

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11th OCTOBER 2023 AT 6.00 P.M. MEETING 23/01
IN ROOM 5, VARNDEAN COLLEGE

Present: Aisha Al-Najjar, Jill Arnold, Jodie Braham, Ayas Fallon-Khan, Paul Herridge, Donna-Marie Janson, Simon Lindfield, Cizzie McGuinness, Keith Perera, Alan Walker, Brendan Ward, Aldona Wheeler

In Attendance: James Gordon, Elaine French, Lisa Watkin-Stevens

Apologies: Danyalle Brinsmead, Jane Farrell, John Williams, Jason Wye

Welcomes: Keith Perera – new External Governor, appointed at the last Corporation meeting in July 2023.

In the Chair: Jill Arnold

1. Welcomes and Apologies for Absence

The meeting was quorate

Apologies – as recorded above.

2. Membership Matters – Update

Thanks were recorded to Jane Farrell for her support and excellent service as a Governor, noting that as reported at the last meeting, she would be retiring with immediate effect.

Reference was made to the Search and Governance Committee meeting (additional meeting this term), held on 4th October 2023 to consider, amongst other matters, the current Governor vacancies and expressions of interest received from individuals who had responded to the Governor vacancy advert (on the website and also circulated to the new Parent body).

It was also recorded that with regret, Yasmin Khan had had to step down as one of the two new Governors appointed last term owing to personal matters.

It was confirmed that there were currently 2 external Governor vacancies.

Following a review of the expressions of interest received, 4 candidates had been invited for interview with a Panel of 3 members, from the S & G Committee members, being Jill Arnold (Chair of Governors), Brendan Ward (Chair of S & G Committee) and Donna-Marie Janson (Principal). Once the interviews have taken place, appointments will be considered at the next S & G Committee meeting on 2nd November after which recommendations for approval will be made to the next Corporation meeting on 6th December.

At this point, agreement was sought from the Board for the option to extend the current Corporation membership from 17 members, up to the maximum allowed in the I and A to provide flexibility for future appointments. In conclusion, the Corporation endorsed the

recommendation, the details of which would be finalised at the December Corporation meeting. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

The Board was reminded that other membership matters would be considered at the next scheduled S & G Committee meeting on 2nd November, with recommendations being made to the December Corporation Meeting.

At this point Aldona Wheeler joined the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

None recorded at this time, other than those declarations notified at previous meetings and as recorded in the Register of Interests' records.

4. Minutes of the Corporation held on 12th July 2023

The minutes of the meeting were approved by the Corporation and the Chair was authorised to sign these. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

5. Matters Arising and Action Points – Progress Report and High-Level Risks' Schedule 2023/2024

The Corporation noted the progress with actions to date and those which were on the agenda, in progress or would be taken forward in due course. The following points were recorded:

Accommodation Work Group – meeting to be convened for the week of 20th November – to be agreed with Chair and Elaine French. It was also resolved that at the meeting future meeting dates for this academic year should be agreed to fit in with the masterplan works' schedule etc and added to the Corporation's meeting dates schedule. **ACTION: ELF/AWG Chair/LEP**

Furthermore, regarding the tender evaluation report – it was agreed to circulate this to Governors with the draft minutes, noting that a copy had been passed to the AWG Chair, earlier today. **ACTION: ELF/LEP**

Mandatory Safeguarding online training for Governors – thanks were recorded to Lisa Watkin-Stevens and HR for organising the necessary training via the TES training for governors, noting that a link to this had been circulated to Governors. All Governors are required to complete the training and confirm this to Louise Pennington, as soon as possible. It was also noted that as HR had set up the training arrangements, they would also be able to monitor progress. Governors were informed that the training would be repeated every 2 years, and in the interim year, Lisa Watkin-Stevens, would provide safeguarding training to Governors pre-Corporation. **ACTION: Governors/LEP**

Sponsorship Policy – noted that this would be carried forward owing to delay as awaiting further ONS guidance and that it would be presented via Finance Committee to review in the first instance (estimated in Spring Term 2024 Meeting). **ACTION: ELF/LEP**

Financial Regulations review/update – carry forward via Finance Committee. **ACTION: ELF**

Student Welfare/Mental Health issues' Report (May 2023 minutes) – in retrospect, it was noted that this item would be included with the annual safeguarding report due to be presented to the December 2023 Corporation meeting, rather than the October 2023 meeting. **ACTION: LJJ**

It was noted that the actions' schedule would be updated to reflect any changes detailed above. **ACTION: Louise Pennington.**

HIGH LEVEL RISKS: The Chair drew Governors' attention to the high level risks, reminding all to bear the risks in mind, during the various meeting items.

6. Chair's Report

Jill Arnold reported on the following activities since the last meeting:

External Board Review:

As reported at previous meetings, the Search and Governance Committee has considered the various EBR providers and on behalf of the Committee, Louise Pennington had sought 2 quotations, in line with the College's financial regulations for any item costing over £5K. In conclusion the S & G Committee members had agreed (via email) to appoint Stone King (Educational lawyers, with SFC experience), subject to Corporation approval, noting the costs for the review, being £7k plus VAT, plus expenses. It was also recommended that should Stone King be unable to timetable a review before the end of July 2024, the Governing Body, should proceed with the second quotation issued by the AoC, which the Corporation agreed.

Governors were reminded that all Colleges were required to have completed their EBR by end July 2024 and every 3 years thereafter.

Governors queried whether an EBR would proceed if notice of an Ofsted inspection arose and it was confirmed that the EBR would continue, regardless of a scheduled inspection. Furthermore, in response to other questions from the Board, relating to the EBR details, Louise Pennington agreed to circulate the Stone King proposal with the draft Corporation minutes and also provided a summary of the process involved, including meetings with certain Chairs/Governors (details to be agreed), observation of one of the Corporation's Committees (usually Audit Committee, but not necessarily in person) and attendance in person at one Corporation meeting.

The Corporation endorsed S & G Committee's recommendations. **ACTION: LEP**

7. Principal's Report

Executive Summary:

a) Start of year Update

The Principal introduced the paper and reported on 2 matters which had not been included in her Start of Year Update paper:

- 1) Sudden death in service of a member of staff during the summer holidays and Governors were informed of the various remembrance initiatives and support made available.
- 2) Stabbing incident in the City on Thursday last week has affected some Students, particularly those who knew the victim, together with general concerns about safety in the City and support options have been reminded to all, including the provision of additional drop-in sessions for Students wanting to talk or other support. The College has worked with other providers in the City including BHASVIC, Varndean School and Patcham too. The College's tutorial programme has also been updated with a focus on keeping safe, together with providing opportunities for general discussion regarding safety and knife crime. Regarding the latter point, The Sussex Police Youth Team has been approached to provide activities to inform Students about knife crime etc.

Start of year: The Principal highlighted the various aspects of her report including the positive Student enrolment process which had started earlier this year. It was also noted that there were 20 extra Students enrolled on the Foundation year. To date, the feedback received at this stage in the term, from Staff and Students, has been very positive.

b) Strategic Plan Update

The Principal highlighted the main points as follows:

Student Experience: progress and improvements were highlighted, noting that with regard to attendance, this remained a key target and an area for development. Nationally, attendance has been a challenging issue post pandemic particularly as in order to improve achievement, being on site is crucial and the College is still below its target, not unlike many others in the sector.

Student Survey – positive feedback overall has been received.

Work experience and employer interaction, which was reported at the last meeting, demonstrated significant improvements, but it was recognised that there remained further work to be done to reach the targets.

UCAS data positive, which will be reported on below in the meeting, including the HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) analysis, presents the College in a good light compared to national benchmarks, including the independent sector. .

Environmental Sustainability: significant inroads have been made, but there is still much more to be progressed. The impact of the existing huts/portable cabins, will continue to have an impact on the College's carbon footprint. The new boiler, for which grants were received, will help improve the College's energy efficiencies and reduce costs.

All year 1 Students via their tutorials, complete the carbon literacy qualifications.

Ecology and biodiversity: 100 trees have been planted, involving Students and the rewilding areas have developed, with Student engagement in this area improvement. At this point the Student Governors reported on Student engagement in this area, highlighting an increasing interest and involvement, with regular environmental meetings. It was also noted that Student representatives had attended the recent conference “Grow Greener”, held at Plumpton.

Curriculum: Reference was made to the agenda item on curriculum and standards later in the meeting.

Attainment and achievement remain good compared to the national figures, with retention also remaining positive.

The College continues to perform well in terms of value added.

Regarding Student enrolment targets being 5% increase year on year, the Board was advised that this would not be sustainable in the longer term unless the capacity of the College’s accommodation is able to be increased further. It was agreed to keep this target under review at the next strategy event.

Reference was made to the building project underway in the 2 quads which will create classroom space but noting that funding wasn’t available currently for Student social space and recognising that space is tight at times in social areas and the Library. A catering pod has been purchased providing coffee and cold drinks etc. The improved toilet facilities were also recognised at this time. At this point the Student Governors reported on the water pressure issues from the new sinks and it was reported that the tap fittings were due to be replaced shortly to rectify this.

The Deputy Principal drew attention to the current reliance on the temporary portacabins for the teaching, noting that with the 4 new classrooms will relieve some pressure, but as the strategy is to continue to grow, the College will have to continue its reliance on the portacabins which are below the optimal standard for teaching when compared to the other classroom facilities.

Regarding the reference to first year Students completing the carbon literacy qualification this year in tutorials, being equivalent to 10 hours of independent study, it was noted that last year, this had been offered as an enrichment activity.

In response to a question from Governors, and the fact that some Students were unable to enrol on some of their changes of preference for courses owing to insufficient space, the Principal explained the cost issues including the need to achieve a target class size per subject to improve efficiencies. Furthermore, it was noted that there were in fact only 2 or 3 subjects where it hadn’t been possible to enrol all Students on their preferred choices in the first instance, but that this only arose in respect of late transfers or late applications and that later in the term, this had been rectified in all cases, as spaces had become available when other Students had swapped subjects.

Global Citizenship: End of year report will be issued later this year and shared with Governors. SLT confirmed that there had been good progress as reflected in the careers survey from Students and that enrichment activities had also improved, having invested increasing resources over the last 2 years, with some Students selecting more than one enrichment activity. Notwithstanding this positivity, via the survey analysis, it was apparent that there were lower satisfaction rates recorded in some Student groups, including Adult Education. This will be reported in the SAR and EDI reports in December and/or March Corporation meetings.

Community and Partnerships: Broadly positive aspects within the area, except with some issues arising from the Adult Education provision, noting that enrolments had remained fairly static post Covid and that it was taking longer than expected to increase numbers, making some courses unviable in terms of cost. Regarding the accountability agreement, some positive feedback has been recorded to date.

Staff: Absence rate is within expectations and sector benchmarking data is awaited; there were several Staff absences last year owing to sickness and this is continually monitored. Regarding Staff CPD, Staff wellbeing and satisfaction survey – reflected challenges experienced by Staff last year owing to various reasons, many of them because of post pandemic and cost of living issues. Currently, SLT is working with JCC to investigate the issues and a report will be brought to the Corporation once it's been finalised, with the aim of improving staff satisfaction. At this point Aldona Wheeler, reported that via the S7 College network' staff meetings, experiences and suggestions for improvements, were shared and this experience was similar to other Colleges.

Financial Sustainability: – the higher numbers of red and amber ratings within this section were highlighted but not surprising as this reflects the challenging financial position of which Governors have been made aware, including the Staff pay award of 6.5%, details of which have not yet been confirmed from the SFCA owing to its ongoing negotiations with the Unions.

The Governing Body were reminded that the Adult Education income will be less than budgeted and also the target for improvement in income will also need to be reviewed at the next Strategic Planning session. The Principal explained the difficulties experienced nationally in this area since Covid, but also reported on the work underway to improve enrolments, following the appointment of the Director of Adult Education. The Adult Education area will be kept under review by SLT and the Governing Body will be provided with updates.

In response to a question from Governors regarding International income which has exceeded its target by £100K, it was noted that the additional income was very welcome and would be used to balance out other areas of the budget where there was either a shortfall or an increase in expenses.

c) Government Policy Update

The Principal advised the Board that there had been no further updates since the last meeting (Skills Agenda, T Levels etc), apart from the announcement at the recent Conservative Party Conference of a new qualification the British Standard.

d) Staffing Report inc. Pay Award

Governors were informed that the SFCA negotiations with the Unions were continuing, noting that the Unions were aiming to achieve an agreement based on the same pay award agreed for School Teachers (between 6.5% and 8.44%, noting that the latter percentage increase related to those Staff at the bottom of the pay scale). SFCs have received additional funding which would contribute towards the pay rise, but would not meet the anticipated total pay rise. It was noted that in the Teaching Staff budget there had been a reduction in FTEs by 2.9 FTEs, in order to maximise efficiency. This matter will be discussed further at the Finance Committee in November and following a request from the Chair of the Finance Committee, it was agreed that a breakdown of the pay bands affected by the predicted pay rise range of 6.5% to 8.4%, should be included in the papers. **ACTION:**
Elaine French

8) Student Governors' Report

The Student Governors, Aisha Al-Najjar and Cizzie McGuinness provided the following update to Governors on various activities involving the SU and Student Governors:

- The Student Governors and other SU executive members, have visited Year 1 tutor groups to improve communications and to ensure that new Students are fully aware of the SU and its activities, together with how to make contact with the various SU executive members.
- The Student Governors and SU executive members were also present during Freshers' week to raise awareness of the SU and its role at the College. The interactions with new Students had been well received, with various new events per day such as stone painting, board games etc
- Other SU communications include the Student Bulletins and the SU Instagram account, the latter of which has seen numerous new followers.
- Owing to the actions above, the SU received good feedback from the new Students who were keen to join the SU.
- Student Governors and SU Executive members have also attended open days for prospective students, wearing T-shirts identifying themselves as SU members and were able to answer questions and provide information to those interested.
- Daniela Sramova has taken over as the new Staff SU Co-ordinator and commenced in post by having a 1 to 1 with each SU Executive Member and set targets to provide a clear focus which the SU welcomed.
- The improvements in the canteen area and toilet facilities had also been favourably received by Students, with fewer issues and problems, likely to be raised this year, as a result of the works carried out.
- Current building works in the 2 quads: the ongoing work had generated a lot of interest from Students, and they were keen to see the works completed asap, and were tolerating the noise, notwithstanding the contractors' timetabling to avoid very noisy work during key times. The photographs and posters placed near the quad showing the end stage of the works, have also been of great interest to Students and

more information would be welcomed. The Principal advised that the aim would be to finish the project in January 2024. Elaine French also reported that the construction company was also intending to share a drone video of the main construction works to date, shortly. The screening of the main corridors by the quads were noted and that this related to safeguarding issues to ensure that the workforce couldn't observe Students and vice versa.

- Lunchtime classrooms' opening for Students was working well, and it was reported that the detailed classroom availability per day would be advertised via the information TVs on site, with effect from today.

Thanks were recorded to the Student Governors for their report.

9) Curriculum and Standards

James Gordon, Deputy Principal and Lisa Watkins-Stevens, Vice-Principal, presented the various papers to the Corporation, the contents of which were noted and the following key aspects were highlighted as recorded below, followed by questions from Governors:

a) Executive Summary of Student Performance Data Dashboard (including value added & exam results for all Learners)

i) Data Dashboard

James Gordon, Deputy Principal, presented his reports and the following points were recorded:

- The data dashboard presentation has been revised and based on the current data provides a positive overall picture of the College's performance.
- SLT has prepared analysis of the headline results, comparing these with the national averages, but emphasised the importance of considering the context. Varndean College Students who sit A Levels, have an average of 5.9 GCSE Score (National average is 6.6%), so this reflects very well and is demonstrated in the value-added analysis, as the College's Students overall do perform above the national average.
- SLT has introduced other value-added measures, including that from the 6 Dimensions for SFCs (assessment based upon course purpose, technology, social support, autonomy, learning materials and skills), which simplifies the interpretation of the figures ie calculates the percentage grade above or below the national average. In the latter analysis, this places the College's Students' results place them in a position of being 20% higher than other SFCs.
- In terms of applied general qualifications the ALPS measure is proving less reliable as a measure as only some subject areas are included in the measure. The College offers a varied provision and the 6 dimensions VA score is more accurate. Regarding the College's BTEC Nationals provision this is 0.25 of a grade less than the average. Cambridge Technical qualifications (CTECs) on the other hand is 0.5 of a grade higher than the national average.
- GCSEs: English and Mathematics show excellent comparisons with the national average, being 18% above this in respect of Maths. Governors were reminded that the GCSEs are in respect of those Students who haven't passed their GCSEs at secondary schools prior to enrolling at Varndean College. In English the pass rate is

27% nationally, whilst the College's rate is 61%. Governors were reminded of the Students within this category, who have been affected by the pandemic and are also disadvantaged for various reasons, in many cases.

- Attention was drawn to the various value added graphs included in the paper which Governors welcomed. Referring to the summary of the report, the Principal drew attention to the fact that the College was able to demonstrate its impact on the Student body, showing the value added impact across the board, including the very academic Students, having high prior attainment levels, but still with good value added outcomes. In response to a question from Governors, SLT confirmed that this aspect of the College's performance was emphasised at the various School liaison visits and open days to ensure that prospective Students and Parents, were aware of the College's attributes, reflecting in value added rather than focusing solely on results analysis. In response to an observation from the Student Governors regarding the recording of value added in the College's online records, the Principal advised that despite the manual entry of GCSE grades in respect of newly enrolled Students, there were only a minor number of errors. It was also noted that the GCSE entries were checked with Students, via the Tutorial process, so any errors should be identified and amended quickly. Examination remarks were also included in the system. In summary, SLT explained how the College's data was recorded via the MIS system which captures the relevant data to produce the value added analysis and that manual data entries were part of the process.
- Students also benefit from learning to study independently which is a great asset for those progressing to Higher Education and is shown in University retention and results' analysis.

b) Student Enrolment & Class Sizes

ii) Executive Summary

iii) Analysis

The report provides a breakdown of enrolments for this year, showing that the College's recruitment numbers have increased to 1,140 new Students. Within the new enrolment figures, the foundation year (level 2) numbers have increased, together with other pre-advanced qualifications, which have been re-branded to improve clarity.

Census date is 42 days after enrolment in mid-October, with the College's target being at 1,850 on which funding allocation is based.

Set size analysis: the average set size is above 18 Students which is an increase on previous years and there are also a few Year 1 classes which have 22 – 23 Students per class. Regarding the latter, various teaching and learning strategies have had to be implemented to assist Staff in managing larger groups. There have also been some site improvements such as in creative arts and design where this has enabled an increased capacity in set size.

IB classes have become more efficient and have increased to 14.8 per class compared to 12.5 in 2021.

The majority of Students have followed similar patterns from previous years regarding feeder schools, although following an observation from the Governing Body, there has been an increase in numbers recruited from Cardinal Newman, although it was thought that this may be in respect of Foundation year and/or some Media Arts offers.

c) UCAS Placements Report

- i) **Executive Summary**
- ii) **Analysis**

Lisa Watkin-Stevens introduced this item and summarised the key points, noting that the initial placements report format had changed slightly, so that the total number of applicants is displayed as a percentage of cohort, which makes it easier to see the number of applications per year, together with the number of places offered/accepted.

There has been a slight decrease in the latest figures regarding the number of applications made by College Students to Higher Education, although fewer Students were subsequently unplaced. It's likely that the cost of living crisis has had an impact on application.

The College has worked with Students and Parents/Carers to ensure they are fully informed regarding Student finance, via events held in the Spring Term last academic year, together with another similar event held last week at Sussex University where speakers from Chichester, Brighton and Sussex Universities, together with the College's Careers Department, were involved.

Next week the UCAS placement data will be released and from this a paper will be prepared for Governors to view at Corporation in December 2023. **ACTION: Lisa Watkin-Stevens**

Attention was drawn to the national UCAS figures, noting that last year 41.5% of 18 year old Students applied to University and that there was a 3.1% reduction in applicants gaining a place, compared to the previous year. UCAS reported an increase in applicants interested in courses perceived to have better career prospects eg digital, computer courses etc.

Students at College are supported throughout their UCAS application process, including the preparation of their personal statements, via their tutorials and specialist support within the Careers Department. There is also an "Aspire" programme for Students applying to Oxbridge/Medicine/Dentistry.

Noting that the College's UCAS applications may be lower than other Colleges, the Principal explained that the Art Foundation year post Varndean College and before applying to University (often enrolling at GB Met), was very popular for Students seeking creative/art/design related courses and careers, combined with the fact that more Students are also interested in taking a gap year and deferring HE entry.

d) Staff CPD Report including Summary of training and development to support Staff in managing the various difficulties and challenges

- i) Executive Summary**
- ii) Report**

James Gordon reported to Governors on this item and referenced Lee Finlay-Gray's (Director of Curriculum Quality and Development and IB Diploma Programme Coordinator) Cross-College responsibility as a member of SLT for this aspect. Lee Finlay-Gray has worked with HR in producing this report, noting that there was an electronic tracking system, providing insight into a range of Staff continuing professional development activities. An online dashboard is produced which collates the various development activities which then link to Staff appraisal targets.

This was made of the various Inset days and provision, including some twilight opportunities, with themes ranging from Ofsted readiness, mentoring, long term memory developments etc.

Mention was also made to the Support Staff conference held at Varndean College, in July this year for SFC Staff in Sussex and Surrey, which proved to be very popular and useful.

Some Staff also participate in the External Quality Review (EQR) scheme with reviewers visiting other Colleges' curriculum areas, within the EQR group and vice-versa. It was also noted that Donna-Marie Janson was currently the Chair of the EQR Steering Group.

Lisa Watkin-Stevens referred to the appendix added to the document relating to a Matter Arising/previous agenda item from July 2023 Corporation, referring to challenges faced by Staff, in which it was agreed that a report on training and support in place would be provided to Corporation, details of which extend to specific Support Staff training too.

In response to a question from Governors regarding the EQR and differences in provision at other Colleges, it was reported that the EQR was seen as a very supportive and constructive process for the Colleges involved and that all participants were happy to share good practice. Usually, the EQR involves 2 reviewers per College, together with 1 paid advisor (paid for by EQR) which provided a robust process and noting that the group comprised all S7 Colleges with others too (eg Wessex Group of Colleges), totalling 22 Colleges overall, which provides a broad mix of expertise).

At this point it was also noted that Governors participated in various training courses, many of which were optional and that records were kept by the Governance Team and HR, details of which were reported annually to the S & G Committee in the Autumn Term.

10. Finance

Elaine French, Vice-Principal (Resources), introduced and presented the following items to the Corporation, the contents of which were noted by the Corporation:

a) **Financial Update – including draft year end Management Accounts**

i) **Executive Summary**

j) **Draft Income and Expenditure 12-23**

k) **Draft Balance Sheet 12-23**

l) **Cashflow Forecast 12-23**

- The current forecast is largely unchanged from the summary year-end figures provided to the Corporation in July 2023.
- Headline figure year end finished £200K short of the budget EBITDA (earnings before income, taxation, depreciation and amortisation), which is equivalent to the College's cash surplus and based on the budget set in May last year. Account should be taken of the 3% pay budgeted figure whilst the actual pay was 5% plus (additional £300K cost), with the understanding that the College delivers an additional 40 hours.
- Attention was drawn to the income and as mentioned earlier the under delivery of the Adult Education provision; the final figures will be confirmed via the ILR (Individualised Learning Record) tomorrow, after which the College will await the potential final claw back from the DfE, probably due in December 2023/January 2024.
- Despite the additional staffing costs and the under delivery of the Adult Education provision, the College has managed its finances tightly in order to avoid any significant deterioration.
- There may be some other slight adjustments as the financial statements are finalised but these will be accounting adjustments, details of which will be agreed with the financial statement auditors (audit work commenced this week).
- In response to a question from Governors regarding the expected adult education funding claw back, it was reported that this would probably be accounted for in next year's accounts, although the figure was not expected to be significant; prior to finalising the accounting, the matter will be discussed with the auditors, once the final figures have been calculated. However, it was noted that it was usual practice to make the adjustment in year. In this regard, Elaine French agreed to liaise with Simon Lindfield, Finance Committee Chair, before the Finance Committee considers the final draft accounts at its meeting on 17th November. **ACTION: Elaine French**
- The 2022-3 year end will finish with a financial health score of "good" as predicted.
- Cash flow – draft figures at present and forecast, will be reviewed and updated for Governors to consider at the December 2023 Corporation meeting. The cash element listed in respect of the grants received to meet the on-going construction costs for the building works (2 x quad construction works), was brought to Governors' attention.

- b) **ESFA Funding agreement changes** – the ESFA document which had been included in full was noted by the Corporation (rather than the expected "significant

changes only” reference. Elaine French advised that there was nothing significant to bring to Governors’ attention in the current wording.

c) Property Update

Elaine French gave a summary of progress with works to date since the last meeting:

- Boiler works has been completed and noted CIF bid was awarded to the College in respect of this work. This will improve the efficiency of the College’s water/heating costs and avoid any problems over the winter period. In future, the next stage will be to improve the heating system on site, subject to funding grants being made available.
- Post 16 Capacity fund awarded bids to the College, following which the works on the 2 quads were commenced, post planning approval. It was noted that the Project Managers/Consultants had not only put the bid application together on behalf of the College, but they had also handled the tender process for the works finalised in November 2022. The internal auditors reviewed the College’s tender processes and noted that these were robust.
- The successful bids for capital funding were notified to the College in May 2023. To date the works are progressing in line with the schedule and is slightly under budget at this point too; a contingency sum has been included in the budget to cater for any differences in final costings.

During the Summer break much of the ground works were completed, together with various summer works projects including – refurbishment of the dining hall, canteen and office; toilets refurbished across the site, classrooms 30 and 31 were merged to provide 1 larger space for 3D design and photography; IT suite has returned to a newly refurbished room 18 expanding the space for Students to use College computers; a new catering coffee pod was purchased which will be installed for Students to use from next week; there were various office moves together with refurbishment including a new Adult Education office.

Thanks were recorded to the College’s Estates Manager, Andy Watson, for all his hard work in co-ordinating the various projects.

College Accommodation Master Plan – regarding future developments, Elaine French reported that another opportunity to submit a bid for capital funding would be made available in December 2023 and that SLT were starting to formulate early plans for Phase 1 to replace the temporary Huts/Portacabins; it was noted that this would be split into 3 phases to co-ordinate with the maximum funding available per application and discussions were currently underway with the College’s architects and consultants on how best to take this forward. At this point, and referring to an action from the Summer Term Corporation meeting, it was confirmed that the Accommodation Working Group meeting would be held during the week of 20th November, with a report/draft minutes being presented to Corporation in December 2023. **ACTION: ELF/LEP/AWG Chair**

Accommodation Master Plan – The Corporation was reminded that the Plan had been presented by the Architects, to Governors at the start of the March 2022 Corporation meeting and it was agreed that although this hasn’t been recorded in the minutes at that time, it was resolved that the Plan had been agreed at that time, and resolved to record this within these minutes. It was agreed to re-circulate the latest

Accommodation Master Plan to all Governors with the draft Corporation Minutes.

ACTION: ELF/LEP

Thanks were recorded to Elaine French for all the work involved with the capital bids and project work, in addition to her finance and audit responsibilities.

Alan Walker, Chair of AWG referred to the Tender Evaluation document which he had received earlier today and agreed to raise any questions arising from this with Elaine French, outside the meeting. Any outstanding matters relating to this would also be raised and discussed at AWG in November. It was also noted that the Tender document would be circulated to all Governors with the draft Corporation minutes. **ACTION: ELF/AW/LEP**

Regarding the current building works, further details will be presented and considered at the AWG meeting including any queries outstanding from the bid and tender process.

In response to a question from Corporation, it was noted that the construction works commenced on 17th July 2023 and although the timeline in the tender evaluation document, states that this would take 33 weeks (end time 1st week of March 2024), it's currently indicated that the works will be finished in January 2024.

11. Policies and Other Documents

a) **Executive Summary for Items 11a i and ii:**

- i) **Health and Safety Policy**
- j) **Health and Safety Annual Report**

The Corporation approved the H and S Policy and received the H & S Annual Report and recorded thanks to Nick Stubbs H and S officer, for his work. **ACTION: ELF**

b) **Student Bursaries & Free School Meals – update:** It was agreed that this policy's next review would be amended from Sept 23 to May 24, to fit in with the application process. **ACTION: SLT/LEP (May 2024 Corporation Agenda)**

- i) **Executive Summary**
- iii) **Policy**

c) **Equality Policy – revised policy and new format.**

- i) Executive Summary – the contents were noted and thanks were recorded to George Marshall (EDI Lead) for producing the revised document. The format of the policy was revised to bring it into line with other College policies.

The Corporation also approved the minor amendment relating to the definition of civil partnerships.

12. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 6th December 2023 at 6.00 p.m.

Bearing in mind that the proposed date was likely to be inconvenient for more than 1 Governor, it was resolved to move the meeting date to **Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 6.00 p.m., subject to confirmation. ACTION: Simon Lindfield/Louise Pennington**

13. Any Other Business - none.

14. Part II Confidential business

It was noted that the brief confidential business from the last meeting had been included in the Main business Part I minutes.

There was no other confidential business to report.

a) Matters Arising – None.

b) Other Confidential business - none

17. Enclosures for Information – Meeting dates for 2023/2024 academic year –

Governors were encouraged to put the dates relevant to them in their diaries.

Louise Pennington 11/10/23

Chair.....

Date.....