanked all staff for their hard work to ensure students had a positive experience and were assured to hear that resources for the increased student numbers are being managed within the current budget. Further analysis of the enrolment numbers and open events will be included in the December Principal's report.

Action: S Cook

Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) – C Hare updated members on the current position and progress with the projects and collaborations with MKCTS and the other Kent colleges. He informed members he is writing a bid for LSIF monies.

Institute of Technology (IoT) – C Hare informed members that the IOT at the Maidstone campus is near completion and will be launched with students using the facility in the new year.

Governors thanked S Cook and **accepted** the report.

7 **Safeguarding Update & End of Year Report – Paper SGB23/1757**

Marie Woolston, Safeguarding Governor, updated members on the current position and the end of year report. She informed members of additional information since the paper was written.

She reported that the safeguarding review has been completed and gave assurance of a good position that the College was effectively managing the significant rise in referrals.

Members were assured that all the required changes since the new Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) guidance have been made including the responsibility of filtering and monitoring information which is being managed by the ICT Department with the Director joining the Safeguarding Committee, although this remains the overall responsible of the Safeguarding Lead Governor.

M Woolston informed members that 100% of all staff have completed the mandatory safeguarding training and gave assurance that the single central record is up to date and being monitored regularly.

Members discussed the work of the welfare team in managing the increase in suicide ideation amongst students and how they are working in partnership with local external agencies. They were informed the Mental Health First Aiders were receiving suicide awareness training.

It was agreed the Board would benefit from a detailed report regarding the significant increase in welfare need in the College and this could be reported to the QTL in the first instance.

Action: C Hart

Members thanked M Woolston and the College for the assurance gained from the report.

8 Update from Chair of MidKent College Training Services Ltd (MKCTS) - Paper SGB23/1758

Nick Baveystock introduced the update from the Chair of MKCTS Ltd. regarding the performance of MKCTS since the last meeting.

This item was minuted as confidential due to the commercially sensitive content.

Members thanked N Baveystock and accepted the report.

9 Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee (QTL) inter-meeting notes - Paper SGB23/1759

Chris Reeves introduced the notes from the meeting during which Jim Mawby provided the Committee with an update on enrolment.

The focus of the meeting was on Apprenticeships highlighting the challenges with the End Point Assessments (EPAs) last year which had a big impact on achievement rates and employer satisfaction. Staff recruitment, retention and morale are also areas that require improvement although members noted that providers across the country have experienced similar and significant problems.

Members were also informed that many Governors has attended the Self-assessment and improvement plan (SAR/QIP) meetings held internally which had been useful in gaining knowledge of the curriculum but also supportive to the College staff. The College SAR validation will take place on 6 November 2023 with three Governors on the panel along with external scrutiny and College staff.

Members **accepted** the minutes.

10 Minutes of the Group Risk & Audit Committee Meeting held on 19 September 2023 and confidential minutes - Paper SGB23/1760

Chris Reynolds introduced the minutes and highlighted the following:

The Committee were briefed on the current strategic risks. They noted the Trade Union situation was reflected within the risk regarding staffing.

It was suggested that an exercise be run to identify a bespoke risk package that can be used to record the Strategic, Operational & MKCTS risks in a single product.

The deep dive covered Government Key policy changes.

Internal audit reports were reported with no key issues found.

Governors **accepted** the minutes.

11 Minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee Meetings held on 27 September 2023 and confidential minutes - Paper SGB23/1761.

In the absence of the F&R Chair Alison Currie, Martin Cook introduced the minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee.

The item was minuted as confidential due to the content.

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

- **Accept** the Equal Pay Audit and Gender Pay Report
- **Approve** the proposed Pay Award (item 6)
- **Approve** additional expenditure of £1.4m for the sustainability project following cost increases, bringing the total costs to £11.6m.

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

GOVERNANCE

12 Minutes of the Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 4 October 2023 - Paper SGB23/1762.

Angela Woodhouse introduced the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee. The Committee considered the following matters:

Search

- Attendance for Governing Body/Committees in 2022/23 was above the sector average however it will continue to be monitored throughout the year.
- Board had a full membership at the time of the Committee meeting; however, M Prentis as co-opted member had shown enthusiasm and constructive challenge and was considered to be a suitable Governor and his membership of Committees should continue.
- Vacancies on Committees were considered, and it was agreed that Governors should be approached following a review of completed skills forms.
- M Woolston's contribution to the Governing Body was noted and it was agreed that she should be recommended for a second term.
- Link Governors – the Committee noted that meetings were scheduled or had happened across most areas.
- The need for a designated KCSiE Link Governor was discussed and identified to form part of the role of the Safeguarding Governor role.
- Senior Independent Governor (SIG) - The Committee further discussed and agreed to recommend to the Board that the specific role of SIG was not required as the Vice Chair was available for Governors to speak to and alongside Committee Chairs can act as a sounding board for the Governing Body Chair. The S&G Committee will consider options re the Chair's Evaluation at their next meeting.
- Student Governors on the Board would be fulfilled by the newly appointed President and Vice President of the Student Union who would join the Board in December 2023

Governance

- The new AoC code was published in September 2023 with no significant changes to the draft already adopted by the Board.

- All Governors had been asked to sign up for the online training as they had changed to a new platform.
- The Governor Job Description undertook its scheduled review with minor amends which do not need Board approval.
- The Skills Audit had proved useful for identifying individuals with appropriate skills/experience for Committee roles. This would now be shared with the Executive.
- The External Review action plan was monitored and continues to progress with work on papers, additional training on behaviours and a planned review of risk appetite.

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

- **Approve** Marie Woolston for a second term of office until 2028.
- **Approve** that Mike Prentis to continue on both GR&A and F&R Committees and be appointed a full member of the Board since a vacancy has become available.
- **Approve** the deletion of the Senior Independent Governor Role

Members **accepted** the minutes and **approved** the recommendations of the Committee.

13 Any Other Business

There were no AOB items.

14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at the College's Medway Campus on Thursday 14 December 2023 at 17.00hrs.

15 Next Governor training session

Members noted the following training sessions:

16 November 2023 – SEND
11 January 2024 - Challenging Questions
16 May 2024 - EDI

16 Review of the meeting

Members felt that the correct time had been allocated to items which allowed good debate and scrutiny. They appreciated the input from Exec members to give context to some items and help Governors further understand the breadth of College involvement in local and College projects.

The Observers thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend and felt it gave them a different perspective.

Confidential Item

17 Minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 21 September 2023 – Paper

Approved by the Governing Body as a true record. Date 14 December 2023

SGB23/1763

Angela Woodhouse introduced the minutes of the Remuneration Committee.

[This item was minuted as confidential.](#)

Members noted the minutes.

The meeting closed at 19.45.