

**CHELMSFORD COLLEGE  
BOARD OF THE CORPORATION  
25 September 2020**

---

**Draft Minutes**

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of the Corporation held at the Committee Room, Moulsham Street Campus, Chelmsford and via MS Teams on Friday 25 September 2020 at 2.00 pm.

**PRESENT:**

Elaine Oddie (Chair)	
Andy Sparks (Principal)	
Jenny Beaumont	*
Trevor Bolton	*
Susan Hughes	*
Sarah Noble	
Christian Norman	*
Amanda Montague	
Jaya Patten	*
Doug Zeeman	

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Caroline Williams (Deputy Principal)
Debs Hurst (Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Resources)
Rob Millea (Clerk to the Corporation)
Joanne Harrington (Assistant Clerk)

\* Denotes attended through MS Teams – all other attendees were present in person

**1422. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for Absence were received from Barbara Vohmann, Seena Shah and Stuart Hodges.

**1423. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Resources informed the Board that she continues her role as a Member Representative on the Essex LGPS Advisory Board.

The Principal and the Chair notified their declarations as Directors of Essex Shared Services Limited.

The Principal declared his interest as Director and acting Chair of ACER Limited (dormant company).

The Clerk renewed his declaration that he acts as Company Secretary of Essex Shared Services Limited.

No confidential items were notified save that minute **1436** was deemed Confidential (**Part 2 Agenda**).

#### **1424. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

#### **1425. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JULY 2020**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 July 2020 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

#### **1426. MATTERS ARISING**

The Clerk tabled a paper tracking actions arising from the last minutes, all of which are covered elsewhere in the Agenda.

The Board were informed that Emma Butler has been appointed as General Manager of Essex Shared Services Limited and as Finance Director of South Essex College as from 24 August 2020, replacing Peter Moore.

The Chair indicated that she was having a Teams Meeting with Emma next Wednesday.

Debs Hurst reported that a new Estates & Facilities Manager (Terry Gann) has joined the College and will be reviewing the College Cleaning Arrangements shortly.

**ACTION: VPFCS**

#### **1427. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal presented a written Report for the information of governors, supported by a slide presentation.

#### **Recruitment**

Enrolment is still under way but 16-18 full time learner enrolment numbers are marginally higher than last year although the total 16-18 numbers are 2067 which is 37 lower compared to last year at this stage due to reduced pre-apprentices on Internet Safety.

Enrolment of 19+ learners is similar to last year. Apprenticeships starts are better than expected due to Government incentive schemes and there may be only a small reduction in Q1.

The Report gave a fuller breakdown of the learner numbers by age and curriculum area. There is a considerable variation in levels of enrolment by curriculum area compared to last year.

Art & Design, Extended Learning, Special Provision and Electrical, Technical Construction, Carpentry, Hospitality, Child Care and HE are all down but these are offset by increases in Access, Hair & Beauty and Media, IT, Brick and Painting & Decorating

All programmes offered in the past are being offered this year (apart from Art), but there will be some blended learning/attendance.

Approximately, 50 to 60% of learners are attending the College but the Government have indicated a wish for attendance to be around 70%. This is very difficult in the current climate.

So far, there has been high compliance with protective measures by students and they are clear what is required of them.

There is a central process for confirmed cases of COVID.

Staff working patterns are being reviewed but not many staff can satisfactorily work at home as contact with learners is vital for an educational institution.

Regarding results, there will be no normal QAR prepared measuring statistical performance and therefore comparison with prior years is impossible. However, the Deputy Principal commented that the Board will receive relevant achievement data for 2019/20 in the final Self-Assessment Report for the year.

### **Risk Register/Dartboard**

There are three critical risks at present – Going concern, Reputation and managing COVID-19. The Board **NOTED** the following:

- Going concern – dependent on recruitment and income projections where fuller information will be known during October. In addition, there will be more data in respect of commercial income from the nursery and the refectory. However, as stated above, recruitment is quite positive although reduced Special Provision students will result in lower income from Essex County Council.
- Reputation – how the College is perceived to be handling any COVID-19 outbreak.

- Managing COVID-19 – ability to adapt to changing guidance and staff/learners are protected.

The Board were provided with the latest version of the Risk Dartboard. This area is further covered in the Risk Management report (minute **1430**).

The Report outlined the key aspects of the COVID-19 supplement to the **College Curriculum Plan** (movement around the College, scheduling of learner attendance on campus, on-line delivery, control of 'bubbles', adjusted timetables and arrangement of group sizes). This also includes full induction for students and what is required of them to comply with COVID-19 guidance.

### **Governors' Development Day 16/10/20**

In discussion with the Clerk, the Principal felt that it would be difficult to hold a 'normal' Governors' Development Day programme for 16 October 2020 at the Moulsham Street Campus. Learning Walks and interaction with staff and students would be difficult and the use of MS Teams not really appropriate as the Day is normally 'hands on'.

The key developmental issues at present are the College's Strategic Future and the Budget for 2020/21, which has only been approved for part of the year (to 31 December 2020).

Accordingly, it was agreed to cancel the GDD on 16 October. The Budget issue will be covered at a Special Governors' Meeting on 17 November 2020.

The Strategic Future review and discussion will be postponed until the next scheduled GDD on 5 February 2021, when a full discussion and interaction can hopefully take place with all governors physically in attendance.

**Staffing matters** are addressed in the HR Report and this includes COVID-19 measures (minute **1428**). There have been no further positive cases of COVID-19 beyond the three notified at the last Meeting.

The Board **NOTED** that the **draft SAR** is prepared in the new Ofsted inspection framework format (minute **1434**). The grade proposed in the SAR is Good. Fuller discussion will take place at the Quality & Learners Committee on 3 November 2020, when achievement figures are available and the curriculum areas have been validated, in order that the Report can be approved at the December Board Meeting. This is not a requirement from Ofsted (in advance of a short visit) for this year but it is felt that it should still be produced.

## **Exam issues**

Considerable issues have been caused by the algorithm.

Considerable number of results from the awarding bodies are still to be received – Engineering and Hair & Beauty – which has caused problems for students.

Data tables are still awaited but GCSE English & Maths are slightly better than last year – English 42.3% and Maths 34.6% (up 3pp and 7pp respectively) in grades 9-4.

As regards 'core' learners, the outcomes were very positive at each level and age group except 19+ level 3 which was down 9pp but only about 70 learners involved. Overall, the College is not unhappy with the statistical result. It was noted that some courses (short) were not run due to the pandemic. The Deputy Principal indicated that the College is still awaiting a number of results - 250 approximately.

## **Funding & Finance**

The Board were informed that a small operating surplus of £55K is currently projected for the 2019/20 year. This will be adjusted by pension accounting under FRS102 (see Finance Report – minute **1429**).

The Board noted that this surplus is after providing £140K for clawback of the Adult Education Budget as the ESFA appear to have changed the guidance from full payment to only 80%.

On the Capital front, only essential works took place during the summer relating to COVID-19 compliance. Pleasingly, match funding for the New Construction centre at Princes Road has been achieved with a grant from the ESFA of £558K. Project consultants have been appointed (Ingleton Wood) and planning permission will shortly be sought.

The College will maintain Requires Improvement (formerly described as Satisfactory) Financial Health providing the projected outturn position is confirmed and audited.

## **Governor questions**

Amanda Montague asked if the Government's Kick Start Scheme would help with funding for IT. The VPFCS said the Scheme is for staff trainees with a minimum of 30 people being part of the programme. The College is working with Job Centre Plus via the Essex Provider Network for further opportunities in this area possibly to assist in student support areas. Partnership with SEC and USP is also under consideration.

In response to governors, the Principal said that there is a concern regarding work placements and there is a risk the College might not be able to reach targets. It is the case that employers will not accept work based learning experience placements for learners due to restrictions in the current climate which restricts students in completing their programme of learning. Furthermore, in some areas, the jobs do not exist now.

The Principal also commented that apprenticeship numbers are holding up well and are likely, for the first quarter, to get quite close to target (maybe 80%).

The Report was **RECEIVED**.

## **1428. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

The Board **RECEIVED** a Report from the Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Resources on Human Resources matters.

The key points were:

- **Turnover** to date for this academic year annualised is 12.67% (11.84% at time of last report) against a target for the year of 18%. The overall trend remains pleasingly downwards and compares well with the AoC benchmark in the Eastern Region of 18.2% no doubt reflecting uncertainty in the job market in the current climate dissuading staff looking for new positions.
- Staff recruitment remains high during this term with successful recruitment of 22 staff during the summer. There are still 9 academic vacancies to be filled.
- **Sickness absence** averaged 5.79 days in the rolling twelve month period to end of August against AoC benchmark (2017/18) of 5.2 days and 5.97 days at the time of the last Report. Long and short term staff absence has reduced.
- **Employment relations** are good with the unions and there have been no claims made to the Employment Tribunal. Recent Meetings have been held with UCU Representatives regarding the implementation of COVID-19 procedures and these have been positive.
- Some disquiet from UCU members because the late start to the year means only 48 days are available to take 42 days of leave.
- There are no employee grievances currently.
- All staff were paid 100% during lockdown with furloughed staff subsidy being reclaimed from HMRC.
- Still some staff on furlough mainly in the Learning Resource Centre. The College received a monthly payment of £91K in cash flow under the Government's furlough scheme.

There continues to be a lot of activity in the area of Mental Health and Well Being, which was detailed in the Report. For example,

- Staff intranet updated regularly
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Socially distanced walkie talkies and Boot Camp
- Telephone contact during lockdown
- Addressing staff anxieties on returning to College
- Workshops with Mental Health advisor
- Forum style sessions during PD Week

### Governor questions

Amanda Montague was informed that the outstanding Business Support post could not be a position for a Kickstart trainee as it has to be a new post.

Susan Hughes was informed that the College does not currently know how many College staff are Unison members and this will be researched through their new Representative.

The Report was **NOTED**. In addition, the Board **NOTED** the College Whistleblowing Policy, which had been reviewed by SMT – no amendments were required.

## **1429. FINANCE REPORT**

### **1429.1 Management Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2020**

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services **PRESENTED** the Management Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2020 for discussion and comment by the Board. These have been reviewed by the designated Finance Governors.

For the year, the College is showing an operating surplus of £55K in the Management Accounts against a surplus in the May reforecast of £23K, a favourable variance of £32K. In addition, the Board noted that a provision of £140K has been made for a possible clawback as a result of under-achievement of AEB funding, even though original guidance was that this funding would be paid in full. The latest guidance suggests that only 80% will be met and the College clawback (if any) will depend on reconciliation at R14.

The income from the Job Retention Scheme (approx. £70K) has helped the College in achieving the projected outturn position.

Total income amounted to £15.843 million and total expenditure amounted to £15.788 million.

The Accounts were accompanied by a detailed commentary explaining the variances from budget. These management accounts do not take into account any adjustments which will result from including FRS102 pension adjustments – see minute **1429.3**.

At 31 July 2020, group net assets stood at £15.301 million, including cash of £501K and revalued fixed assets of £29.765 million.

The College's Financial Health for 2019/20 to date, based on the SFA's new methodology and designations, is Requires Improvement and is likely to remain so for 2020/21.

The current ratio stands at 0.43 broadly as expected, but slightly under target of 0.65. Pay expenditure as a percentage of income is 69% against target of no more than 65%. It is therefore higher than the suggestion from the FE Commissioner that pay as a percentage of income should not exceed 65%.

Borrowing as a percentage of income is 25.18%, which is lower than the ESFA tolerances of 40% to 60%, and is a direct consequence of loans repaid from some of the Beacon House sale proceeds last year.

Chelmsford College needs to comply with 5 bank covenants. One from Barclays in relation to the £1.5m loan and 4 from Lloyds Bank. As at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 we comply with 3 covenants. However, Barclays have waived the covenant for 31/7/2020 in relation to "Debt Service Cover" as this has been caused by the repayment of the Revolving Credit Facility refinancing. We are waiting for a response from Lloyds Bank.

A detailed cash flow forecast was provided to governors and the VPFCS highlighted the extra £300K from ESFA to support learners in small groups in English, Maths and other courses where learning has been disrupted and £558K capital grant from ESFA, which has strengthened cash flow. It is now expected that an overdraft will not be required in the early month of 2021.

Susan Hughes asked about the Budget for the year and DH believes that a deficit is still likely for 2020/21 but not as great as previously thought. The income from the nursery is likely to be affected and therefore any profit from that source will be reduced. Fuller analysis and revised Budget for the year ended 31 July 2021 will be considered by the Board at a Special Meeting on 17 November. The College is required to submit a final Financial Plan to the ESFA (including the Budget for all of 2020/21) by 27 November 2020.

The Board **APPROVED** the draft Management Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2020 and **NOTED** the projected cash flow for the year.

### **1429.2 Capital Update**

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services **PRESENTED** a Report on Capital Works, which covered COVID-19 adjustments and the New Construction Centre at Princes Road.

The Report outlined the COVID-19 items to accommodate, mainly, social distancing and minimising 'mixing'. The Principal also reported on the adaptations made to accommodate learners – refurbishment of the Refectory and some adjustments to the entrance in Vicarage Road.

On 8 July, the College received approval for the New Centre, subject to planning. SELEP will fund £1.258 million and the College the balance of £600K. ESFA have awarded £558K for capital works (category D assets) and the New Centre qualifies. The 'Rubb Tents', which will be replaced by the New Centre, have been identified for replacement for some years. Planning will be applied for shortly.

The Board **NOTED** the Report.

**ACTION: DH**

### **1429.3 Year end accounts and audit**

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services provided an analysis of the adjustments between the management accounts position for the year (see minute **1429.1**) and the anticipated statutory financial accounts position.

Surplus per management accounts	£ 55K
Past service costs (pension)	(633)K
Interest on pension liabilities	(124)K
Actuarial loss	(2,757)K
Total Comprehensive Income (subject to audit)	£(3,459)K

KPMG will be starting their year end audit shortly. They will be particularly reviewing income recognition and the computation of accruals and reconciliations of balances generally. The College does not anticipate any further adjustments to the figures quoted above.

The Board **RECEIVED** the draft Forecast from the Management Accounts to the Financial Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2020.

#### **1429.4 Insurance Review 2020/21**

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services **PRESENTED** a Report outlining the College's Insurance Cover for 2020/21 (on portal) for review by the Board as part of its duty to safeguard the assets of the organisation and procure protective cover against other risks to which the College might be exposed.

The costs of the main insurances for 2020/21 is £27.5K and £2.9K for motor vehicles, which is unchanged from last year and is with the same insurer, Aviva, and this was **AGREED**.

During 2020/21, a valuation of Buildings will be undertaken (cost £3K) to ensure that the current insurance valuations are adequate (Moulsham Street £31million and Princes Road £25million).

Separate HR insurance cover is in place with Peninsula (£12K per annum) in respect of employee tribunal matters and this is considered good value.

#### **1429.5 Financial Regulations**

The Board **APPROVED** the updated Financial Regulations, which had been reviewed with no amendments being necessary. A copy will be placed on the governors' portal.

Two appendices remain outstanding – procurement (awaiting BREXIT being finalised) and major projects – and these will be presented to the next Board Meeting in December for agreement.

**ACTION: VPFCS**

#### **1429.6 College Budget 2020/21**

The Board have only approved a Budget for the period ended 31 December 2020 pending further data regarding enrolments, apprentices and ECC funded students being available.

At this stage, it is not possible to finalise the deficit Budget for 2020/21 presented to the Board in July 2020 of £786K and submitted to the ESFA as part of the Financial Return. Signs are currently that there will be a deficit for the year but not as great as this estimate.

Pleasingly, for cash flow, the College will receive an additional £300K this year for students requiring added support and £558K for capital works, as noted above (**minute 1429.1**).

The Board were informed that an updated Financial Plan has to be submitted to the ESFA by 27 November 2020 with a completed approved Budget for the whole year.

It was **AGREED** that a Special Meeting of the Board should be held to consider and **APPROVE** the completed Budget and the ESFA Plan at 3pm on Tuesday 17 November, immediately before the Audit Committee Meeting scheduled for 4.30 pm on that day. This will enable the deadline of 27 November to be met.

### **1429.7 Internal Audit Plan 2020/21**

The Board **APPROVED** the following Audit Plan for the year:

- Review of Teacher Pension Contributions (done)
- Health and Safety (next week)
- Curriculum Planning (November)
- Human Resources and Mandatory Training (February)

In addition, audits will be carried out at Essex Shared Services Limited – the ESS Board will approve these at its Meeting on 9 November 2020.

### **1430. RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The VPFCS presented this Report. The Risk Dartboard highlights the risks, which are all COVID-19 based. There are 19 risks in total, of which 3 are RED (Going Concern, Learner Technology, Learner capacity on campus), 11 are AMBER and 5 are GREEN.

The Report outlined the steps taken to accommodate staff and students returning to the College, covering directions of movement, signage, sanitisation/hand washing, wearing of face coverings in communal area, socially distanced classrooms, layout of the refectory and coffee shop, seating area and test kits).

It is clear that College practices compare well with other institutions in the sector.

The Going Concern risk is covered in the Principal's Report and the Board recognised that cash flow should be adequate during 2020/21 and an overdraft will not be required.

The College is working towards 50-60% capacity of learners on campus until half term and, if possible, to increase towards the Government expectation of 70-80% thereafter.

The College recognises that an outbreak could arise in the College due to factors outside the College's control, i.e. events in the wider community. The College has upgraded the Learner Mental Health risk from GREEN to AMBER to reflect likely issues from students in this area.

The Board was provided with a copy of the latest iteration of the Risk Register for review and comment and were reminded that the Risk Register is regularly discussed and reviewed by SMT on a weekly basis.

### Governor questions

Sarah Noble sought clarification that it is information technology that is the issue as regards quality not the curriculum content or its delivery and this was given.

The Principal, in response to a question, said that there would be more sampling this year of remote learning, at least once per annum in each area.

An Advanced Practitioner is being recruited in Digital Skills to support IT technology and its use by learners. The College has also engaged with Harlow College on their Edtech programme to help develop IT skills for learners. Learners generally seem to enjoy their learning if they have the technical resources to support it and the broadband connectivity.

Susan Hughes mentioned that she had recently attended a Safeguarding Meeting (9 September) as the Safeguarding Governor, involving the SMT lead and CAMs. This was very positive and covered the issues raised by the COVID-19 situation, with special coverage of Learners' Mental Health and Well Being issues.

Safeguarding will be covered at the Quality & Learners Committee Meeting on 3 November when the Annual Report on Safeguarding for 2019/20 will be presented for discussion and approval.

The Report was **NOTED**.

### **1431. ACOP 2020-21 AND REGULARITY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2019/20**

The Board **APPROVED** the Audit Code of Practice Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2019/20 and it was **SIGNED** BY the Principal as Accounting Officer and the Chair of the Corporation. It will be submitted to the regularity auditor, KPMG, as part of the evidence for their regularity audit.

To support the Questionnaire, the Clerk provided the Board with a Paper explaining the changes to the Audit Code of Practice for this year and changes to the Questionnaire, all of which were relatively minor.

## **1432. QUALITY & LEARNERS MATTERS**

### **1432.1 Self-Assessment Report 2019/20**

The Deputy Principal **PRESENTED** the **draft SAR for 2019/20** to the Board to provide governors with an early insight as to the College's performance against the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework.

It includes judgements both pre-lockdown and during lockdown within 2019-20. Governors were pleased with this approach.

It was noted that final assessment figures (data tables) are not yet available but will be included in suitable form in the final version. It is proposed that the College will continue to be overall **GOOD**, subject to the completion of curriculum validation, presently in progress. Each of the four judgements and all four areas of provision are proposed to be **GOOD**.

The text of the Report identifies areas requiring further improvement and these are marked RI. Some of these issues can be identified as ones of capacity to deliver in changed circumstances now prevailing.

The SAR will move to completion through review by the Quality & Learners Committee on 3 November 2020 and then be approved by the Board in final form on 4 December 2020.

The key recommendations for 2020/21 are itemised within the Report (Pages 5/6).

#### Governor questions

In response to Jenny Beaumont, the Report will be reviewed further to ensure readability as it is in Ofsted format.

Sarah Noble asked how governors can respond to and have greater visibility with students and staff. The DP said new ways will have to be found to facilitate this, given the restrictions, e.g inability to carry out Learning Walks. For example, governors are welcome to join Learner Voice Meetings on line. The Principal will seek input from FEDEC and the AoC as to methods of engagement across the sector.

Amanda Montague commented that governors will not have the benefit of Learning Walks to improve their knowledge of what happens in the College and will lack visibility with staff and students.

The Principal suggested that he could include a slide – Meet the Governors – as part of new staff induction and set up a Teams invite as an introduction.

The DP said that SAR Validation Meetings are taking place next week and invitations will be sent to governors via Teams. Governors could attend in person if able to do so. Sarah Noble is going to attend.

Amanda Montague asked about observations of teaching (mentioned in Principal's Report) for the future to cover both on line teaching and face to face delivery. The DP responded by saying that Penny Petch is leading on a project for effective on line observations and is attending an AoC conference to develop knowledge around this challenge.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

### **1432.2 Teaching & Learning Arrangements 2020/21**

The Deputy Principal presented a verbal Report.

She said that learners are very pleased to be back and that teaching and learning arrangements correspond and follow the COVID-19 Supplement to the Curriculum Plan. Enrolments are encouraging but there are challenges regarding delivery in some curriculum areas which have increased recruitment for this year (e.g. Hair & Beauty) and in maintaining student 'bubbles' generally. This has required splitting groups in alternate weeks to maintain segregation of learners.

There are also issues regarding the delivery of English & Maths in keeping students in their 'bubbles'.

Staff are responding to the challenges, one of which is delivery of teaching in the classroom with no books or resources. This is tough. The Board was pleased to hear how staff have responded and are responding and the Board recorded their thanks in this regard.

The Deputy Principal was **THANKED** for the Report.

### **1433.3 Accommodation and Attendance of Students 2020/21**

The Deputy Principal presented a verbal Report.

Some of this is already covered in the Risk Management Report.

Issues include:

- Timetable checked to address/identify pinch points when students moving around the campuses.
- All learners and apprentices being kept in their respective 'bubbles'.
- Movement in and through communal areas being kept to a minimum.
- Attendance at sessions (on campus and on line) being carefully monitored, as this acts a part of Track and Trace.
- Need to make changes to the Fire Evacuation procedure to maintain 'bubbles'.
- Central process for reporting COVID-19 cases
- Part time learners have dedicated classrooms
- General adherence to social distancing

The Deputy Principal was **THANKED** for the Report.

### **1433. GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

The Clerk **PRESENTED** a detailed Report addressing a number of Governance issues.

#### Governor Recruitment

There is currently one vacancy for an independent governor: there are no candidates at present.

Expressions of Interest have been sought from potential staff governors with a closing date of 30 September. If necessary, elections will be held in October. When the results of the election(s) are known, the Clerk will seek approval to the appointment of two new staff governors by email to the Board and will provide a pen portrait of each successful candidate.

The three new governors will be allocated to a relevant Committee – academic and student governor to join Quality & Learners Committee and staff governor, assuming appropriate skill set, to join the Audit Committee. The Clerk indicated, in response to the Principal, that there is no impediment to a staff member being co-opted to the Audit Committee, in order to meet a skills need. This person, if co-opted, would not be a full governor.

The Board had previously decided that it was content to appoint a staff governor to the Audit Committee if that met the skill requirements of the Committee and that it was not prohibited by the Audit Code of Practice (although not recommended).

Marco Iciek has identified a potential candidate to serve as Student Governor for 2020/21, who is Natalie Devaney – Access Student (mature) – and this appointment was **AGREED** by the Board.

The Board will be asked to approve appointments of staff governors and a student governor by email in October. The individuals will attend their first Board Meeting in December and hopefully Committee Meetings in November (Audit & Q&L).

**ACTION: CLERK**

*Governor's Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2019/20*

All governors who served during the year and are still in post (twelve) were asked to complete the SAQ – eleven have replied. The Clerk provided a Report to the Meeting of these responses.

Overall, Governors awarded a grade of 1.6 (last year 1.48, based on twelve returns) which, in Ofsted grading terms, is just worse than midway between Good (grade 2) and Outstanding (grade 1).

A number of points featured more than once as Areas for Development or Improvement within the responses:

- More opportunities to meet students/interaction & feedback/the student experience post COVID
- Extensions to governor links for curriculum areas
- Greater understanding of the curriculum and its delivery including feedback from CAMs and student satisfaction
- Engagement with stakeholders
- Improve level of challenge and questioning techniques especially in interrogating less well performing areas

The Paper includes possible topics for further training and development for governors for follow up.

**ACTION: CLERK**

The Paper summarised responses to specific questions relating to the College handling of the COVID-19 issues. Governors were satisfied overall with the College's approach and the challenges of delivering learning to students remotely and with the continuance of governance processes during this difficult time.

### Programme for Governors' Development Day 16 October

This is covered in the Principal's Report, where the Board decided that it be cancelled.

### Compliance against English Colleges' Code of Good Governance 2019/20

The Clerk **TABLED** a Report demonstrating the College's Compliance against the Code for last year and this was **NOTED**. This compliance and the College's adoption and adherence to the Code is quoted in the College's Annual Report and Accounts.

### Review of Confidential Papers

The Clerk **REPORTED** that he had reviewed items in the minutes over the past year which had been deemed by the Board and its Committees to be Confidential. These related to Remuneration Committee Reports (covering pay and remuneration of Senior Postholders), College Strategic Future and confidential HR issues.

He recommended that none of these items should, at this stage, be reclassified as Open, since they remain commercially and politically sensitive.

The Board **ENDORSED** the Clerk's advice.

### Chair Succession Planning

The Clerk **REPORTED** that interest had been shown within the Board as to the position of Chair, when the current Chair retires next July.

The Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee will further consider the matter at their Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 3 November 2020 at 4.30 pm.

### Governor Attendance 2019/20

The Clerk provided details of attendance by governors at Board and at Committee Meetings, during 2019/20. The overall average for Board and Committees was 89% (last year 84%).

Governors on leave of absence are not included in the attendance figures.

The generally accepted benchmark within Colleges is 80%. There are no figures as yet for the average in the sector for last year, but the 2018/19 average was 82%.

In the opinion of the Clerk, 89% would be regarded as an excellent average for attendance.

Board & Committee Memberships from 25 September 2020

A current list was provided for information. Governors noted that it would change once the new staff governors and student governor have been appointed.

Meeting Schedule 2020/21

A revised schedule was provided to the Board reflecting changes agreed at the July Board Meeting.

Governor questions

The Chair asked the Clerk to enquire from Barbara Vohmann if, due to her teaching commitments, Board Meetings on a Friday afternoon were going to be a problem.

In response to Trevor Bolton, the Clerk indicated that the quorums for the Board and Committees will be reviewed. The SG&R Committee will consider this at its meeting on 3 November 2020 and make recommendations to the Board Meeting on 4 December 2020.

**1434. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Debs Hurst reported that there had been an instance of fraudulent use of a College purchase card in the Nursery externally, but there had been no loss to the College. KPMG will be informed. It has been recorded in the fraud log.

**1435. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Friday 4 December 2020 at 2.00 pm  
Friday 5 February 2021 – Development Day – arrangements to be decided  
Friday 26 March 2021 at 2.00 pm  
Thursday 8 July 2021 at 2.00 pm

There being no further business, the Meeting terminated at 4.50 pm.

Signed.....Dated.....