



**DN COLLEGES GROUP  
CORPORATION BOARD**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 19 March 2018

Members were informed of the sudden death of a member of staff, Steve Jackson. Members expressed their condolences.

Prior to the meeting, the Chair informed members of the resignation of the following members: S. Lloyd, M. O'Reilly, M. White and R. Hewson. Letters of acknowledgement and thanks had been sent.

P. Grinell had been appointed as a Director on the Board of DC Teach Ltd.

1 **Present**

A. Tüscher (Chair), P Adams, A. Briggs, G. Clarke, I. Falconer, P. Grinell, N. Jackson, M. Keyworth, M. Lynds, H. Osborne, P. Pascoe, P. Senior, R. Stubbs, M. Swales, A. Tyrrell

**In Attendance**

K. Brentnall, J. Charles, L. Clark, P. Doherty, R. Reeve

2 **Apologies**

J. Doherty, D. Hilditch, N. Hinchliffe, A. Khan, K. Walker

3. **Declaration of Interests**

Members were reminded that they should declare any personal or financial obligation allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.

4 **Minutes**

The minutes from the meetings held on 6 December 2017 and 5 February 2018 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair with the following amendment:

6 December 2017 Item 6 Performance Monitoring, North Lindsey. Reference in the third bullet point to 'North Lindsey Council' to be amended to 'North Lincolnshire Council.'

## 5 Matters Arising from Minutes / Action Points

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Action</u>
6.12.17	6	<p>Provision through 'Vision to Learn' had been approved by Chair's Action in February 2018, and reported to the Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p>A. Tyrrell confirmed that meetings with North Lincolnshire Council regarding the High Needs budget had taken place although the final budget had not yet been confirmed. Support is being made available to the students. A request was in place for future applications for High Needs support will be made through Doncaster Council.</p> <p>KB confirmed that discussions are ongoing regarding the business planning process to establish good timetable and appropriate utilisation of space.</p>	
	7	The final Doncaster College SAR 2016/17 had been approved by the Curriculum Quality and Performance Committee.	
	9	Notification of graduation ceremonies will be forwarded to Governors when they are known.	
	10	The Financial Statements for July 2017 had been signed off in December 2017.	
	16	The process for Committee feedback will be considered later in the meeting during the item to discuss Governance Arrangements.	

## 6 Further Education Performance

Members received an update on FE in year performance. It was noted that

- Predicted achievement rates for 16-18 at North Lindsey are currently in line with target and should maintain the 2016-17 results (86%+) Doncaster College performance reviews are planned for March; it was anticipated that the improvement target (80%) will be met
- Attendance is currently below target at NLC although above the same point last year. At DC the picture is similar with attendance lower by 1% overall.
- Retention is currently high across the group (96.97%)
- Work is ongoing to improve students' exam technique, mental toughness and resilience. It is still anticipated that a group 16-18 achievement rate of 82-84% can be achieved
- Predicted achievement rates for 19+ at NLC are lower than 2016/17 mainly due to the reduction in short courses delivered through the

Steel Industry Redundancy Training programme. It is anticipated that DC will meet its target of 88%.

- English and maths grade 4 and above are predicted to be 25% and 22% respectively. This is below target but an improvement on 2016/17.
- Functional Skills achievement continues to be an area for improvement t DC; NLC is on track to maintain the improvements from 2016/17
- At NLC 96% of students have work experience planned. 70% have had employer engagement so far this year and 36% have completed purposeful work experience relating to their programme of study and career plans. At DC there is still work to-do to establish a methodology to accurately track work experience
- A new College Information System is in the first phase of implementation and will provide more consistent reporting across the group. This in turn will be a catalyst for further improvements in performance

AVT/KB  
/ML/PD

It was suggested that the executive summary of future reports include columns for each of the Colleges and that the targets be stated as a global target and separate college targets.

It was noted that managers across the Group are meeting to share good practice, considering targets and areas of co-working to share resources.

With reference to English and maths, it was noted through questioning, that students are being supported in their understanding of the questions being asked. It was suggested that work across department, i.e. engineers working alongside the maths teachers, might work well.

It was established that work is ongoing to record destination data more accurately.

7

### **Employer Based Provision Performance**

It was noted that:

- The NLC Apprenticeship target would be achieved. DC had estimated a shortfall of £200,000 on its £2.6m target. Work is ongoing jointly to ensure the overall target is reached
- Both business development teams are working to secure new apprenticeships from large organisations such as the Health Authorities and Local Authorities
- The group has 137 High Apprenticeship starts which is a new market and subject to competition from universities. A number of new standards are being delivered in response to employer demand
- There is an increased focus on achieving the Group's non-levy contracts against a 41% fall in starts nationally

- A number of sub-contracts are in place with DC, with a value of £460k, which are being closely monitored
- Functional skills continued to be a reason for non-achievement and both sites are allocating additional resources to ensure that these can be delivered more flexibly
- Overall achievement rates at Doncaster are predicted to be in line with 2016/17, at 74% although 79% could be achieved. Achievement rates at NCL will be around 78-80%
- Timely achievement rates improved last year and it is anticipated that this will continue with NLC predicting 70% and Dc 67%, both above national average.
- The Skills for the Workforce project at NLC is on target to achieve its budget with around 200 manufacturing and business improvement qualifications delivered in the workplace
- Commercial delivery at NLC is more challenging with a current shortfall of around £50k, although additional programmes are being offered to close the gap
- International programmes (Erasmus) at DC have exceeded budget and have attracted £385k, allowing 120 students to participate in work placements overseas.

It was acknowledged that the Apprenticeship provision was growing and was an area to be proud of.

The timely completions were improving; it was noted that there was a cost to monitoring apprentices who completed after the funding date had passed; additional work to ensure accurate end dates would assist in ensure more timely completions.

## 8 **Higher Education Performance**

Members received an update on performance indicators in relation to higher education at the two University Centres. This report had been discussed in detail at the Higher Education Performance and Quality Committee meeting.

### University Centre North Lindsey

- Each Cognate Area Leader has agreed key result indicators for their area for recruitment, attendance, retention, achievement/success, progress/attainment and student satisfaction
- Cognate area performance will be formally reviewed each month
- Programme level performance will be monitored through cognate and programme operations meetings as well as reporting to the HE quality, standards and performance group
- Key result and performance indicators for student feedback mechanisms commenced in February with regular updates in relation

to response rates. The HE Survey will take place towards the end of the spring term with results published in the summer term

#### University Centre Doncaster

- Indications were that targets for attendance and retention are likely to be met. This provided reassurance in light of the physical relocation of some of the HE programmes
- Sports Science is an area of close scrutiny. Many of these students are enrolled on the distance learning programme based in London
- The new dashboard recording against targets was not used in the same way as at NLC. This impacted on the completion/achievement recording. It will be aligned gradually and be fully in place for 2018/19
- The formal mid-year progress boards at both University Centres are scheduled for the same time as the HE Performance and Quality Committee. Timing of meetings will be considered going forward to ensure the most effective reporting
- A summary was provided of the joint approach being taken towards the National Student Survey and other survey data.

A joint development event had been held to share good practice amongst the HE staff.

9

#### **CEO'S Update and Strategic Plan**

*A. Tüscher declared an interest in item 4 of the CEO's report, as he is a member of the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme.*

A. Tyrrell presented an update on current developments particularly in relation to progress on strategic planning and significant events and partnerships

#### Post Merger Update

The Governors' Development Day in November provided a launch event for setting the future direction of the DN Colleges Group. The outputs from the day were shared and developed as part of the first Joint Management Day in February 2018 which involved nearly 100 managers from across both Colleges. The draft Core Values, Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives for further discussion and input from students are being prepared. Working drafts are being brought to Governors for further involvement as setting the strategic vision, mission and educational character is a key role for Governors. The best practice in both colleges will be built upon to enable a fresh start and new ideas to shape the future.

The discussions centred around the Driving Principles, the Vision, Mission and Values, and Strategic Objectives. These areas of consideration will form the basis of ongoing work for the Corporation Board meetings in 2018.

It was agreed that the word cloud could be developed on the College website as an interactive tool alongside students talking about the values. This would be taken forward for further discussion by the website development team and consideration given to using a survey to decide upon the Vision and Mission statements. Members were asked to forward comments to A. Tyrrell via the Clerks.

#### DN Colleges Group Proposed Targets 2017/18

The previously agreed Group level targets for 2017/18 which included both improvement and stretch targets are currently being revised due to more detailed analysis of current and previous years' data and recognition of the in-year impact of some legacy issues, particularly in Apprenticeships.

The targets will be sent out as soon as they are available and will be considered for approval at the next meeting and will form the basis of the performance monitoring reports. It was acknowledged that it is important to align reports for governors with those used internally so that governors have a comprehensive and consistent overview of performance and quality and progress towards targets.

The financial targets had already been agreed as part of the approved financial plan.

#### Proposed New Group Level Appointments

A. Tyrrell explained that consideration was being given to lead responsibilities at Group level. Currently a transitional Senior Leadership Team structure is in place at both Colleges, led by M. Lochran at North Lindsey and by K. Brentnall at Doncaster. Key individuals have been identified to lead curriculum development across the Group, not as a line management structure but to provide a means by which to encourage the sharing of good practice and joined up strategy for core priorities. A process has begun to recruit additional posts at Group level in areas where there are currently interim arrangements or vacancies. These are new posts which do not impact on current structures and were included in the budgets for 2017/18. Further details will follow at future meetings.

#### DN Colleges Group HE Institutional Transitional Planning

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) required the two university centres to become a single entity from the date of the legal merger on 1 November. The Higher Education Higher Education Institutional Transitional Plan 2017/18, created in advance of the merger, identified key areas of activity to be addressed. This plan has been progressively updated and reported through SLT and governor meetings and continues to evolve. Governors received the latest version of the plan which summarised the progress on original actions and emerging aspects.

### DN Colleges Group Newsletter

The first Newsletter was published on 8 March 2018. The next edition will focus on Values, Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives. In response to questions it was noted that the newsletter is distributed to all staff and governors and consideration will be given to wider distribution as a marketing tool.

### Local Developments – Doncaster

As part of the 'One Doncaster' Report, a post-16 Review has been initiated, supported by the College and working with the lead consultant to ensure that Doncaster College, as the major post-16 provider, is contributing and recognised. The Interim Report was available for Members' information

Doncaster College is engaged as a partner in the Sheffield City Region bid for an Institute of Technology together with all the FE Colleges in the region and National College for High Speed Rail.

The College is actively involved in proposals for 'University City Doncaster'. This provides an opportunity to promote the strengths of both the University Centres and build upon existing provision at Doncaster College, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital and the National College for High Speed Rail.

### Local Developments - North Lindsey College

The College is involved in two bids for an Institute of Technology, i .e. Yorkshire and the Humber and Lincolnshire and is an Anchor FE Institution for the Lincolnshire bid. IoTs are designed to deliver higher level specialist skills.

North Lindsey continues to be actively involved in North Lincolnshire Council's project to develop a University Presence in the town centre. A steering group including the College, North Lincolnshire Council and the University of Lincoln has been formed.

### Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme

The Corporation Board had agreed to support the proposal to sign the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme. This is currently being progressed Key events, when organised, will be communicated to Members. An event to celebrate 100 years of the RAF is being held in Doncaster in April; invitations to attend will be sent out to Members.

10

### **Doncaster College Financial Statements and Regularity Questionnaire 31 October 2017**

P. Doherty presented the Doncaster College accounts for the period to 31 October 2017 and the regularity questionnaire for the period. The accounts covered the period from 1 August to 31 October 2017; the date

of the cessation of the college as a legal entity. The consolidated results of DN Colleges Group will incorporate the full 12 months results of Doncaster under merger accounting principles and not just the 9 months post transfer. The accounts to 31 October 2017 are a memorandum to satisfy funding body requirements.

Following approval, the accounts will be signed and submitted to the ESFA. They have no impact on covenants, banking arrangements or tax implications.

D. Reeve explained that the accounts had been considered by the Audit and Risk Committee immediately prior to this meeting and had been explained by R. Lewis (RSM). The opinion of the independent auditor was that the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and the College's affairs as at 31 October 2017 and of the Group's and the Colleges deficit of income over expenditure for the period then ended, and they have been properly prepared in accordance with UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. There was nothing to report by exception. With reference to the regularity questionnaire, it was noted that nothing had come to the auditor's attention which suggested that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the relevant period has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

The Audit and Risk Committee had concluded that the financial statements and regularity audit report should be recommended for approval. It was agreed that a note should be included in the report that the statements referred solely to Doncaster College and not DN Colleges Group, which did not exist before 1 November 2017.

The work of the Doncaster College Finance team in taking on the additional work to prepare the financial statements and begin implementation of the new finance system was acknowledged.

RESOLUTION: THAT THE Doncaster College Financial Statements and Regularity Questionnaire 31 October 2017 be approved.

11

### **Sale of High Melton – Progress Report**

Members were reminded of the confidential nature of the discussions.

A. Tyrrell explained that the bids had been received for the High Melton site. A small subgroup comprising the Chair, two Vice Chairs and the CEO and David Reeve had been set up to consider the offers and recommend a preferred bidder. The group was not currently in a position to recommend a preferred bidder at this time although information on the two main contenders were available. More detailed consideration is required before any decision is made.

After full discussion, it was agreed that the subgroup should meet again to discuss the two bids in greater detail and bring a recommendation back to the Corporation Board for approval. It was further agreed that P. Doherty be co-opted onto the subgroup.

*D. Reeve left the meeting at this point*

## 12 **Staff Pay Award**

A recommendation had been made by the Finance and Resources Committee that all Group employees, including Optime Support Limited staff, be awarded a consolidated increase of 1.0% (or £250 where this is more beneficial). This is as per the AoC recommendation and it is further recommended that the award is backdated to take effect from North Lindsey's normal award date of 1 February 2018.

This recommendation was approved

RESOLUTION: that all employees, including Optime Support Limited staff, be awarded a consolidated increase of 1.0% (or £250 where this is more beneficial) backdated to 1 February 2018.

## 13 **Tuition and Exam Fees Policy**

Members gave consideration to the tuition and Examination Fees Policy which had been reviewed and recommended by the Finance and Resources Committee.

The tuition fees policies of both colleges had been jointly reviewed in order to establish a policy for the DN Colleges Group to apply for the 2018/19 academic year. Key elements included:

- Tuition fee rate when co-funded to be set at 50% of LARS (Learning Aim Reference Service) published rate, subject to conditional adjustment. This aligns with Doncaster position but is an increase for North Lindsey
- Fee remission, to allow more benefits to be eligible for fee waiver in line with Doncaster policy
- Authority for discretionary aspects to reside with the Principal or Director of Finance
- Payment terms reviewed
- Withdrawal terms reviewed
- Exam fees – free first re-sit established

The Policy, as presented was approved.

RESOLUTION: that the Tuition and Examination Fees Policy for the DN Colleges Group, as presented, be approved.

## 14 **Financial Report January 2018**

Members received the consolidated Management Accounts for the half year ended 31 January 2018. A deficit of £110k has been reported for the year to date, which is an improvement of £44k upon the budgeted position. However the forecast surplus for the year of £232k is £291k below the budget for the year, including an estimated income shortfall of £198k.

Financial health is rated as Good at January 2018 and in line with the Financial Plan, is forecast to be Good at July 2018. The College is fully compliant with its bank loan covenants and expects to remain compliant for the remainder of 2017/18.

P. Doherty reported that he had met with representatives from Lloyds Bank recently; they had professed themselves very satisfied with the initial performance of the Group.

I. Falconer requested further information about the reporting of severance costs if and when they occurred. The Clerks agreed to follow this up and ascertain guidance from the Auditors regarding the declaration of any payments.

Clerks

#### 15 **Gender Pay Report**

Members were informed of the requirement to publish gender pay gap information for 2017 and the two colleges' positions. Information must be published on the two websites and on a designated government website by 30 March 2018. This information will help inform the equality and diversity strategy report for the DN Colleges Group.

The snap shot data on 31 March 2017 was as follows:

Doncaster College	Mean 7.5%	Median 18.29%
North Lindsey College	Mean 16.2%	Median 23.31%

The other information included in the publication will include the Bonus Gap, where the colleges sit in the quartile analysis, and the proportion of male to female staff.

*At this point in the meeting, the Chair acknowledged that it was almost 8.00 pm. Members agreed to continue the meeting and complete the agenda.*

#### 16 **Implementation of New Software Systems**

Members were updated on the implementation of the new College Information system (ProSolution) and a new finance system (Open Accounts) for the DN Colleges Group. The implementation is in progress and is planned to result in the core systems going live in May/June 2018 in time for the start of the new academic/financial year 2018/19. The implementation of each system has a designated project manager, a project sponsor and project boards that meet regularly with agreed terms

of reference to review both project plans and risks, to ensure successful implementation.

17 **Equality and Diversity**

Members received the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2016/17 for Doncaster College and the summary overview of Equality and Diversity for the period September 2017 – February 2018 for North Lindsey College. It was noted that the annual report for North Lindsey College had been previously presented; both reports had been received by the Curriculum Quality and Performance Committee.

18 **Safeguarding**

Members received the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Annual Report 2016/17 for Doncaster College. It was noted that the Designated Governor for Safeguarding had had meetings with the Head of Welfare, Tutorial and Professional Development and the Head of HR to ensure compliance and monitor standards.

Members also received an update on safeguarding activity at North Lindsey College. The Safeguarding Group, which includes the Designated Governor for Safeguarding have met on a regular basis with excellent representation from staff and functional areas of the College. The Group maintains oversight and progress made towards the actions identified in the Quality Improvement Plan for Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty.

The sharing of good practice is ongoing although it was recognised that separate reports will be required for the different Local Safeguarding Boards.

Members were informed that there had been a death of a student at High Melton campus in the previous year. A. Tyrrell and K Brentnall confirmed that the recommendations from the report had been implemented.

With reference to Safeguarding training for Governors, it was noted that Doncaster College had invited Governors to attend staff training which had been a half day session; North Lindsey College had used an online training package. The training strategy for next year will be agreed put in place.

Clerks

19 **Minutes of Meetings**

The minutes of the following Committees were received and noted:

- Audit and Risk Committee 4.12.17
- Curriculum Quality and Performance Committee 8.11.17
- Finance and Resources Committee 5.2.18
- Higher Education Performance and Quality Committee 29.11.17

Members discussed how best to report action from the Committees at the earliest available Corporation Board meeting after the Committee had met. The methods used at the previous Boards, prior to the merger, were discussed, i.e. Doncaster College were used to receiving a bullet point report from the Chair of each committee; North Lindsey received the minutes from the previous meeting when available and included any items for approval or discussion on the agenda. Members discussed methods of discussing the most recent meetings if the minutes from those meetings were not yet available.

Future meetings could combine both methods, i.e. the minutes of meetings be presented when available and important items for discussion and approval included on the first available Corporation Board agenda, and short bullet point reports from the Chair of each Committee to highlight key issues which have not been included on the agenda. This would be further discussed by the Search and Governance Committee.

Clerks

20

### **Governance**

Members received a report detailing the Governance arrangements which have been discussed by the Task and Finish Group, referred to the Search and Governance Committee or presented for approval to the Corporation Board. The Determination of Membership of the DN Colleges Group going forward, i.e. post July 2018 was recommended as 18 Governors, to include 13 External, 2 Students, 2 Staff and the CEO. The Task and Finish Group had considered the time commitment on individuals based on this number i.e. resulting in an average of around 80 hours a year which was consistent with current expectations on Governors.

A scheme of delegation had been prepared; reviewed by the Task and Finish Group in principle. If agreed, the terms of reference for each Committee will be aligned with the authorised delegations. The Scheme of Delegation, as presented, was approved.

The report also detailed role descriptions for Governors and for the nominated Safeguarding Governor(s) and a timeframe to give assurance that the required actions can be completed in a timely manner. Many of the actions will be taken up by the Search and Governance Committee and approval sought by the Corporation Board where required. It was acknowledged that the membership of the Local Stakeholder Boards still had to be determined.

Members discussed the determination of membership. It was proposed that the upper limit of the determination should not be capped at 18, but rather that a guiding number of between 18 and 20 be agreed to allow flexibility to appoint additional members.

NB Following the meeting it was confirmed that quoracy was calculated on the total number of members appointed plus vacancies.

RESOLUTION (a) that the Determination of Membership to be within a range of 18-20, comprising up to 15 External, 2 staff, 2 students and the CEO.

RESOLUTION (b) that the Scheme of Delegation be approved.

21 **Governors Involvement in College Business**

The Chair reminded all members to regularly update their registers of interest. Members were encouraged to utilise their expertise for the benefit of the College, but reminded that all contact with staff members or partners should first be checked with the Clerks.

22 **Reserved Item**

**Clerking Arrangements**

*L. Clark left the meeting for this item*

Reserved Item – Debate minuted separately.

23 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 23 May 2018, 5.30 pm at The Hub, Chappel Drive,  
Doncaster

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action Point</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
19.3.18	6	The executive summary of future reports to include columns for each of the Colleges and that the targets be stated as a global target and separate college targets.	<b>AVT/M L/ KB/ PD</b>	May 18
	14	The Clerks to ascertain the requirements regarding reporting of severance costs if and when they occurred.	<b>Clerks</b>	May 18
	18	With reference to Safeguarding training for Governors, it was noted that Doncaster College had invited Governors to attend staff training which had been a half day session; North Lindsey College had used an online training package. The training strategy for next year will be agreed put in place.	<b>Clerks</b>	Sept 18