

**MINUTES OF THE
EMERGENCY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION**

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 6.00 P.M.

Fourth virtual meeting via Google Hangouts

Present: Jane Farrell, Paul Herridge, Donna-Marie Janson, Simon Lindfield, Janice Robinson

In Attendance: Peter Bailey, Elaine French, Louise Pennington, Alan Walker (Chair of Audit Committee), Lisa Watkin-Stevens

The meeting was quorate.

Apologies: None

In the Chair: Janice Robinson

It was noted that the Meeting papers had been circulated to all Governors and questions invited prior to the meeting, which would then be considered by the Committee and recorded in the minutes.

The Chair gave a brief introduction summarising the reasons for the meeting and the protocols which would be followed during the Google Hangouts meeting, as previously circulated. She also confirmed attendance and quoracy for the Meeting.

Introduction – last meeting uncertainty over international students' recruitment and home students, so agreed have extra meeting in September in case any urgent action was needed re finances. Re finances for rolling students would also have implications for next year. main focus is on international programme and staffing implications.

1. Welcomes and Apologies for Absence

Apologies – as recorded above.

Welcomes – Donna-Marie Janson (new Principal), Lisa Watkin-Stevens (new Vice-Principal)

2. Declaration of Interests - None recorded – and as per previous declarations/register of interest declarations

3. Minutes of the Meeting on 8TH July 2020

The minutes of the last EGC meeting were approved. It was noted that the minutes of the last Corporation meeting would be considered and approved at the next Corporation Meeting. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

4. Matters Arising and Action Points – Progress Report and Significant Risks Schedule

The Committee reviewed the actions' schedule and all actions which had been progressed or completed were noted. Louise Pennington agreed to revise the schedule for the next Corporation meeting. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

The following additional points were recorded:

- Strategy Event – Amex – deferred booking to be rearranged in order to avoid losing the deposit. **ACTION: Janice Robinson/Donna-Marie Janson/Janine Hatcher**
Post Meeting note: a refund has since been agreed by the Amex
- Financial Regulations – Alan Walker reported that he had liaised with Richard Seager and that they were working on the final revisions to the regulations, prior to consultation with Elaine French and then to Audit Committee in November 2020.
- Risk Management section/actions – as it wasn't clear whether the actions had been taken forward, it was agreed that the Risk Management Group should oversee this at its meeting later this term. **ACTION: Elaine French**

At this point the Chair also reminded Governors to keep the evening of **26th November 2020** free in their diaries for the Mid-Term Seminar, which will be used to discuss strategy with the

SIGNIFICANT RISKS 2020/2021 – noted.

5. Updates on Student Recruitment September 2020

Donna-Marie Janson referred to her paper on page 18 and confirmed that the Student recruitment total was 1,885, plus 31 International Students (comparing with 1,825 and 76 respectively in 2019). She advised that the increase in overall numbers was manageable but was likely to reduce slightly before the final enrolment figures have been recorded and comprised new Level 3 Students and Year 2 Students, the latter of which has seen high conversion rates.

Regarding the decrease in Level 2 Students, being 138 compared to 211, Donna-Marie Janson reported that last year had seen the College's largest increase in Level 2 Students. The Committee was reminded that Cardinal Newman Sixth Form had ceased offering Level 2 provision and the College had decided to sustain its L2 entry requirements.

Regarding the College's competitors, it was noted that the new Haywards Heath Sixth Form provision was discussed noted that for 2020/2021, their first year, they had recruited 300 Students to date.

The socially distanced Student induction days have proved very successful and were appreciated by Students and Parents. 30 Students, owing to Covid-19 related issues (shielding etc), were unable to attend the induction days, but were sent the induction materials in order to ensure that they were able to commence their studies this year.

The Committee queried whether owing to the increase in overall numbers, the College would have more A Level Students this year, compared to last year and the Principal confirmed that both A Level and Level 3 BTEC Student numbers had increased, along with IB Student numbers which are at a similar level to last year.

In response to a question arising from the capacity to cater for the increase in Student numbers together with limitations on the flexibility to meet all course choices, it was noted that this would be discussed at the Strategy Event on 26th November 2020, along with reviewing future plans. **ACTION: Donna-Marie Janson**

Regarding the College's physical capacity to cater for the additional Students, it was noted that it was manageable at present, but that there may be other implications during the year depending upon the developing pandemic. To date, the College has focused on limiting set size which will be kept under review. An update will be given to Governors at the October Corporation meeting.

At this point a question received from a Governor prior to the meeting – “Does the change in number of Students in 2020, have a greater impact in certain departments ie Science of Arts?” In response Pete Bailey reported that to date there was no discernible pattern, with broadly similar increases across the overall curriculum offer. However, the College has established an extra set for both Chemistry and Biology to meet the demand for science subjects by the new IB students. It was also reported that engineering had been offered for the first time this year which has proved popular.

The Committee recorded its congratulations to the Staff for achieving the recruitment levels during such a difficult time.

6. Finance Update

a) International Students

Elaine French presented the item and referred to the Executive Summary on page 19 of the papers, the contents of which were noted, as summarised below:

10 returning year 2 Students, all of whom are attending on site;

22 new applications for 2020/2021 enrolment – 17 on site and 5 on line (owing to flight suspension from Japan);

Total Income £211K (£6k not yet received);

Agent commission has reduced by £5K and International Department costs have reduced by £17K, with no planned overseas trips and fewer Students.

The breakeven assumption as recorded at previous meetings and based upon current staffing levels has been maintained at £216K. There has been some redeployment of administrative Staff elsewhere in the College, including a consequential cost saving from not needing to recruit the usual temporary staff in the registry at this time of year.

The following points and responses to questions were recorded:

- In response to a question from the Committee regarding host families/International Student accommodation, it was confirmed that there had been no issues this year in finding suitable host families.
- International – income per Student, after costs, totals about £7K per Student (32 Students in total so far), which compares with the average funding for domestic

Students being £4K per Student (notwithstanding some additional funding for some Students).

- The Committee queried how many International Students didn't return to College after their first year and SLT advised that the detailed figures weren't to hand, but that it was probably very few and in single figures, bearing in mind that many International Students only enrol on 1 year or termly courses.
- Overall there are fewer International Students this year so far, although more are expected to enrol in January for the termly courses; in 2019 there were 70 International Students and to date there are 32 in 2020.
- Taking into account a question from a Governor received prior to the meeting, querying whether costs had been reduced to match the lost income, Donna-Marie Janson explained that with regard to tutor costs reductions have been made to reflect the change in International Student numbers this year with a reduction in staff costs by 2 periods with immediate effect and a further 4 period reduction in staff costs post-Christmas. It was also noted that the majority of costs related to Staffing and as the Department has to remain staffed, there has not been a pro rata reduction in staff and associated costs, noting the redeployment of staff recorded above and the reduction in tutor time. The remaining Staff are in post to manage the remaining International Department's Students, projected additional Students enrolling later in the year. Governors were also reminded that the general College Policy was that International Students joined existing classes provided for domestic Students, so there were no additional costs associated with specific sets having to be established for International Students.

The Committee discussed the future of International Students at College, taking into account the established existing and successful International Department, the latest Student numbers, income, costs and future projections for the rest of this year with a current breakeven situation, that the International Students should continue to be recruitment for the time-being, during the pandemic and that this would be reviewed again next year. It was agreed that if the decision to cease recruiting International Students was implemented, it would be difficult to re-start an International Department in the future, post pandemic. SLT confirmed that they would be monitoring closely the International Students' progress and additional short course enrolments during this year. The future of International Students will also be discussed at the Strategy event on 26th November, along with any impact on domestic Student numbers and local demographics, noting also that SLT were meeting for a Strategy day in the next few weeks. **ACTION: Janice Robinson/Donna-Marie Janson**

b) Review of Budget Estimate for 2020/2021 (Staff costs, Cash flow and overdraft facility)

Elaine French presented the item to the Committee and also referred to relevant points raised under item a) above and the executive summary on page 20 which details the key changes to the previous budget provided to Governors. The following points were recorded:

- No further changes to the figures given in the summary since the paper was prepared and the Committee noted the various reductions and increases in income/costs since the Summer Term budget figures.
- The Committee discussed the various operational risks arising as a result of the pandemic continuing including a lack of testing facilities which may impact upon face

to face Teaching time, but also noting that online alternative lesson provision, would be available in most cases if Teachers were asymptomatic; in some instances (illness), teaching cover may need to be sought. Financially the impact should be low.

- Currently there are 4 staff members who are isolating owing to their children having been sent home from school and awaiting test results. The HR Manager is investigating whether it's possible for SFCs to obtain priority tests in order to speed up testing/results where possible.
- There are also some Students isolating owing to know contact with some who has tested Covid positive. There are 3 confirmed Covid positive cases, but the Students concerned have not yet ventured into College and are isolating.
- In response to a question from Governors regarding Staff morale, SLT confirmed that there was some understandable anxiety and the College has invested in Staff meetings and briefings in the Main Hall or via Hangouts so that SLT can respond to Staff questions and seek assurance etc. Masks and visors are available to Staff and the 2 metre social distancing rule has been implemented. No Staff member has refused to work on site. The HR Manager is also working with the College's Occupational Health Practitioner on a webinar for all Staff and has also carried out meetings with some anxious staff in order to better manage any concerns.
- Regarding Parents' concerns, two live Question and Answer session have been offered to Parents and the turnout has been low with less than 10 Parents joining each session.

Thanks were recorded by the Committee to SLT and all Staff for their work during the pandemic.

7. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 14th October 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

It was noted that the decision regarding whether the meeting should be face to face on site or held remotely, would be made discussed at the S & G Committee on 24th September.

8. Any Other Business

The Principal reported on the decision to go ahead with Open Days on 26th September in the day (and an evening Open Day in October) and the measures which would be implemented to ensure that social distancing and other Covid guidelines, were in place.

Post Meeting Note: Since the change in Government and Local Authority Guidelines, unfortunately the College has had to cancel it's Open Day on 26th September and all prospective Students/Parents, have been informed.

Part II Confidential business - None.

Chair.....

Date.....

Louise Pennington 16/09/20