

GOVERNOR BIOGRAPHIES

MICHELE BACON – External Governor & Board Chair

Michele is a qualified teacher and, until her retirement after 35 years in August 2018, was the Lead Principal of the Wade Deacon Trust.

Having a Masters degree in Educational Leadership and Management, NPQH, Michele was a National Leader of Education and led the Wade Deacon Teaching School. Within that role she always placed great emphasis on supporting others to ensure the very best outcomes for young people.

Michele was seconded to work for the Knowsley Commission to help support the drive for improvement in educational outcomes across the Borough. This involved her working with a network of secondary schools, providing advice and devising/supporting professional development programmes for headteachers and senior leaders. Her experience includes leading a number of schools in challenging circumstances and Michele continues to be an active practitioner in supporting school improvement across all phases.



KATIE ANDERSON – External Governor

Following her graduation from Liverpool John Moores University in 2004, Katie worked in differing roles within the Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) sectors. During this time she developed specialisms in apprenticeship delivery, development and recruitment. Since 2018 Katie has been employed by Merseyside Police. Her role is varied and has led to Merseyside Police delivering apprenticeships which includes Police Officers, Community Support Officers and 999 Call Operators. Katie is passionate about delivering the highest standard of training, ensuring the community is being supported by honest, trustworthy, knowledgeable, and respectful staff members.

Outside of work, Katie is a keen open water swimmer and resides on a narrowboat.



KAREN BANKS – External Governor

Karen has recently retired from the role of Director of Strategic Change at the University of Liverpool. During her career she worked at several universities undertaking a range of roles. Karen provides mentorship to individuals enrolled on the Association of University Administrator's Post Graduate Certificate in HE Management. Her qualifications include a MSc in Management Studies, and Post Graduate Diplomas in Policy Studies and Advanced Employment Law. Karen is experienced in governance, within the context of her previous career, and also as a former member of the Board of Directors of a Manchester based Social Housing Association.



Karen has a passion for supporting access to high quality education for all, given the transformative impact it can have.

Most of Karen's spare time is devoted to long muddy walks with her Labrador, going to the gym and listening to podcasts.

LOUISE FROST – External Governor

Having gained a First Class Degree in Accounting & Finance at Liverpool John Moores University Louise trained and qualified, as a Chartered Accountant, with a large accountancy practice in 2004.

Louise is currently Head of Finance at Halton Housing (HH), the largest registered provider of social housing in Halton and is responsible for the preparation and audit of the financial statements, financial planning and reporting of both financial and non-performance for the HH Group.

Louise has a particular interest in education having gained her first accounting exams through evening classes at a further education college and during her career has worked in and with Sixth Form and Further Education colleges, academy trusts and other not for profit organisations.

Having spent time living and working in Greece, Louise returns whenever she can to visit friends and family, including her granddaughter and is working on perfecting her Greek language and cookery skills.

PAUL LEATHERBARROW – External Governor

Paul Leatherbarrow is Head of Bids at United Living Group, where he leads major infrastructure tender submissions across the UK. With over a decade of experience in the construction and utilities sector, Paul specialises in delivering complex, high-value projects with a strong emphasis on compliance, governance, and accountability.



He is a committed advocate for skills development and played a leading role in launching the United Living Young Persons Network. Paul has also contributed to several industry professional development groups and is regularly involved in outreach with local schools and colleges to promote careers in engineering and infrastructure.

As a governor, Paul brings strategic insight into quality assurance and risk management, alongside a commitment to supporting young people into technical and vocational pathways.

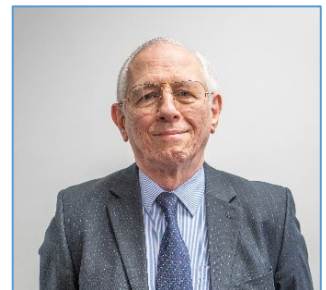
ANDREW MACMANUS – External Governor

Andrew is a retired accountant with an ACMA qualification. He has worked in both private and public sector organisations.

Private sector experience was in a number of household name companies in various sectors. Public sector experience was in local government and the NHS.

Andrew has an B.A.(Hons) degree from the Open University. He attended an FE college after school doing a 3 years business studies diploma course.

Outside of work Andrew was a governor at SS Peter & Paul secondary school in Widnes for 16 years, a town councillor for 11 years and chaired the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community committee for 5 years. He sits on the local AGE UK expert panel.



NEIL McGRATH – External Governor

Neil is currently Deputy Group Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer at Halton Housing (HH)., the largest registered provider of social housing in Halton.

After studying for his A Levels, Neil joined the finance team at North British Housing Association (NBHA) in Preston in 1987 where he trained and qualified as an accountant in 1996.

In 1999 Neil left NBHA and worked for 20 months at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in Blackpool, before rejoining the social housing sector as Assistant Director of Finance at West Pennine Housing Association in Oldham in 2001.

Neil joined Halton Housing as Director of Resources in 2005 and, working as part of the Executive Directors Team, successfully oversaw the transfer of 6,300 homes from Halton Borough Council to HH later that year. Since then, Neil, working as part of the Executive Team, has overseen the transformation and growth of HH into the largest provider of social housing in Halton.

Neil is married with 3 children. He enjoys playing golf, walking his dog, and socialising with friends and family.



COUNCILLOR TOM McINERNEY – External Governor

Tom is the Halton Borough Councillor for Halton View in Widnes, Cheshire. He is the Executive Board Member for Children, Education & Social Care.

A former bus driver, Tom has served the local community for many years and was mayor of Halton in 2015. His other interests include membership of the Liverpool City Region Child Poverty & Life Chances Commission.



OSCAR LAM – Student Governor (Cronton College)

(To follow)

MARY MURPHY OBE – Principal & Chief Executive

Mary was appointed as Principal from September 2013, having been Vice-Principal (A Level) at Riverside College from July 2009 and the Head of A Level and Pre-Advanced Studies at Runshaw College prior to that.

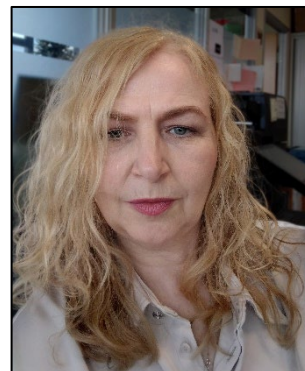
In her earlier career Mary worked at Pendleton College as Head of Pre-Advanced Studies and as a Teacher of Leisure & Tourism. Mary has a background in the leisure industry and progressed rapidly from graduate trainee to general manager.



RACHAEL OWEN – External Governor

Rachael is CEO of Halton Chamber of Commerce, a long standing, locally embedded, not for profit organisation delivering business services, expertise and support to organisations of all sizes across the Borough. She is also a Director of Halton BIDs and Chair of Runcorn Town Deal Board.

Rachael has worked in the private, public and not for profit sectors and was a part time Business lecturer at Riverside College having studied and gained her PCGE at the college in 2007. Rachael also has a Post Graduate CIM Marketing Diploma, a MBA, L3 TAQA and a L2 vocational qualification in Patisserie and Confectionery which was gained at Riverside College night school.



STEPH POWER – Staff Governor

(To Follow)

CHRIS SIKORSKI – Staff Governor

Chris Sikorski is a Senior Officer in Quality at Riverside and Cronton Colleges. Before joining the College in 2005, Chris graduated from the University of Salford with a first class honours BSc in Business, working for a pharmaceutical company as a work placement and then MBNA bank straight after university for nine months.

He has worked in the Quality department of the College both pre and post-merger and still does to this day. In addition, Chris holds the position of Vice Chair of the Association of College's Staff Governor Network. He is involved in many other networks and undertakes training to keep up-to-date with developments in quality, curriculum and the FE and Skills sector as a whole.

Chris is married with a young son and is a keen runner.



PROFESSOR SUSAN SMITH OBE – Co-Opted Governor

As graduate of Glasgow University, Susan started at Daresbury Laboratory as a physicist in 1985, working on the development of particle accelerators for light sources. Later Susan's role changed to leading the accelerator physics input from Daresbury Laboratory for a range science projects, including future particle physics facilities such as those at CERN in Switzerland.

Susan retired from her role as Director of Accelerator Science and Technology Centre at Daresbury in 2020. As Head of Daresbury Laboratory she worked strategically with the joint venture partners, Halton Borough Council and Langtree, in developing the Science & Innovation Campus.

Susan is passionate about ensuring that those working and living locally to the Campus can benefit from their proximity to an exciting "Big Science" research facility, which aims to grow 10,000 high value jobs over the next 20 years at Daresbury. As such she acts as an ambassador for the facility.

Outside of the science world, Susan is a keen golfer and table-tennis player.

