



Cheshire College  
South & West

**MINUTES OF FULL CORPORATION MEETING**  
HELD ON TUESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2024 – 14:00HRS  
VIA TEAMS & ELLESMERE PORT CAMPUS

**Governors in attendance in person or via Teams as stated:**

Ms Maggie Ayliffe	(MA)		Teams
Mrs Beverley Barlow	(BB)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Margaret Cheshire	(MC)		Ellesmere Port
Mrs Claire Clayton	(CC)		Ellesmere Port
Ms Lesley Davies	(LD)	Chair of Governors	Ellesmere Port
Mr Jasbir Dhesi	(JSD)	Principal/CEO	Ellesmere Port
Mr Jerry Green	(JG)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Shane Guildford	(SG)		Crewe
Mrs Sue Harrison	(SHar)		Crewe
Mr Davinder Lotay	(DSL)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Clive Roberts	(CR)		Ellesmere Port
Mr Len Tildsley	(LT)		Ellesmere Port
Ms Thelma Chigwada	(TC)		Crewe
Mr Alex Kertolli	(TK)		Crewe

**In attendance:**

Mrs Michelle Huntley	(Clerk)	Clerk to the Corporation	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Helen Nellist	(HN)	Deputy Principal & Deputy CEO	Ellesmere Port
Mr Andrew Tyley	(AT)	Interim Chief Financial Officer	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Ruth Szolkowska	(RS)	Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum & Quality	Ellesmere Port
Mr Chris Baggs	(CB)	Safeguarding, Welfare & Behaviour Manager, Items 03 & 04	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Zoe Benn	(ZB)	Assistant Principal Quality, Item 07	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Nim Mistry-Miah	(NMM)	Assistant Principal Learner Services, Items 03 & 04	Ellesmere Port
Mrs Jordan Swift	(JS)	Director of Marketing & School Partnerships, Item 08	Ellesmere Port

**PART A MINUTES**

Minute Reference	
<b>FC 37/24</b>	<p><b>Welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interest</b></p> <p>Attendance was as recorded above – apologies had been received from Mr Fintan Bradley, Mrs Sarah Bailey, Mr Kenny Murray, Mr John Kiely, Mr Sean Herbert, Mr Mike Braun, and Mr Paul Colman. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Mr Alex Kertolli, one of the new Student Governors. Alex introduced himself and the meeting noted that Alex is a Yr2 A Level learner, studying Law, Business and Economics.</p> <p>Ms Thelma Chigwada, one of the new Student Governors joined the meeting at the end of Minute FC 38/24 and introduced herself. The meeting noted that Thelma is a Yr2 A Level learner, studying Maths, Chemistry and Biology.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made.</p>

FC 38/24	<p><b>Governor Training: Safeguarding including Prevent</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Mrs Nimisha Mistry-Miah (NMM), Assistant Principal Learner Services and Mr Chris Baggs (CB), Safeguarding, Welfare and Behaviour Manager to the meeting. NMM and CB gave a presentation on safeguarding and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is an annual safeguarding update for governors.</li> <li>• Governors noted the key definitions, safeguarding categories and possible indicators of abuse. They also noted the main changes to wording and terminology in the latest issue of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) (KCSiE). This has been issued to all staff and governors to be read and signature required to confirm understanding. Ofsted monitor the awareness of staff and governors via this record.</li> <li>• Governors noted that NMM is the person with strategic responsibility for safeguarding; CB is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Rebecca Mathars is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and the team leader of the operational safeguarding team.</li> <li>• Local priorities and themes include Neglect; Contextual Safeguarding; Mental Health &amp; well-being – low mood, self-harm, suicidal ideation; Domestic Abuse; Personal Safety; Sexual Abuse; and Education as a protective factor (attendance).</li> <li>• Governors noted the Be Safe area on the staff intranet which provides policies and guidance for staff in a variety of situations. This includes the College's risk assessment process; the procedure for reporting concerns; and the checklist and guidelines for visiting speakers and organisations to manage our Prevent Duty.</li> <li>• A low-level concern report form is also available for use.</li> <li>• A Safeguarding Steering Group reviews all the forms which are submitted.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q: We do have adult learners too and they could be vulnerable, are staff made aware of this?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Yes, we refer to ANY learner being potentially vulnerable, irrespective of learners' age.</p> <p><b>Q: How do we train staff about unconscious bias?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> We started some training last year in term 3 and will do more this year on unconscious bias. Staff also received some training about gender awareness in Sept 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR team monitor staff compliance with mandatory safeguarding training and responsibilities.</li> <li>• The College's filtering and monitoring system is now fully in place and the Be Safe Team review this bi-weekly. Governors approved the purchase of the filtering system.</li> <li>• Operation Encompass is a national police and education early information safeguarding partnership which has changed recently.</li> <li>• The College dealt with 54 cases in 2023-24; it has already had 27 cases to date.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q: If a young person is involved in a safeguarding situation, do they have to give consent before information can be shared?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> No. Training gives clear guidance on how to manage welfare. No consent is required as this is related to safeguarding, and information can be shared via the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) to ensure confidentiality levels. However, we do comply with GDPR rules.</p> <p><b>Q: What happens if there is an out of hours incident? How do staff know what to do?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Operation Encompass instances will only come through to the safeguarding team. We do train various members of staff including reception, duty managers, and tutors about safeguarding. If there is an immediate risk of harm, then staff know to call 999. We often get multiple reports on the same instance, but these can be filtered by the Be Safe Team.</p> <p><b>Q: What is the difference between the number of safeguarding instances reported during college hours compared to the number reported out of hours?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> The number of reported incidents reported is lower out of hours. In Covid it was higher.</p> <p><b>Q: Do you think this data is accurate?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Lots of self-harm is reported to us, but not by learners when it is happening. We have reminded everyone that out of hours they can use 101 or 999 to report a situation.</p> <p><b>Q: Last year we asked about whether staff receive online training and in-person training. Is this still the situation this year?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Yes. We provide some face to face and some online training.</p>
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	<p><b>A:</b> We can use the Monday CPD slot for sharing case-studies. We ask, what would you do differently? The sessions were well attended last year, and we will continue with them in 2024-25. The online sessions are also interactive using the chat facility.</p> <p><b>TC joined the meeting and was welcomed by the Chair.</b></p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to update governor training records with Safeguarding &amp; Prevent update training.</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked NMM and CB for an excellent session.</p>
<b>FC 39/24</b>	<p><b>Annual Safeguarding (including Prevent) Report</b></p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Mrs Nimisha Mistry-Miah (NMM), Assistant Principal Learner Services and Mr Chris Baggs (CB), Safeguarding, Welfare and Behaviour Manager responded to the following questions:</p> <p><b>Q: In which report do governors see the progression being made with referrals?</b>  <b>A:</b> This data is reported to C&amp;Q.</p> <p><b>Q: Can the data be shared more generally, with Board? It would be good to know how effectively referrals are being dealt with.</b></p> <p><b>Action: NMM to send counselling and referral progress data to the Clerk for sharing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting noted that HN has worked with the NHS and for 2024-25 the College will have a mental health practitioner at each college campus 3 days per week. Information from this initiative can be included in future reports.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: NMM/RS to ensure that information about the impact of having an NHS campus-based practitioner is reported to C&amp;Q in March 2025 and again in October 2026.</b></p> <p><b>Governors APPROVED the Safeguarding Policy.</b></p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to advise JH that Governors APPROVED the Safeguarding Policy. Next review in September 2025.</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked NMM and CB for their work and they left the meeting.</p>
<b>FC 40/24</b>	<p><b>Minutes of meeting 09 July 2024 and matters arising from previous minutes</b></p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The minutes were reviewed for accuracy and approved.</p> <p><b>It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes from 09 July 2024 and the Chair signed the minutes.</b></p> <p><b>The meeting noted the following matter arising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part B, Minute FC31/24, pg7: The Board approved the recommendation from the Finance &amp; Resources Committee (F&amp;R) to delegate authority to the executive leadership team (ELT) to adopt the same flexible approach for the energy renewal up to the limits provided for in the 2024-25 draft budget. Recent quotes are looking higher than budget, so ELT are seeking authority to take all necessary action to secure the most cost-effective energy contracts they can secure. An update will be brought to F&amp;R on 26 September 2024.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q: Can we put a 10% cap on any increase in costs?</b>  <b>A:</b> The market prices are so volatile; any decision will need to be made at short notice. It would not be practicable to return to F&amp;R Committee for further discussion without the potential for changes in market prices. The executive team are asking for the Board to trust them to make an informed, sensible decision.</p>

	<p><b>The Board APPROVED the delegation of the decision to the executive leadership team, to secure the most cost-effective energy contracts for the College to replace the current contracts which run out this term.</b></p> <p>The action log from the 09 July 2024 was reviewed and the meeting noted the following:  138 &amp; 139 – (Digital Strategy) Minutes from Full Corporation shared with SW. On target for timely completion. Revised document due to be shared with Chairs' Committee on 07 October 2024.  140 &amp; 141 – (People Strategy) Minutes from Full Corporation shared with LW. On target for timely completion. Updated document in hand, will be shared with ELT and report against the People Strategy will go to F&amp;R in June 2025 and then to Board in July 2025.  143, 146 – Completed and CLOSED.  142, 144 – On target for timely completion.  145 – Clerk is following up with 6 governors who have not completed and submitted all required forms and questionnaires.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to continue to work with governors to get completed online safeguarding documentation and completed annual documentation.</b></p>
<b>FC 41/24</b>	<p><b>Results 2023-24 – Early Indications</b></p> <p>Mrs Ruth Szolkowska, Vice-Principal Curriculum, Quality &amp; Innovation gave a presentation to the meeting and the full minute was recorded as Part B 41/24.</p> <p>The Board commended the leadership team and all the staff for the improvements which have been made. It is good to see the upward trends, and the acknowledgement that there is still room for improvement. The good oversight and challenge from the Board has contributed to the good interventions and the positive impact.</p> <p>The Chair thanked RS for her presentation. Only top level data has been shared. The details were thoroughly reviewed and discussed at the Self-Assessment Validation meeting on 11 September 2024.</p>
<b>FC 42/24</b>	<p><b>SAR 2023-24 Update</b></p> <p>Mrs Zoe Benn, Assistant Principal, Quality, joined the meeting. ZB gave a presentation to the meeting and the full minute was recorded as Part B 42/24.</p> <p>Final assessments will be shared with Board via email for approval and then for ELT to submit the final version to DfE before the end of October.</p> <p><b>TC left to catch the college bus.</b></p>
<b>FC 43/24</b>	<p><b>Enrolments – Early Indications</b></p> <p>Mrs Jordan Swift, Director of Marketing &amp; School Partnerships joined the meeting and made a presentation. The full minute was recorded as Part B minute FC 43/24.</p> <p>Governors recorded their thanks and congratulations to staff for all their hard work to date in the start of a very busy term.</p> <p><b>Mrs Jordan Swift left the meeting.</b></p>
<b>FC 44/24</b>	<p><b>Chief Executive's Update</b></p> <p>There was no paper for this item as agreed previously with the Board. This enables the Principal to provide the most up to date position to the Board. Mr Jasbir Dhesi presented to the meeting and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meeting has already received an early indication of results and enrolments.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors will be notified as soon as the College receives notification of an Ofsted inspection.</li> <li>• The government has conducted some curriculum reform: It did pause and reflect on Level 3 qualifications. T levels will stay but may be tweaked. We have been able to retain the L3 Construction programme for learners at CCSW. Defunding of some L3 qualifications is likely to continue and some current courses will be discontinued.</li> <li>• English &amp; Maths conditions of funding may change. It continues to be challenging to get learners to attend English &amp; Maths. There is a shortage of English &amp; Maths teachers nationally.</li> <li>• To improve the country's productivity, we must improve skills nationally.</li> <li>• The government focus is on Early Years, and the development of Skills England.</li> <li>• Devolution is happening, including devolution of skills in Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Warrington.</li> <li>• There have been many leadership changes in our local authorities, and financial issues need to be addressed.</li> <li>• Austerity 3 is expected, with the budget on 30 October. We can expect a decline in the quality of public services and also a record tax burden.</li> <li>• SEND costs continue to grow and impact local authorities nationally.</li> <li>• There has been no funding for any FE pay award from government this year. The AoC are still to make a recommendation.</li> <li>• New employment legislation is coming, including a duty on employers to protect employees from sexual harassment. The right to claim flexible working from day 1 came into effect on 6 April 2024.</li> <li>• More colleges will be in financial difficulty which will trigger FEC intervention.</li> <li>• CCSW needs to get a good Ofsted result and to build its clean cash to £6m+.</li> <li>• The College is in scope for an Ofsted inspection in 2024-25. We will debrief all staff on the outcome and will invite governors to attend these meetings on site.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked Dhesi for his informative presentation.</p>
FC 45/24	<p><b>Clerk's Report</b></p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The following points were noted from the paper:</p> <p><b>Governor Attendance 2023-24:</b> CCSW overall attendance was 81% compared to 82.19% for 82 colleges, nationally. However, this figure only includes attendance at committee and Board meetings and does not include the additional hours that governors spend on link activities, including one-to-one meetings with ADs, learning walks, attending Advisory Board meetings, SAR and CIP meetings, and attending celebratory events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2023-24 we achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 77% attendance for Full Corporation Board meetings (83% in 2019-20); (91% 2020-21); (81% in 2021-22); (86% in 2022-23)</li> <li>- 85% for Committee attendance (all committees) (91% in 2019-20); (92% 2020-21); (87% 2021-22); (87% 2022-23)</li> <li>- 81% for total meetings attendance (88% in 2019-20); (92% 2020-21); (85% 2021-22) (86% 2022-23)</li> <li>- By Committees, attendance in 2023-24 was:</li> <li>- Chairs: 95.45% (98.28% in 2019-20; 94.29% in 2020-21; 90.48% in 2021-22; 96.67% in 2022-23); (96.66% in 2023-24)</li> <li>- Audit &amp; Risk: 90% (85% in 2019-20; 100% in 2020-21; 96% in 2021-22; 95% in 2022-23); (95% in 2023-24)</li> <li>- Finance &amp; Resources: 91% (76% in 2019-20; 86% in 2020-21; 84% in 2021-22; 86% in 2022-23); (86% in 2023-24)</li> <li>- Curriculum &amp; Quality: 70% (85% in 2019-20; 88% in 2020-21; 79% in 2021-22; 74% in 2022-23); (74% in 2023-24) and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remuneration: 100% (100% in 2019-20; 100% in 2020-21; 100% in 2021-22; 100% in 2022-23); (100% in 2023-24)</li> <li>• During 2024-25 it is proposed that governors join Board and Committee meetings in person whenever possible. The Board has resumed its practice of holding meetings at the Chester, Ellesmere Port and Crewe campuses. Governors will retain the option to join Board and Committee meetings via Teams by prior arrangement with the Clerk and the meeting Chair.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Clerk to calculate participation units within the Governor Involvement record.</b></p> <p><b>Governors' Register of Interest:</b> Each year all governors are asked to review/complete their individual register of interests, and the Clerk maintains a record which is published on the College website. A few governors are yet to review/ complete their individual register of interests from July 2024.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to upload updated Register of Interest to CCSW website.</b></p> <p><b>Use of College Seal:</b> The College Seal was applied six times in 2023-34. Electronic copies of the documents, complete with seal and where necessary a stamp, were retained in all six instances. The Clerk will continue to maintain a record of the application of the College Seal in 2024-25, per the College's Instrument 21, Application of the Seal.</p> <p><b>Website Compliance:</b> The Department for Education recommends a list of information which all colleges should provide via their websites. Additionally, colleges may be required to provide information per their specific ESFA funding agreement. The AoC's Code of Good Governance also recommends the sharing of information as good practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College website is compliant in respect of the listed items – some are specific items on the website, others are included within the College's annual report and financial statements. The compliance of the College website is regularly monitored by the Marketing department.</li> <li>• The College has a Publication Scheme which complies with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance on the Freedom of Information Act 2000, so in addition to accessing information on the College's website there is the facility for individuals to request data/ information directly from the Clerk (this includes for example, information about gifts/ hospitality enjoyed by governors and senior leaders); and also for individuals to make Freedom of Information requests.</li> <li>• The Freedom of Information requests are monitored by the College's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Officer. An annual report is produced and shared with the Audit &amp; Risk Committee.</li> </ul>
<b>FC 46/24</b>	<p><b>Policy for ratification</b></p> <p>The meeting noted the paper which had been sent to all members in advance of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health &amp; Safety Policy:</b> This policy is reviewed annually. Governors reviewed and APPROVED proposed amendments.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Corporation APPROVED the Health &amp; Safety Policy.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Modern Slavery Policy:</b> This policy is reviewed annually. Governors reviewed and APPROVED proposed amendments.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Corporation APPROVED the Modern Slavery Policy.</b></p> <p><b>Action: JSD to check and update the number of staff and annual turnover within the Modern Slavery Policy.</b></p>

	<p><b>Action: Clerk to advise JH that the Corporation APPROVED the Health &amp; Safety Policy and the Modern Slavery Policy.</b></p> <p><b>SG, AK and SHar left the meeting from Crewe.</b></p>
<b>FC 47/24</b>	<p><b>Confidential or commercially sensitive business to be noted</b></p> <p>The meeting agreed that the Clerk and Principal will identify the items from this meeting to be recorded as commercially sensitive information. See Part B minutes for commercially sensitive elements of minutes FC 39/24, FC 41/24, FC 42/24, FC 43/24, FC 44/24 and FC 47/24.</p> <p><b>Action: JSD and Clerk to identify items from this meeting to be recorded as commercially sensitive information.</b></p>
<b>FC 48/24</b>	<p><b>Key points to note from this meeting</b></p> <p>The Clerk noted the following key points from this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board received detailed 'high level' data relating to student outcomes for 2023-24, such that governors understand the College's areas of strength and those for improvement. The action plan to promote improvement was also shared with governors.</li> <li>• Governors were informed of initial enrolment and retention figures.</li> <li>• Governors received safeguarding training following amendments to the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024 document.</li> <li>• The College Continuous Improvement Plan has 3 focused action points.</li> <li>• The meeting discussed and noted that whilst formally recorded governor attendance has dropped the time spent on additional activities is extensive and is not included in the attendance figure.</li> <li>• The board APPROVED the delegation of authority to the executive leadership team for the procurement of utilities.</li> </ul>
<b>FC 49/24</b>	<p><b>Date of future meetings and any other business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the Self-Assessment Validation Group (a subgroup of C&amp;Q) met with ELT and APs on 11 September and the final self-assessed grades will be circulated to Board before the end of October it is proposed to cancel the meeting on Monday 11 Nov 2024, 14:00hrs, Ellesmere Port which historically has been used to review the College SAR.</li> </ul> <p>The Board APPROVED the cancellation of the Board meeting on 11 November 2024.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to cancel the 11 November meeting and send out notification.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is also proposed to move the Governors' Day from 17 January to 14 February 2025.</li> </ul> <p>The Board APPROVED the changed date for Governors' Day from 17 January to 14 February 2025.</p> <p><b>Action: Clerk to move the calendar invite for Governors' Day for all attendees.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 12 Dec 2024, 14:00hrs, Crewe (NB Christmas Lunch for Governors 12:00-14:00)</li> <li>• Friday <b>14 Feb 2025</b>, 08:30hrs Governors' Day – Ellesmere Port</li> <li>• Thursday 27 Mar 2025, 14:00hrs, Ellesmere Port (NB Lunch with Learners 13:00-14:00hrs)</li> <li>• Tuesday 08 July 2025, 14:00hrs, Crewe (NB Barbecue for Governors 17:00-18:00hrs)</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Clerk to send out menu choices for Governors' Christmas lunch in late October.</b></p>
	<b>Meeting closed at 16:53hrs.</b>

Chair's signature: .....

Minutes produced: 07 October 2024

Chair's approval: 21 October 2024

Report made to Corporation, for approval: 12 December 2024