

**MINUTES OF THE
CORPORATION MEETING**

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11th OCTOBER 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.

MEETING 17/01

Present: Jane Alderton, Randall Anderson, Robert Bridges, Ramy Danial, Jane Farrell, Philip Harland, Simon Lindfield, Cathy McDonnell, Billy McNally, Anton Pruden, Janice Robinson, Richard Seager, Katharine Travis, Simon Waters.

In Attendance: Peter Bailey, Elaine French, Louise Pennington

Apologies received: Jill Arnold, Ayas Fallon Khan, Zenobia Thomas-Atkin and Aldona Wheeler

In the Chair: Janice Robinson

1. Welcomes and Apologies for Absence

Apologies – as recorded above.

Welcomes – Simon Waters (new Governor (Teaching Staff category))

2. Membership Matters

Simon Waters election as the new Staff Governor (Teaching) was ratified by the Corporation, following the resignation of Lucy MacDonald. He was appointed with immediate effect for a four year term of office, subject to his employment contract with the College.

3. Declaration of Interest

None recorded.

4. Minutes of the Meeting on 5th July 2017 Part I and Part II (Confidential)

The minutes of both the Part I and Part II minutes were approved by Corporation and the Chair authorised to sign these as a correct record of the meeting.

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

The contents of the action points' schedule were considered and the actions completed were noted, including those which were on this meeting's agenda.

Item 7 and 6 ii - Teaching allowances – Philip Harland confirmed that he had taken forward the matter as per the actions in the Part II minutes.

Item 8 Strategic Plan: Developing a card with the Strategic Aims – not yet completed.

ACTION: Philip Harland

Item 8 Strategic Plan – consultation process with Staff – on going.

The action schedule will be updated to reflect any changes accordingly for the next meeting.
ACTION: Louise Pennington.

SIGNIFICANT RISKS 2017/2018– the risks for 2017/2018 were reviewed and would be taken into account, where appropriate when considering various items on the agenda. It was also noted that the Risk Group had met on Tuesday and the business would be reported via the next Audit Committee in November. However Randall Anderson reported on one recommendation to introduce a new category B risk – Reputation to College in light of the proposed land development. **Chair's Report**

6. Chair's Report

Janice Robinson advised that there were no specific items to include within her Report on this occasion but referred Governors to item 14 Confidential Business where her written report would be presented, comprising two items. In this regard, it was resolved that the Staff and Student Governors should be asked to leave the meeting prior to the start of item 14, owing to the confidential nature of the business, involving identifiable members of staff.

7. Principal's Report

Philip Harland gave his report to Governors on the following items (*NB some items from this Report have been transferred to Part II minutes owing to the confidential nature of the minutes*)

- Capital investment fund Bid – the initial submission failed and this decision was appealed but this also failed with no explanation. Further updates will be given in the Property Update in the item on Finance.
 - Student Numbers – 1,530 16-18 Students on roll and equivalent to 1,512 by first census date. Last week the numbers had increased to 1,625 and if the College is successful in achieving a similar historical conversion rate, this will ensure increased income (subject to lagged funding arrangement).
 - There has also been growth in International students from 57 to 71 this year.
 - Increased Student numbers has had an impact on the facilities available to students on site and SLT are investigate short term means to improve this.
- a) Apprenticeship Levy (from Matters Arising) – Philip Harland informed Governors that the College would not be taking this forward at the moment, although consideration may be given to offering one apprenticeship within the Finance Department.

8. Student Governors' Report

In the absence of Zenobia Thomas-Atkin, Ramy Danial gave the Student Governors' Report noting the following:

- Successful Freshers' Events – One week comprised Enrichment activities and the other comprised Freshers' event. The SU Executive has been resolving funding allocations for the various societies.

- It has been suggested that IB Students were not interacting with Student Governors and the Student Council and this will be resolved at the Student Council meeting on Monday.
- There have been some complaints about Science laboratory space particularly from Chemistry Students, where some of their lessons are held in general classrooms. The Students concerned have been informed of the reasons for this and that this should be resolved by early next term, following works being carried out to change 3 maths classrooms into one laboratory.

9. Curriculum and Standards

i) Student Outcomes

a) Student Recruitment and Class Sizes

(NB some items from this Report have been transferred to Part II minutes owing to the confidential nature of the minutes)

Peter Bailey presented the paper to the Corporation reporting that the College had recruited between 80/90 additional students, so have increased the average class size compared to last year, to 18.4 from 17.5. This has placed increasing pressure on some teachers where they are operating with above average class sizes. In some instances the College has had to increase the number of sets, following an increase in Student numbers e.g. MFL (modern foreign languages). A few subjects remain small such as Music, but without more space, it's unlikely that the College can increase its capacity much further.

In response to a question from Governors regarding Varndean's average class size compared to the national benchmarks, It was noted that comparable information was not to hand but that on a local level, BHASVIC had higher class sizes compared to Varndean, despite additional pressure this year on numbers at the College. The measure of square meterage per student at Varndean last year was in the region of 5.2 metres per student, compared to the national base being 7 metres per student; hence Varndean is operating below the average. This year, following an increase in student numbers, the measure has moved to 4.8 m per student.

The difficulty setting recruitment targets was discussed owing to uncertainty in predicting applications and enrolments and it was agreed that it was important not to discourage applications from students. It was also recognised that regardless of class size, it was essential that quality was maintained.

b) Annual Student Support Analysis

In the absence of Jill Arnold, Peter Bailey presented the report and explained the traffic light grading system from green, amber, red and finally blue, reflecting the seriousness of the support issue.

In response to questions from Governors, Peter Bailey explained how the system worked noting that students could move both ways along the traffic light grading system and also noted issues which triggered the support system e.g. missed lessons, missed homework,

poor attendance etc. The Student concerned would be invited to a meeting with relevant staff to establish a programme/target etc to implement in order to resolve any issues. At the blue stage, under certain circumstances, a student may be asked to leave the College.

The analysis in the paper includes a breakdown of students within the support system, by ethnicity and gender etc and it was apparent that there were more male students who went beyond the green category. Furthermore at the higher end (blue), there were more non-white UK male students, although overall there were fewer students at this level. However following a question from the Corporation, it was noted that the analysis did not extend to identification of disability issues, although it had been discussed last week at the College's Equality Committee. Philip Harland advised that he has been tasked with completing further investigation in this area. In response to a question from Governors regarding Students' understanding of the support system and procedures, the Student Governor confirmed that this was explained to Students during Core Studies.

c) Data Dashboard – Student Progress on Exam Results and Value Added.

Philip Harland introduced the Dashboard reflecting Student progress and referred to earlier discussions held regarding results, earlier in the meeting and to ensure that quality is not affected owing to an increase in student numbers.PH.

Following the change to linear A levels, there has been no apparent change to either progression or to achievement. The analysis shows that there is only a marginal reduction in the pass rate in the results, compared to the previous year. In terms of progression the ALPS (Advanced Level Performance System) score achieved is grade 2 overall, reflecting that the College is in the top 20% of A Level students' achievement on a national basis.

Philip Harland explained the ALPS system, being a national analysis carried out by Durham University looking at Students incoming score to Sixth Form and how they achieve historically which is then translated to an ALPS grade being the expected outcome grade per student.

Regarding AS levels, the provision has declined significantly from 1,743 in 2012 to 196 in 2016/2017, reflecting the change to linear A levels. Performance has reduced from ALPS 3 to ALPS 4, although this remains good;

BTEC – Governors have been made aware over the last few years of various difficulties within this area. Progress has moved from ALPS 7 to ALPS 8 in respect of Diplomas. Progress has gone to 7 from 8 in the BTEC and Subsidiary diploma. Progress on the BTEC Certificate has moved to satisfactory/good. In some areas significant improvement and high progression was achieved e.g. business (achieved a 4) achieved high progression including business (went to a ALPS 4). Regarding the achievement of target grade per student, 67.7% of students did not achieve their target grade, although there has been some improvement compared to last year. Although greater improvements were hoped for by staff, the latter improvement in overall target grade percentage, has generated some optimism amongst staff, although much more work is required in the longer term in order to improve this to a reasonable level.

A Level achievement has reduced marginally 55.5 from 56.4 with regard to the top grades. AS Level achievement has reduced marginally and there has been an increase in some BTECs in terms of Distinction and Distinction * grades.

Level 2 Awards – increased from 31 to 37 achieving higher grades

IB qualification – position has been sustained, being marginally down - 5.71 to 5.64 as average score, but compared worldwide averages, Varndean's results remain outstanding.

The dashboard does not include the College's GCSE results (English and Maths) as the GCSE results are more complicated to explain, owing to the fact that English GCSE moved to the new grading 1 – 9 system, whilst Maths remained at grades A – E. Achievements on both were lower than anticipated and English results were down by approximately 10% and Maths down by approximately 9%. It was also explained that the English GCSE was based on a new specification with no coursework, which did not suit all students.

Overall the Corporation was encouraged by the results and congratulations were recorded to staff and students. **ACTION: Philip Harland**

10. Human Resources

a) Staffing Update

(NB some items from this Report have been transferred to Part II minutes owing to the confidential nature of the minutes)

Philip Harland presented the HR report on page 27 of the papers, which drew Governors attention to recent staff turnover.

It was noted that following a suggestions from Governors last term, SLT had advertised teaching vacancies nationally via the TES (Times Educational Supplement), having secured advertising arrangements via an annual subscription of about £4.5K. Consequently 6 vacancies had been advertised through the TES and as a result the College had secured a reasonably sized field.

11. Finance

Elaine French introduced the various Finance reports and referred to certain figures therein. The following key items were highlighted:

a) Financial Update

- i) **Year End Financial Dashboard**
- ii) **Year End Management Accounts**
- iii) **Year End Balance Sheet**

Elaine French explained that the update focused upon the year end position reflecting the fact that the Finance Department was working on the year end accounts which are in the process of being audited. From the summary, Governors noted that a surplus has been achieved at the year end, (before pension adjustments) in the region of £250,000. At the December Corporation meeting the completed annual report and financial statements will be presented to Governors having also been considered firstly by the Audit Committee. This will show a £77,000 operating deficit owing to the pension adjustments which are purely accounting adjustments and won't therefore be included in the College's financial health scoring.

Dashboard and management accounts

(NB some items from this Report have been transferred to Part II minutes owing to the confidential nature of the minutes)

The underlying surplus position of £250,000 was highlighted on page 29 – the dashboard which provided a summary of the financial papers (management accounts) which followed. The main variance between the original budget and the final position was noted, including the fact that £200,000 plus additional funding had been received in respect of the additional students enrolled as a result of the Haywards Heath Sixth Form closure, together with grant funding and transitional grant monies (approx. £28,000). During the year SLT acknowledged that the College had under-recruited Access students, so recognised that there would be less income. An adjustment for pension contributions (FRS102) was also highlighted together with additional staff costs to reflect an increase in student numbers.

A significant variance in the main central services costs was highlighted, having spent more on professional fees compared to the initial advice to Governors. This was generated by costs associated with the transitional period in establishing the Russell Martin Academy and also the costs associated with consultancy work from Simon Hinks and Jill Sawyer who provided assistance post their retirements. More money was invested by the College in IT software in order to improve Student Services as advised previously to Governors. There have also been some cost savings, including within international marketing where commissions were less than predicted, together with savings from utilities up to £16,000.

Pensions costs – 2 adjustments have been imposed this year including one in respect of a direct staffing cost being the annual pension liability service cost being £175,000 and secondly the pension interest adjustment cost, being £63,000.

In the accounting statements of the profit and loss, the pension liability adjustment has fallen by £1.3M.

OTHER PROPERTY ISSUES: Governors were informed that SLT had been reviewing the College's priorities regarding its estates and the increasing pressure upon accommodation and priorities are in the process of being identified. The more immediate priorities are the provision of additional bathroom facilities and improvement of the canteen and kitchen space.

CIF BID 2017 – If the College is successful in its bid this year, the College will have to focus upon the urgent requirement for additional laboratory space and general classrooms. SLT is working on the new bid and will aim to submit a similar proposal to that submitted last year but with the aim of basing this upon a lower cost per square meter in order to have a better chance of success; consideration will also have to be given to potentially increasing the College's own contribution to the associated works and proposals will be brought back to Corporation in December. **ACTION: Philip Harland**

b) Health and Safety Annual Report

Elaine French highlighted the main features of the report including the recent fire safety survey which has been required following the Grenfell Tower disaster in London – no action

has arisen from the survey. A new first aid rota has been initiated which has enabled a better management of first aiders within the College to enable all first aiders to be called on an equitable basis.

12. Policies

a) Health and Safety Policy – amendments – minor changes re CET rather SLT and to Executive VP to Business Director – housekeeping.

The changes to the document were noted as explained by Elaine French and Janice Robinson and Philip Harland were authorised to sign the revised Policy. **ACTION: Janice Robinson/Philip Harland**

13. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 6th December 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

Mid-term Seminar 21st November at 6.00 p.m.

14. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

PH referred in to his report that Staff member died end of last year Fran Murison, Staff Development and staff very upset by her death. Valued her greatly and did lot for College. Sent on Governors' behalf condolence card to her family to recognise her appreciation of her work for College

Governors were reminded to submit their completed Start of Year Letter forms to Louise Pennington as soon as possible.

15. Confidential Business

Refer to separate Minutes. At this point it was resolved that Staff and Student Governors should leave the meeting owing to the confidential nature of the business, which the Chair explained.

Chair.....

Date.....

Louise Pennington 11/10/17