

**DN COLLEGES GROUP
CORPORATION BOARD**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 23 May 2018

1 Present

P. Pascoe (Chair), P Adams, A. Briggs, R. Brook, G. Clarke, P. Grinell, D. Hilditch, G. Hinchliffe, N. Jackson, M. Keyworth, M. Lynds, H. Osborne, P. Senior, R. Stubbs, M. Swales, A. Tyrrell, K. Walker

In Attendance

K. Brentnall, J. Charles, P. Doherty, M. Lochran

2 Apologies

I. Falconer, A. Khan, L. Sharp, A. Tüscher

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 19 March 2018, including the Reserved Item, and 30 April 2018 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair with the following amendment:

19 March 2018 Item 19 final paragraph to read "There was a robust debate regarding methods of reporting action and discussions from the Committees at the earliest available Corporation Board after the Committee had met. Following discussion it was proposed that agreed minutes from all committees should be available at the Corporation Board immediately following the Committee and that the Committee Chair would present a bullet point report on issues of importance. Items of approval referred from Committees to be included as agenda items. This to be discussed further by the Search and Governance Committee as a matter of urgency and a clear process agreed".

5 Matters Arising from Minutes / Action Points

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Action</u>
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19.3.18 6 It had been agreed that executive summary of reports will include columns for each College and targets stated as a global target and separate college targets.

14 The Clerk informed Members that with reference to the reporting of severance costs, advice had been sought from R. Lewis (RSM). According to the financial memorandum, the College must demonstrate that any payments made in respect of the termination of employment are regular, secure value for money and would not have been made where disciplinary actions would have been justified. All such payments are brought to the attention of the financial statements auditors via the regularity audit Self Assessment Questionnaire which is reported to Governors, i.e. all Finance and Resource Committee and Audit and Risk Committee members received a copy of the Self Assessment Questionnaire

The regularity SAQ requires declaration of 'approved terms of final agreement' referring to employment claims (i.e. this suggests after termination and therefore claiming unfair dismissal). It is not clear from the advice whether this includes severance payments, that the College might pay to an employee so that there is a contractual agreement not to sue the College for any claim against the employer.

It was requested that all such payments are reported to the Board for information.

Auditor advice was that there should be a clear policy on employment payments that are not contractual and that includes designated authority to a certain limit. Any settlement claim would thereby be dealt with by management in accordance with an approved policy and within delegated authority. Members agreed that this should be implemented

Following discussion, it was ascertained that any significant payment or one made to a senior post holder would be discussed by the Corporation Board, and that other payments made after management consideration would be included in the regularity audit report SAQ. It was agreed that it would not be practical for the detail of all payments to be discussed at Board level, because although they were not made regularly or routinely, they could be numerous. Members agreed that the proposed policy setting a threshold figure and process would address any concerns. A policy will be prepared and a limit agreed.

18 All governors had been invited to complete online Safeguarding and Prevent training. A training strategy for 2018/19 will be agreed and put in place

6 **Presentation – Financial Benchmarking 2016/17**

P. Doherty presented detailed Financial Benchmarking information for 2016/17 showing financial trends for GFE Colleges; Financial Benchmarking for 2016/17 for GFE Colleges and Financial Benchmarking 2016/17 for Regional College.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that the Group had a very strong relationship with Santander and Lloyds Bank; both being very supportive in a wider context of colleges nationally which are not doing as well financially. Similarly, with pension schemes – some colleges were being asked to provide security against assets because of pension liabilities which is indicative of how the sector is presented. Some colleges are giving consideration to pension schemes other than local authority; the DN Colleges Group subsidiary company Optime Support Limited, for example, uses the NEST pension scheme for employees.

The presentation slides are available for Members on the Governors' Sharefile.

6 **CEO's Update and Strategic Plan**

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

Post Merger Update

Significant progress has been made on the development of the Strategic Plan 2018 to 2021. Students, staff and external stakeholders across both Colleges and localities have been involved in shaping the Core Values, Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives. Working drafts are being discussed with Governors for further involvement in setting the strategic vision, mission and educational character of the DN Colleges Group which is a key role for the Governing Body; building on best practice in both colleges and enabling a fresh start and new ideas to shape the future. Subject to further planned workshops with staff and students, work is on track to enable a full Strategic Plan to be presented for approval to the Corporation Board meeting in July 2018.

The draft Core Values, linked to ASPIRE, are:

Ambition – to achieve the highest standards

Support – a caring, safe and inclusive environment

Partnership – collaborative working to achieve shared goals

Innovation – We use our initiative and are agile in finding creative solutions

Responsibility – we take individual and collective responsibility

Equality – we work with integrity and are open, honest and respectful of each other

The Draft Vision: Transforming our communities through learning

Driving Principles:

- Outstanding and inspirational teaching and learning
- Local and regional growth through partnership and collaboration
- A high performing culture that realizes potential
- Financially sustainable, investing in growth
- Responsive and adaptive to change

- Innovative and maximizing the benefits of technology

The Draft Mission: outstanding education and training that enables students to achieve their full potential; meeting social, economic and community needs.

Members discussed the Group's unique properties and suggested means by which the individuality of the provision can be best presented to appeal to prospective students. It was acknowledged that the students were also being prepared for the values of the organisations they will enter as employees, i.e. being prepared for the workplace.

Headline Stretch Targets 2021

The Stretch Targets as follows will be included in the strategic objectives and key performance indicators and targets, which will form the basis of the ongoing work.

The final version will be presented to the Board in July for approval.

New Group Level Appointments

As previously reported, the process of recruitment for additional posts at group level has begun. These are all new posts in areas where there has previously been interim arrangements or vacancies and are included in the 2017/18 budgets and beyond.

Current Group posts advertised include Group Director of Finance and Funding, Clerk to the Corporation, Group Director of Teaching and Learning and Senior Practitioners for English and Maths. AoC Create are supporting the appointment process and further details will follow the governors involved.

DNCG HE Institutional Transitional Planning (Office for Students Registration)

The Office for Students Registration document has been completed and submitted by the deadline of 23.5.18. A considerable amount of detailed work has been undertaken to complete the registration which has been approved by the Senior Leadership Teams and the Group Executive Team. The full documentation will be presented to the HE Performance and Quality Committee for information.

DN Colleges Newsletter

The second edition of the DN Colleges Newsletter was published on 23 April 2018. The next edition will focus on the Strategic Plan.

Local Developments Doncaster College

Following the 'One Doncaster' Report and resulting recommendations, a post-16 Review had been undertaken in Doncaster. The College supported the initiative and worked with the lead consultant to ensure that Doncaster College as the major post-16 provider is recognised. The outline report and recommendations will be launched at an event on 24 May 2018; the College has been asked to present a response to initial findings. Work is ongoing with head teachers (who are sponsoring the forthcoming UTC) to set out the strategic intent to collaborate on a comprehensive post-16 offer at the centre and Doncaster and to confirm a commitment to wider collaboration with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and schools across the Borough. The initial recommendations were under the following headings:

- Consolidation of 6th forms
- Extending CIAG (Careers Information and Guidance)
- Strengthening vocational routes into employment and higher education.

Institute of Technology

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 the National College for High Speed Rail. The bid, led by Sheffield Hallam University, focuses on digital technology growth in a number of sectors including construction, engineering, logistics and digital technologies (artificial intelligence)

University City Project

The College is actively involved in proposals for 'University City Doncaster', currently in an embryonic state and which were also within a recommendations from the 'One Doncaster' Report. There have been no significant developments other than the Borough-wide HE Prospectus, to launch in June/July 2018

High Melton Site and Academy

Both the IoT and the University City Project are potentially connected to the recent decision to approve the sale of the High Melton Site to the preferred bidder, i.e. 360 Degrees Media. Heads of Terms for the sale and for the delivery of educational training and work experience are being drawn up.

Local Developments North Lindsey

Institutes of Technology

As previously reported, North Lindsey College is involved in two bids for an Institute of Technology; submitted separately for Yorkshire and the Humber (excluding South Yorkshire) and Lincolnshire. The College is an Anchor FE Institution for Lincolnshire and a partner in Yorkshire and the Humber.

At stage 2 of the process there may be opportunities for regions to come together, which would enable us to consider our position working across Lincolnshire, the Humber and South Yorkshire.

University Presence Project

North Lindsey continues to be actively involved in North Lincolnshire Council's project to develop a University Presence in the town centre in Scunthorpe. Funding has been previously secured from the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and this is being held while various options are pursued. No commitment has been made by the college on any capital expenditure at this stage. Priorities across the Group as part of the current budget preparation and Property Strategy will be established during the process.

Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme

Governors had previously agreed to support the proposal to sign the Armed Forces

Employer Recognition Scheme. This is currently being progressed and governors will be notified of key events once these are organized.

M. Lochran informed Members that enquiries had been made by Lincolnshire LEP regarding a group of engineering companies in Gainsborough intending to set up an apprenticeship partnership in the town. It would be necessary to secure premises in Gainsborough for around 20 apprentices; funding could be available from the LEP and from North Lincolnshire Council. This is being further investigated.

A. Tyrrell informed Members that Ofsted had selected DN Colleges Group to undertake a pilot Ofsted Inspection, i.e. a full Ofsted Inspection, over four days across both Colleges during June, after half-term. This is a pilot inspection, which Ofsted is carrying out entirely to test and evaluate new electronic systems for evidence gathering, which will be realistically like a normal inspection so Ofsted can be sure it has tested it properly. The pilot will therefore be carried out like a normal Ofsted inspection and, while there will be no grades or published report, we will receive verbal feedback, which will enable us to build on Ofsted's judgements to support our commitment to continuous improvement. Ofsted will be inspecting us as one organisation, and the individual Colleges as separate centres.

A group of Governors, i.e. Chair, Vice Chairs, Chairs of Committees will be invited to meet with the inspectors.

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Performance Monitoring Update

Members received an update on FE, HE and Apprenticeships in year performance. It was noted that

- Retention for 2017/18 at North Lindsey College is 95% and 93% at Doncaster College. An improvement on last year across both colleges.
- Predicted achievement at NLC for 2017/18 is 88% for 16-18 year olds, 91% for 19+ and 89% for all. Doncaster College is 81% for 16-18 year olds, 88% for 19+ and 85% for all. Any issues identified through performance meetings are being addressed.
- Overall achievement rates will be approximately 84% 16-18 year olds, 89% 19+ and 86% for all.
- Value added L3 qualifications: 70% of students at NLC re on or above target. DC do not collect this information currently but data to be monitored during year.
- Work Experience – over 91% of 16-19 year old students at NLC are predicted to participate in meaningful work experience. At DC this is 84% with work being carried out to improve further.
- GCSE English and maths. At NLC grade 4 are predicted to improve to 24% with Functional Skills being maintained at 75%. At DC grade 4 are predicted to improve to 26% with Functional Skills improving to 70%.
- Applications from 16-18 year olds for 2018/19 are in line with previous year at North Lindsey and have improved markedly at Doncaster compared to the previous year.

- HE full and part time retention at North Lindsey is performing 1% above the target. At Doncaster, full and part time retention is performing at 3% above the target.
- Overall completion and achieving is currently performing at the target (92%) at North Lindsey and (90%) at Doncaster.
- 228 full time offers have been made at North Lindsey; 302 at Doncaster.
- National Student Survey 2018 has closed at 81.3% response rate across the group.
- The HE Survey (NLC) 2018, overall satisfaction currently at 90%. All Level 4 and 5 DC surveys have been collected and are currently being processed.
- With reference to apprenticeships, the impact of legacy apprentices at DC and the loss of Just Car Clinic at NLC is likely to see a fall in overall apprenticeship achievement rates to 75%. Timely achievement is likely to improve
- Recruitment at NLC is on target to meet £3.1m target, whilst at DC there is likely to be a £350k shortfall.
- A new post of Operations Director has been created to further improve quality across the group and allow other managers to focus more on achieving challenging growth targets

Targets 2017/18

- 16-18 Group Improvement Target of 83% and stretch 84%
- Adults Group Improvement Target of 90% and stretch 91%
- Apprenticeship Group Overall Improvement Target 75% and stretch 78%
- Apprenticeship Group Timely Improvement Target 68% and stretch 70%
- Higher Education Overall Achievement Rate Target 93% and stretch 94%
- Higher Education Overall Satisfaction (NSS) Target 84% and stretch 86%

After consideration, the Targets 2017/18 were approved.

Members requested details of employer satisfaction and asked how information about work experience was shared. It was noted that the FE Choices Survey process had now been changed and Colleges were no longer able to contact the employers directly to encourage a response. It was agreed that a Group-wide survey of employers will be prepared.

KB/ML

It was agreed that social media is essential as a marketing tool. A report was requested for the next meeting to explain to the Board how social media was used for promotion purposes.

KB/ML

RESOLUTION: Targets 2017/18 as presented to be approved.

Financial Report April 2018

P. Doherty presented the consolidated Management Accounts for the nine months ended 30 April 2018. The report was based on the following assumptions:

1. That learner funding will be paid in full, even where allocations are not met in full. The shortfall in income shown in the figures related in part to timing of receipts against budget profile. The income for the year is considered not quite achievable though High Needs funding in Education Contracts are forecast to be lower than budget, countered by higher income elsewhere. There are weaknesses in achieving the Apprenticeship income at Doncaster.
2. Staffing costs reflected vacant posts at the start of the year but outturn is expected to be better than budget even allowing for potential exceptional severance costs at Doncaster. This is partly due to the release of provisions held for merger issues.
3. Other expenditure is ahead of budget principally due to accelerated interest costs at Doncaster, and some exceptional professional fees at Doncaster, plus merger related costs being higher than anticipated.

The merged College has reported a surplus of £170k for the first nine months of 2017/18, which is £99k worse than the budgeted position. A surplus of £490k was forecast for the year end. This is worse by £33k than the budgeted position. Forecasts have been reassessed at both colleges and a number of positive and negative variances included in arriving at the net result. Significant issues were reported in the detail of the report.

The net pension liability has reduced by £1.7m following an additional revaluation of Doncaster's scheme immediately prior to merger. It is forecast to increase to £19.5m at July 2018 reversing the gain recorded at 31 October. The forecast increase also reflects the budgeted pension provision as projected is a combination of the figures at Doncaster and North Lindsey, currently in two different schemes. All North Lindsey eligible staff have now transferred to the South Yorkshire fund, and updated figures are being commissioned.

Financial Health (automated rating before any ESFA adjustment) is rated as Good at April 2018 and expected to be Outstanding at July 2018. The College is fully compliant with its bank loan covenants and the College expects to remain compliant for the remainder of 2017/18.

Review of Pension Arrangements

P. Doherty presented a review of the Group's current pension arrangements as undertaken by KPMG, including the subsidiary companies DC Teach Limited and Optime Support Limited. No staff are employed by Kingsway Consulting Ltd.

Following the merger of the 2 colleges, it became apparent that different pension arrangements and staff terms and conditions exist

within the group, notwithstanding that NLC staff within the Local Government Pension Scheme transferred administering authority upon merger from East Riding Pension Fund to the South Yorkshire Pension Fund to align with the arrangements in place at Doncaster College.

KPMGs report explored the possibility of extending the Optime arrangements for support staff across the Group for cost control purposes whilst recognising and seeking steps to mitigate a potential crystallisation of debt that could occur with the effective closure of the LGPS.

The report also reviewed the position of DC Teach Limited for the Group and compared other staff terms and benefits between the 2 colleges. Further detail on these areas was included in the report. The Group Executive Team will review the report and recommendations and bring any recommendations to the Board for further consideration in due course if it is considered appropriate.

In response to questions it was established that the HR managers at the 2 colleges are currently working together on staff policies. Members were invited to contact P. Doherty with any comments on the paper outside the meeting.

K. Walker left at this point

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Safeguarding Update

Members received a detailed update on Safeguarding activity since the last report.

Of particular note:

- Work is ongoing with Doncaster and North Lindsey Colleges to explore safeguarding/recruitment procedures and to make recommendations for a consistent approach across the Group regarding future practices
- In house training is ongoing and progressing well. Due to the number of new starters, the main area requiring action is completion of level 2 Child Protection training. Plans are in place to offer additional dates and times. E-safety training will be integrated into future Child Protection training sessions to ensure all staff are aware of issues and guidelines on this topic.
- IT security monitoring is ongoing. The monitoring and reporting is working well with any concerns regarding staff or student access being followed up quickly. Of the 554 staff accounts, 470 have accepted the revised IT acceptable use log. Those who have not yet accepted the statement will be followed up, noting that this includes a large number of fractional/casual staff members.
- The Safeguarding group continues to meet to seek assurance that progress is being made against priority areas for this year. The update QIP was included in the detailed report
- Members received a summary of the students supported to date. Data indicated that the most common causes for concern are with the students' mental health, home issues and bullying.
- Counselling sessions continue for staff and students.
- Health Champions and College Staff at NLC have worked

together for some time to create a healthier workforce and subsequently the Silver Healthy Workplace Award had been received.

- School nurse drop in sessions offer support around health promotion providing information and support on a range of issues for pre and post 16 year olds. Currently, due to capacity this service primarily offered to pre 16s but referral for 1-1 support can be made for any student.
- The designated Governors for safeguarding have met the relevant staff and committee members
- In line with national guidance the Doncaster College issued staff and students information in relation to the 'Run, Hide, Tell' campaign from the Counter-Terrorism Policing.
- Online safeguarding tutorials are embedded and delivered through My Sole at Doncaster College with themes including safe relationships, alcohol and substance misuse, sexual exploitation and anti-bullying.
- Background papers to the report included the Annual Safeguarding audit for the North Lincolnshire Local Safeguarding Children Board, the Prevent/Safeguarding Monitoring Summary Report, the Quality Improvement Plan for Safeguarding and Prevent Duty, Case Studies, Doncaster Safeguarding Children and Adults Board's audit arrangements, Quality Improvement Plan for Safeguarding and Prevent

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Minutes of Meetings

The minutes of the following committees were received and noted:

Audit & Risk 19.3.18

Curriculum Quality & Performance 5.3.18

Finance & Resources 25.4.18

HE Performance & Quality 26.2.18

Search & Governance 7.3.18 and 25.4.18

Optime Support Limited 23.3.18

DC Teach Limited 26.3.18

The Chair of each of the committees was given the opportunity at this point to comment or highlight issues which had been discussed at the Committees which were not already on the Corporation Board agenda.

It was suggested that reports from the Chairs should be by exception and that additional points from the Chairs should be prepared in advance and sent out with the Corporation Board papers.

With reference to Search and Governance, the Chair made the following points:

- The Task and Finish Group had referred a number of issues to be completed by the Search and Governance Committee, some of which are still to be completed. It was hoped that the Local Stakeholder Boards would be in place for the start of the new academic year, but appointment to those boards had now been deferred until the Autumn term.
- Those current members of the Board who had expressed an

interest in continuing on the Board post August had completed a skills audit questionnaire and would be interviewed by an independent National Leader of Governance. A meeting has been arranged between the two Vice Chairs and the NLG to take this forward and determine how the interviews would proceed.

- A number of potential new governors have been identified, some of which might be suitable for the Board and some for the local boards.
- All existing Board Members will be appointed where possible and new members to fill the existing skills gaps will be asked to complete an application form and following due process would be recommended for appointment if appropriate.

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Declassification of Confidential Items

The confidential minutes taken at the following meetings were considered in regard to the recommendation to the Board that the minutes be released into the public domain unless there remained grounds for confidentiality.

Group 1

Finance & General Purposes NLC 26.6.17 – Acting Principal’s Salary
Corporation Board Doncaster 9.8.17 – ongoing investigation
Audit Committee Doncaster 20.9.17 – ongoing investigation
Corporation Board Doncaster 20.9.17 – ongoing investigation
Corporation Board NLC 16.10.17 – ongoing investigation
Corporation Board Doncaster 18.10.17 – Temporary Management
Arrangements at Doncaster
Corporation Board DNCG 5.2.18 – Temporary Proposals for SLT at
Doncaster
Audit & Risk Committee DNCG 19.3.18 – Audit Services Update
2018/19 onwards
Finance & Resources DNCG 25.4.18 – SPH Salary Review
Corporation Board DNCG 30.4.18 – Sale of High Melton

After consideration it was agreed that the minutes listed above continue to be classified as confidential, as the subject matter in all cases is sensitive business information or personal information relating to individuals.

It was agreed that the following minutes, now being public knowledge and no longer sensitive, be released into the public domain.

Group 2

- Corporation Board NLC 6.6.17 – Recommendations from the Transition Group, Statutory Notice and Governance Arrangements
- Corporation Board DNCG 1.11.17 – Appointment of SPH
- Corporation Board DNCG 29.3.18 – Clerking Arrangements

It was established, following questions from Members, that minutes classified as confidential would not automatically be released following a request for Freedom of Information, following a public interest test, i.e. the information can be withheld if the public interest in maintaining

the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. The public interest in this instance means the public good, not what is of interest to the public and not the private interests of the requester.

RESOLUTION: that the reserved items in the minutes listed above in Group 1 remain confidential and that those listed in Group 2 be published.

13 **Safeguarding Governor Role**

Members gave consideration to the role description for the nominated Governor(s) for Safeguarding. The role had been discussed by the Task and Finish Committee and the Search and Governance Committee and was presented for approval to ensure a clear reporting structure to give Curriculum Quality and Performance and ultimately Corporation board members assurance that Safeguarding responsibilities were met appropriately.

Members were encouraged to discuss the role with the current nominated Safeguarding Governors, i.e. I. Falconer and M. Keyworth.

The role description was approved

RESOLUTION that the role description for the nominated Governor(s) for Safeguarding be approved.

14 **Terms of Reference Local Stakeholder Boards**

The terms of reference for the Local Stakeholder Boards had been previously approved by the Corporation Board. Several amendments had been proposed by the Task and Finish Group; details of the amendments were highlighted within the paper presented. Following consideration, the amendments were approved.

RESOLUTION that the amended Terms of Reference for the Local Stakeholder Boards be approved.

15 **Conflict Resolution**

It was noted that whilst every effort is currently being made to work harmoniously within the merged organisation, cultures and working practices of teams being brought together may differ. In answer to a question, it was established that if a difference of opinion arose within the merged organisation regarding working practices, this would be addressed by the Senior Leadership Teams and Group Executive Team.

16 **Senior Postholders' Salaries**

Reserved Item – Debate minuted separately

PP sought a resolution for the Senior Leadership Team and Staff Governors to leave. K. Brentnall, J. Charles, P. Doherty, G. Hinchliffe, N. Jackson, M. Lochran, and A. Tyrrell left the meeting at this point.

17

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 4 July 2018, 5.30 pm at The Hub, Chappell Drive, Doncaster

Date	Item	Action Point	Who
23.5.18	7	Members requested details of employer satisfaction and how information about work experience was shared. A Group-wide survey of employers will be prepared.	KB/ML
		A report was requested for the next meeting to explain how social media is used for promotional purposes.	KB/ML
	13	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.	