

COLCHESTER INSTITUTE CORPORATION

**Meeting of the
CORPORATION BOARD
held on Wednesday, 9 October 2024 at 4.30pm
Colchester Campus**

MINUTES – PART I**Present:**

Kevin Prince – Corporation Board Chair
 Lisa Blake – Corporation Vice Chair
 Marco Iciek - Governor
 Sally Messenger - Governor
 Stephanie Bettinson - Governor
 Richard Block - Governor
 Simon Attwood - Governor
 Dawn Swainson – Staff Governor
 Alison Andreas – Principal and Chief Executive

In attendance:

Gary Horne – Deputy Chief Executive
 Alison Bennett – Head of Governance
 Sanjeev Arya - Observer

Pre-Board Briefing – Safeguarding update 2024/25

The meeting was preceded with a Safeguarding update from the Assistant Principal: Learner Experience and Support (and Designated Safeguarding Lead), Kirsty Russell. The presentation covered:

- Statutory Duties for safeguarding as an organisation – legal frameworks
- Key responsibilities for the College
- Role of the Governing Body
- Safer Recruitment Overview
- Raising Awareness for Staff
- How we Safeguard Students
- Key risks for our students

It was noted that:

- No significant changes have been made to the KCSIE document for 2024/25.
- Governors are required to read Part 1 of the document.
- Staff with significant safeguarding responsibilities are required to read the full document.
- Main safeguarding themes being reported are: Mental Health Concerns, Online Safety, Bullying and Harassment, Abuse – sexual, emotional, physical & financial.
- Ofsted recommendations are:
 - Reinforcing a culture where all kinds of harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment (online or in person) are recognised and addressed
 - Training for all Governors
- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.
- Prevent duty places a duty on organisations, including education, to ‘prevent’ people from being drawn into extremist terrorist behaviour.
- College uses the Notice, Check Share approach.
- No referrals have been made to the Channel Panel in the past academic year, however phone call approaches for advice have been made.

- Local risks are Knife crime, County Lines and gangs.

In response to questions from Governors it was reported that:

- Safeguarding issues are separated out into categories such as pre-joining the college, off site and onsite. Reports are increasing in complexity year on year.
- Governors were assured that there is a specific set of criteria that is followed upon the report of an incident.
- CTLP updates take place 6 monthly with no written updates provided in between the meetings.
- Ofsted have an expectation that students are aware of the local risks. This has been included in their induction.
- The Safeguarding team consists of 6 members of staff with one responsible for Looked After Children and one based at the Braintree campus.
- If a student has an incident reported against them, and has been suspended from the College due to a police investigation where possible the student will be provided with work to be completed at home and support provided to re-settle into college life if they return.
- Noted that the person who raises the report is offered the support of a named safeguarding officer and the person who the report is against is offered the support of a separate safeguarding officer.
- Select HR maintains record of compliance with KCSIE for all college staff. The training includes questions to be answered to test understanding.

The DSL was thanked for her attendance and input.

Introductions

Sanjeev Ayra was welcomed to the meeting as an observer and potential new Governor.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Caroline Williams, Chris Donovan and Ali Davis. Michael Asare Bediako and Tim Triffitt were not present.

2. **Declaration of any conflicts of interest**

None

3. **Minutes of meeting held on 25 July 2024**

CIC/24/4/01 minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. **Action Sheet and matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

CIC/24/4/02 Corporation Board Action Sheet, was received and noted.

Governors requested that the action sheet provide update on progress and be RAG rated.

The Board asked that the recommendations from the External Board Review be brought to the December meeting.

ACTION: Head of Governance to update the action sheet to include progress and RAG rating

ACTION: External Board Review to be included on the December Board agenda

5. **Chairs Actions/Announcements**

- Additional date of 16 January 2024 to be added to the meeting schedule in the event of additional meeting being needed ahead of the signing of the accounts.
- Governance, Remuneration and Search Committee requires an additional (non Committee Chair) member and Governors were asked to consider whether they would be willing to join

6. **Student Enrolments 2024/25**

The Principal updated the Board on student enrolments 2024/25. Student numbers were reported as:

- FE Full Time

4221 learners against a funded target of 3800. Recognised that by the final data return this figure will have reduced but the College Executive (CE) estimate that it may end in around 300 students over target enabling the College to submit a growth case into the government (to receive additional funding in-year). Funding for 300 additional students could equate to approximately an additional £750,000 funding per year, but additional funding is not absolutely guaranteed. The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee reported that the Committee had tested the implications of the additional learner numbers and were assured that the majority have been accommodated within existing resources.

- Apprenticeships

Full year target of 620 and Quarter 1 target (end October) of 392

Fully enrolled 260 with a total of 404 in progress.

- UCC

4 full time students above target and 2 part time students above target.

Higher and Degree_Apprenticeships are almost at target.

Governors **ASKED** how the UCC numbers compare to the previous year. The Principal replied that lower expectations had been put into the targets due to the reduced numbers of courses being run.

7. **KPIs 2023/24 (outcomes) and Final Targets 2024/25**

CIC/24/4/03 KPIs 2023/24 (outcomes) and Final Targets 2024/25, was received and presented by the Principal. It was reported that an improvement was seen in all areas. National Student Survey results saw a score of 90% for Teaching which is above national averages. Assessment and Feedback scores was also in excess of national benchmarks. Discussion took place around the apprenticeship figure and the stretch in the target for the current academic year. The Principal explained the importance of targets being ambitious and that managers and their teams aspire to continually improve performance, and to remain at or ahead of national performance rates. The Chair congratulated the College on the attendance figure in a landscape of declining attendance. Governors questioned whether the document should report the Financial Health Grade Target which they felt appeared negative. It was agreed that the points score would be used, rather than the Financial Health Grade.

Governors questioned the Full-Cost Course Income Target which they noted is substantially higher than the previous year's target that was not achieved. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the current year's figure included bootcamp funding which we had hoped to attract, but which has been withdrawn since the targets were set. The College is hopeful for support from Essex County Council instead, so the target may not be unrealistic.

8. **Sub-Strategies to the Strategic Plan**

CIC24/4/04 Strategic Plan Sub Strategies, was received and presented by the Principal. It was reported that ownership of the individual strategies has been assigned to members of SLT and they had worked on them both independently and collaboratively. The Principal explained that it is hoped that the document will enable Governors to monitor progress around the strategies and welcomed feedback. Updates will be provided on progress towards the milestones at relevant Committees. The following feedback was received:

- There is a need to look at the specificity of what the strategies want to achieve by the end of the academic year and the measurability of 'how' it will be achieved. The Skills Sub Strategy was highlighted as being both specific and clear on how it will be achieved.
- Suggested that the Board allocate a Governor to each SLT member and their allocated area of the strategic plan.
- Commented favourably on the simplicity of the document.

Governors **ASKED** whether all the targets have been included. The Principal confirmed that all of the 'Success' statements appear at least once with the most common appearing up to 4 times.

9. **Reports from Committees**

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee provided a verbal report. It was reported that at its meeting of 1 October 2024 the committee had:

- Considered student enrolment numbers
- Looked at the Management Report and Accounts July 2024 with particular discussion around the end of year annual leave figure and whilst positively affecting the accounts, it could as easily negatively affect the budget. The Committee was assured that the College Executive will continue to monitor and review.
- Essex Pension Fund report was received and noted
- Detailed discussion tested the UCC Fee Proposals 2025-26 and whether they should reflect inflationary increases
- High staff turnover levels were discussed in detail
- Policies were considered and approved. These were:
 - Pay and Reward Policy
 - Reserves Policy
 - Sickness Absence Policy. It was noted that this was a fundamental rewrite which will positively affect the way managers and the People and Culture team use and implement the policy.

Management Report and Accounts July 2024

CIC/24/4/06 Monthly Management Report and Accounts July 2024 (Period 12), was received and noted. EFSA funding audit has been taking place and it is expected that the provisions included in the budget will not be required. The External Audit has concluded. It was commented on the good steady performance given the challenges faced during the year.

UCC Fee Proposals 2025-26

CIC/24/4/07 UCC Fee Proposals 2025-26, was received, considered and **APPROVED** following recommendation from the Finance and Resources committee. It was reported that the Finance and Resources Committee had tested what has happened to the cost base and were reassured that the cost base is reducing which adds to the justification to not greatly increase the fees.

2024-25 Financial Regulations

CIC/24/4/08 Financial Regulations 2024/25, were received, noted and **APPROVED** following recommendation from the Finance and Resources Committee. Governors were informed that the approval limits for sect. 11.2, Scheme of Financial Delegation, will be revised and brought back to be re-approved during the year. It was noted that the approval includes the current scheme of financial delegation.

Property Issues

College improvement works continue.

Electric vehicle centre awaits building survey outcomes.

10. **Scheme of Delegation – approval of policies and procedures**

CIC/24/4/09 Scheme of Delegation- approval of policies and procedures, was received and considered and **APPROVED**. It was noted that a number of UCC policies have been updated to reflect the changes to structure. Due to these changes not being significant updates it was agreed that these policies be approved by Chairs action to prevent delay in update and use.

11. **Link Scheme 2024/25**

CIC/24/4/10 Governor Link Scheme 2024/25, was received, considered and **APPROVED** by the Board.

12. **Review of Effectiveness of Meeting**

Governors reviewed the effectiveness of the meeting.

13. **Date of Next Meetings**

The following dates were noted:

Thursday 12 December

Thursday 16 January 2025 (potential additional date)

Thursday 27 February 2025

Wednesday 30 April 2025

Tuesday 22 July 2025

All meetings to start at 4.30pm, at the Colchester Campus. Meetings will normally be preceded with a Board briefing at 4.00pm.

14. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None