

**Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held via MS Teams on Thursday 11 March 2021 at 5pm**

- Present:** Kathy Passant (Chair of the Corporation)  
 Christine Bampton (Vice Chair of the Corporation)  
 Margaret Boneham  
 Michelle Brabner (Principal)  
 Dyese Bruce (Student governor)  
 John Fell  
 Victoria Fenner (Student governor)  
 Rob Firth  
 Alex Gamil  
 Vickie Hayes (Staff governor)  
 Diane Hutchinson  
 Carla Kennaugh  
 Alex Kenny  
 Suzanne Knowles (Staff governor)  
 Mo Kundi  
 Susannah Porter  
 Carol Reid (Staff governor)  
 Richard Simms  
 Vipin Trivedi
- In Attendance:** Maura Cummins (Deputy Principal)  
 Lisa Farnhill (Clerk to the Governing Body)  
 Anne-Marie Francis (Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality) (welcome only)  
 Eddie Green (Vice Principal Services)
- Apologies:** Katy Robinson
- Absent:** Jonny Lea (Parent governor)  
 Loange De Silva (Student governor)

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
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The Chair opened the meeting, welcoming all the new members and attendees and highlighted that at this meeting, the Corporation would be saying goodbye to the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality and the Vice Principal Services, having been two of the biggest contributors to meetings for some time. The Chair expressed her heartfelt gratitude on behalf of current members of the Corporation and those who had worked with them over the years, noting that their work had been appreciated and would be acknowledged by a token of appreciation sent to their homes.

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
	<p>The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality thanked the Chair and the Corporation for being given the opportunity to be in attendance and say good bye, with the Vice Principal Services confirming he had received his gift, thanking the Chair and the Corporation.</p>	
<b>C.21.67</b>	<b>Item 1: Apologies for absence</b>	
	<p>The Clerk detailed the apologies of Katy Robinson, which was accepted by the Corporation.</p>	
	<p>It was confirmed the meeting was quorate.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Item 1 noted:</u> The Corporation noted and accepted the apologies detailed above.</b></p>	
<b>C.21.68</b>	<b>Item 2: Declarations of Interest</b>	
	<p>The clerk declared an interest in relation to her employment at St Mary's College, where the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality is a member of the Governing Board.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Item 2 noted:</u> The Corporation noted the declaration.</b></p>	
<b>C.21.69</b>	<b>Item 3: Minutes and Resolutions</b>	
	<p><b>Item 3.1 - Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of 14 December 2020 (inclusive of confidential minutes).</b></p>	
	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed for accuracy and approved unanimously without amendment.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Item 3.1 - Approved:</u> The Corporation resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 as a true record.</b></p>	
	<p><b>Item 3.2: To Adopt The 5 Written Resolutions Passed By The Corporation Since 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b></p>	
	<p>The Chair asked the Corporation to formally adopt the 5 written resolutions presented since the last meeting, confirming the details had been circulated with the meeting papers. It was noted that the number had been higher than is usual due to the number of items necessitating urgent attention, with it considered preferable to approve the items by written resolution rather than calling the Corporation together.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Item 3.2 - Resolved:</u> The Corporation resolved to formally adopt the 5 Written Resolutions passed by the Corporation since 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b></p>	

**Item 3.3: Chair's Action Report**

The Chair asked the Clerk for clarification on Chair's actions, with the Clerk confirming that this would be items necessitating urgent approval that would ordinarily be within the remit of the Corporation, approved by the Chair due to urgency preventing the opportunity to call a meeting or circulate a written resolution. The Chair advised the Corporation that no items designated Chair's Action had been undertaken since the last meeting of the Corporation.

**Item 3.3 - Noted****C.21.70 Item 4: Matters Arising / Actions Summary**

The Chair asked the Corporation if there were any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting in December that were not indicated in the report or included within the agenda. None were put forward.

The Clerk presented the actions summary from previous meeting and confirmed that all items were either completed or on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.

**Item 4 - Noted: The Corporation noted and accepted the report.****C.21.71 Item 5: Confidential items**

No items within the minutes approved or on the agenda were considered to be confidential.

**Item 5 - Noted****C.21.72 Item 6: Revised FE Commissioner Financial Benchmarks**

The Chair invited the Vice Principal Services (VPS) to deliver a brief update to the Corporation on the revised Further Education Commissioners (FEC) Financial Benchmarks.

The VPS explained that the FEC uses financial benchmarks to look at the financial health of a College and to inform interventions. It was noted that these were in addition to the financial health dashboard issued by the ESFA from the information provided through the reporting cycle which included the submission of accounts and forecasts.

The Corporation was informed that the 6 indicators outlined did not all need to be obtained, with a view being taken of overall performance, with the achievement of each being used as a guide by the FEC to identify areas of concern or to inform intervention strategies.

The VPS advised that a colour coded assessment of the College's position against each benchmark had been included in the circulated information, highlighting that in the current year, high pay costs and the deficit were outside of the recommended parameters.

The pay costs as a percentage of income were considered to be difficult to attain, with the target being below 65% and the sector average being above the benchmark at 67% in 18/19, with the figure for 19/20 due in May and expected to be higher than the previous year.

**A member commented** that the College could be seen to be taking action, however, agreed with the consideration that it was a difficult benchmark to achieve, with reducing income and rising pay costs, adding that unless overall costs reduce substantially they would expect it to go up further. **The member added** that it should be noted that whilst the Corporation resolves to work towards achieving the benchmarks and advocating for a reduction in pay costs overall, as a smaller college, it was more difficult to achieve due to there being less scope for economies in staffing compared to larger colleges.

The VPS advised the Corporation that at the point of merger it was recognised that the College could run for a few years with high pay costs to support the achievement of growth, however, as outlined in the strategy day, the College was now in a position where growth was still necessary, however, the staffing needed to be reduced in line with current income and student numbers.

**A member added** that staff as a percentage of income had been an issue raised for a number of years, without acknowledgment that although high, was only one benchmark and that as a whole, the College is ok and addressing financial issues and has always failed to convince the FEC that this is high but manageable.

**A member asked** how the performance against the benchmarks would be monitored, acknowledging a need for progress and asking how frequently this would be monitored. The VPS advised the Corporation that 5 were already monitored in the College KPI's within the management accounts, and within the forecast is the debt service cover ratio. The VPS added that borrowing as a ratio of income can be added to the KPI's, noting that all were calculated and formally monitored within the finance record.

**Item 6 - Noted: The Corporation resolved to accept the report.**

#### C.21.73 Item 7: Chair's Report

The Chair provided a detailed verbal update of actions undertaken in her capacity as Chair since the last meeting of the Corporation.

The Chair advised the Corporation of the successful outcome of the recruitment process for a number of senior posts as outlined in the written resolutions, including the newly recruited Clerk. The Chair advised that having met with the new Clerk; they had begun the process of prioritising the work that needed to be undertaken, which included reviewing paperwork and documentation related to the Corporation. The Chair advised that a full revision of Corporation policies would take place in the coming months, however, asked for the Corporation to approve amendments to the standing orders to align quoracy requirements with the terms of reference for each Committee as outlined in the circulated report. The Corporation provided unanimous approval to the amendments.

The Chair identified other priorities, including the sequencing of meetings, and the need to align governance business into a sequential and logical order, highlighting that the Standards meeting having been held the previous evening, was not considered to be good practice. The Chair confirmed that the meeting calendar for the coming year would be reviewed to ensure that one meeting would feed appropriately into another. The Chair highlighted that although recently completed, the process for the Corporation self-assessment also needed to align with the timing for the skills audit, including feedback to the Governance Committee and feeding into governor annual reviews to ensure all the processes were working together to be more efficient. The Chair noted that there was considerable work to be undertaken and this would take some time to complete but that this would streamline Corporation business to be more effective in the future.

The Chair provided details of training undertaken, including the Chair's Development Programme which was on-going and included tutorial elements, working with 6 other FE Chair's, having recently looked at problem solving through asking open questions. The Chair concluded that the course had been worthwhile with additional feedback on the content to follow as the course progresses.

The Chair informed the corporation of her attendance at the AOC conference, which following some technical difficulties had some interesting and useful sessions including information on the FE White Paper, a session from Gavin Williamson as well as strategic objectives and risk management, with actions for consideration including the introduction of a corporate dashboard and an opportunities register alongside the risk register.

The Chair advised the Corporation that other actions overlapped with the Governance Committee update, including action taken following the recommendations of the FEC around improving governance. The Chair noted that the number of new members in attendance were part of the work undertaken, to strengthen and expand the skills of the Board, again welcoming the new members and thanking them for their commitment.

The Chair informed the Corporation that a review of Governance had been recommended, with funding available for a National Leader of Governance to undertake this by the end of March. The Chair noted that whilst considered a valuable exercise, undertaking this now would not be the most effective use of the resource, as the outcome of the review would likely highlight areas the Corporation is aware of but had not had the opportunity to rectify having been without a permanent Clerk. A request had been presented to extend the deadline however no response had been received.

The Principal advised that a response had come in that day, agreeing to the extension, adding that progress towards this would be reviewed at the next meeting between the Chair and Principal on Monday.

The Chair detailed action toward the recommendation to recruit a Chair for the Resources Committee, thanking Governor JF for having stepped in to cover the position until the recruitment process concludes. The Chair informed the Corporation that the FEC had supported the process by funding a specialist recruitment agency. The Chair confirmed that the recruitment agency had been instructed and shortlisting would take place on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
	<p>The Chair advised the Corporation that along with the Corporation Vice Chair, regular meetings were taking place with the Principal to ensure issues were addressed in a timely way and the College is well supported by the Corporation.</p> <p>The Chair concluded by informing the Corporation that flowers had been sent to RF as her work for the Corporation came to an end in February, noting the excellent work and contribution she had made to the Corporation over many years but especially as interim clerk, indicating that she had filled provided valuable support at a time the Corporation had most needed it.</p> <p><b><i>Item 7- Noted and Approved: The Corporation resolved to note the verbal update and approve the recommended amendments to the Standing Orders to align quoracy requirements with Committee Terms of Reference.</i></b></p>	
C.21.74	<p><b>Item 8: Governance Self- Assessment Report 2019/20 and QIP for 20/21</b></p> <p>The Chair asked the Corporation for their consideration and approval of the Governance Self-Assessment, confirming that as noted in the Chair's report, the self-assessment processes of the Corporation needed to be strengthened, with this being the first time governors had done this outside of the process for the whole College SAR.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that it was good practice, and although not done at the right point in the cycle, it was felt it was an important exercise to undertake, providing a firm base to move forward with self-assessment in the future. Plans were outlined to ensure in future years this would be done by September/October to feed into the College SAR, having aligned with other work including the skills audit and member reviews.</p> <p>The Chair informed the Corporation that the self-assessment process could be mapped against the AOC's code good governance or the EIF, with it considered more appropriate to map against the EIF to align with the College SAR, however, a biannual review against the code of good governance would run alongside this. Members were invited to comment on the process, with a <b>member asking</b> if the college was graded as good by Ofsted, should governance be 'requires improvement' having not achieved a grade of outstanding for the College.</p> <p>The Chair advised the Corporation that whilst linked, it did not have to be the same, with the grade more directly aligned to the leadership and management grade; however in principle there was no reason that it couldn't be different. The Chair advised the Corporation that it would not be possible for leadership and management to be good if the College was graded requires improvement, however, if leadership was graded as good, it would be likely that governance would also be graded as good.</p> <p><b><i>Item 8 - Approved: The Corporation resolved to approve the Governance SAR and the implementation of the associated improvement plan.</i></b></p>	

**Item 9: Strategic issues****C.21.75 Item 9.1: Principal's Report**

The Principal presented her report, noting that it followed a similar pattern to the last few reports, providing an overview of what has been happening in college since September.

The Corporation was advised that the first section covered the handling of the pandemic, noting that the first day of term after the Christmas break had been a staff training day, which concluded with the announcement of the national lockdown, preventing students from returning to College.

The Corporation were advised that whilst considered a more difficult and challenging lockdown in terms of morale, reassurance was given over the instant response, transferring lessons to remote delivery, noting that whilst some issues remained present, the process for transitioning to online delivery was improved compared to the previous lockdown.

The Principal informed the Corporation that whilst staff and students were not able to do everything they would usually over the half term, they had coped well. Issues were considered to have been addressed quickly and the Southport site remained open for vulnerable students. The Corporation were informed that at the outset, 50 students were onsite; however this varied over the period of the closure and was closely monitored and managed. The corporation were advised that KGV closed entirely after the exams following checks that students did not need access, streamlining the management of the facilities during the lockdown.

The Principal advised the Corporation that the College leaders were able to decide whether exams due to be taken in January and February went ahead. Having reviewed the extensive preparatory work done by the students, and noting that exams commenced the day after the announcement of the closure, the College allowed the exams to go ahead. Students were advised that they could elect to sit the exam or decline and take the opportunity to have an assessed grade or alternative assessment; however, there were no details available at that time as to what the alternative would be.

The Principal informed the Corporation that following the news of a case of the highly infectious South African variant being located within the PR9 area, links with the local authority led to the hall being used as a base by the local public health team to go out and test from, confirming that no tests were taken in the College, with teams sent out to test from the College's central base. The Principal reassured the Corporation that all considerations were made, including the relevant risk assessment and insurance checks, noting that the College did not profit from the use but ensured that costs incurred were covered. The Principal informed the Corporation that the local authorities' use of the hall ended a few weeks ahead of the reopening for students.

The Principal thanked the VPS for the extensive work undertaken to set up the College testing centre, noting that some staff had really enjoyed the experience of being involved in the testing. The Principal reiterated the volume of work involved in both setting up the test centre and the distribution of self-testing kits, with a 30 page guide for this element alone, with continued need to be mindful of the time and work load for these additional tasks.

The Principal advised the Corporation that around 450 tests had been carried out with all with negative results to date, with the uptake of testing at around 80% at KGV and 51-52% at Southport, with plans to promote the benefits to the students at Southport whilst acknowledging that it was not mandatory.

Moving on from the Pandemic, the Principal advised the Corporation that the collective consultation with unions started in February, however, was unable to provide additional details due to the sensitivities around it. The Corporation was advised that this was intended to be a genuine consultation with unions and staff on ways to achieve financial efficiencies, done in a slow, steady and considered way to minimise the damage caused by the process.

The Principal informed the Corporation that marketing continued with virtual open events with further ideas for development being considered, including a live question and answer session which had worked effectively for some institutions, however, others had reported issues. The Principal noted difficulties in marketing to Formby, with marketing buses going into that area to ensure that students know about the College and what is available to them from Southport College.

The Principal advised the Corporation that applications had increased overall for school leavers with better attendance at interview, however, noted a significant increase in dual applications, with 130 made to both sites, noting that this may be reflected in further applications to other institutions. The Principal concluded that there was an expectation for increased enrolments at KGV with applications for Southport remaining low, with feedback from schools implying that students working at a lower level were yet to apply, therefore actions were in place to work with the schools to encourage these learners to make an application.

The Principal informed the Corporation that the plans to implement the processes for the Teacher Assessed Grades had begun, led by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (VP C&Q). It was noted that there would not be any algorithms, with the newly appointed Deputy Principal (DP) taking over the lead of the process once the VP C&Q relocates at the end of the month. The Principal commented on the extensive work necessary in a short timeframe, with a commitment to ensuring the process would be fair and unbiased to mitigate reasons for appeals.

The Principal advised the Committee that there had been considerable work done in the area of student support. The Principal indicated confidence towards the imminent Matrix accreditation, due to be completed by April, which was a kite mark for careers advice and guidance, needed for the OfS and also important for the students.

The Corporation were advised of investment in E-Books to facilitate offsite learning, supportive of the commitment to reduce paper, enabling home learning and reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The Principal advised that there had been increased student need in relation to Safeguarding, with management closely monitoring the capacity of the team, praising the team whilst acknowledging the need for external support, grateful for the success in a bid to work with a mental health nurse in the next academic year.

The Principal notified the Corporation of the continuing work to improve and develop the premises, with the Pennington building starting to be reoccupied.



The Principal advised the Corporation that there were plans to discuss an opening ceremony with the LCR, with it hoped that this could be arranged for later in the year when the weather improves and the social restrictions begin to ease.

The Principal confirmed that audit work continued and was being managed remotely, including the funding audit which had concluded with a HE audit now underway.

The Principal concluded by summarising the activities of the HR department, having provided continued support to staff throughout lockdown. The team had facilitated the online interview processes for new recruits which were considered to have gone very well and were now answering questions and managing staff concerns regarding the collective consultation.

**A member** thanked the Principal for the comprehensive summary of the activities, noting the number of new government initiatives and continually revised government guidance in recent months, acknowledging the additional work that had been undertaken, thanking the Principal and all staff for this.

**A member commented** on the number of safeguarding concerns, at 354, represented 10% of the student population, whilst acknowledging that some may seek help more than once, **asking** if this was a correct reflection, that 10% of students had sought help.

The Principal confirmed that it would represent 10% of the entire population, noting that safeguarding did span the whole college, however, informing the Corporation that a greater proportion was from the 16-19 cohort.

**A member asked** if the mental health issues and concerns had increased with the Pandemic. The Principal confirmed that this had been the case, with anxiety increasing and presenting in those that had previously not experienced it, whilst those with pre-existing issues had escalated. Other areas of concern had been increased incidences of domestic abuse which had risen nationally and filtered into the College community. The Principal reiterated that the safeguarding team had coped with the increased workload but capacity was being monitored, with each vulnerable learner allocated a case worker with frequent contact throughout the lockdown to ensure they were as well supported as was possible.

**A member commented** on how well staff had kept in contact with students during the lockdown, stating it was testament to the commitment of the staff to student wellbeing despite the increased workload. The member added that this had been reviewed at the Standards meeting the previous evening, commenting on how well staff had adapted to the new ways of working, seeing increased engagement from external agencies and parents through the online meeting formats.

**A member complemented** the College for their considered approach to the consultation **asking** if it was the intention for staffing cost reductions to take from effect September. The Principal confirmed that the costs savings were intended to be in place for September.

The Principal explained that the first stage of the collective consultation had begun, looking at saving costs associated with curriculum management, curriculum leader roles, and more broadly, hours allocated to courses, adding that the College was out of alignment with other providers. The Principal explained that having reviewed the offer of other providers rated as outstanding by Ofsted, hours did not equate to high quality.

The Principal confirmed that any of the ideas taken forward to completion would be implemented by the start of the next academic year. The Principal advised the Corporation that having had experience of undergoing the process previously, it often brought about additional opportunities not evident at the start of the process, indicating the need to take time to consider all options proposed. The Principal advised the Corporation that the timeline had been planned carefully with inbuilt flexibility to allow for this, adding that there needed to be a balance between time to assess the options and providing people with certainty. The Principal advised that there was considerable work to be undertaken, with it unclear whether there will need to be individual consultations and the impact that would have on the capacity within the Senior Leadership Team and HR, reiterating the commitment to progressing in a true, meaningful consultative way which had provided positive outcomes in the past.

**A member expressed** sympathy for the difficult task being faced by the senior team, **asking** if there would be a voluntary redundancy package offered, adding that this could present an opportunity for some staff.

The Principal explained that this was not usually offered at the beginning of the process; however it was considered the right thing to do in this case. The Principal explained that as the collective consultation was entered into, a detailed email was provided to staff and followed up with a second email with guidance around the voluntary redundancy process, inviting staff to express interest in the scheme. The Principal explained that not every application would be accepted, noting that as the College moves into individual consultations, the windows for voluntary redundancy would be reopened if it was thought to be beneficial, noting that some staff will not know if they should be considering it. The Principal confirmed that a number of enquiries had already been received with the next step to move from general enquiry to an application which would be later in March.

**A member** complemented the Principal on the risk summary, indicating that the coloured summary presented a useful overview, **asking** if the Resources Committee could receive this at each meeting to focus the Committee on the correct priorities.

The Principal advised the Corporation that this was something that had been used in the past with the VPS having suggested its reintroduction. The VPS advised the Corporation that the information within it did go to the Resources Committee in different formats, with the **member asking that** this one page summary is also included to provide oversight.

The Principal informed the Corporation that ideas for the corporate dashboard were being considered, including the use of symbols to draw attention to areas of concern and that opinions would be sought on its development and implementation.

**Item 9 - Noted: The Corporation resolved to note and accept the report.**

**VP  
Services/  
Principal**

#### **C.21.76 Item 10: Accommodation Update**

The Vice Principal Services, summarised the 3 elements of the report:

##### **1 - Pennington Refurbishment**

The VPS highlighted that as detailed within the Principal's report, the completion was imminent. The delay was attributed to the weather preventing the completion of the external render which had now been completed.

The VPS advised the Corporation that the final sign off was still outstanding however; reoccupation had begun with construction activity already taking place in the building. It was noted that to avoid time table changes, the English and Maths students would complete their studies where they were currently based rather than being moved into the refurbished building.

The VPS advised the Corporation that the LCR had confirmed that they did not want to reclaim the underspend, asking the College to allocate the funds to additional work. The VPS advised that following internal discussion, the money was allocated to equipment required for the T Level's and other minor works not originally included in the refurbishment. The LCR had confirmed that this was acceptable and provided an extension to the timeframe, with the grant funding of just under £2,000,000 to be concluded by the original deadline of the end of March. This then allowed for an extension to the College contribution with a deadline of the end of summer, noting that all works would be completed within the budget of £2,200,000 and to be concluded by the new academic year.

### **2 - Low Carbon Fund**

The VPS explained that the grant from the LCR had been allocated to complete works to improve the energy efficiency of the College. The VPS informed the Corporation of issues preventing some of the works being completed within the timeframe, with the window tender having been unsuccessful in appointing contractor. The Corporation were notified that the LCR had allowed the allocated sum of £70,000 to be used over an extended period, allowing the works to be completed over the summer. It was noted that the other works were near completion, and would meet the deadline of the end of March.

### **3 - FE Capital Allocation**

The Corporation were advised that the ESFA had awarded money to the College to deal with condition improvements. The Corporation were advised that two projects could not be concluded by the deadline of the end of March as the works had to be completed when students were not occupying the building. An extension had been requested which at the time of issuing the report had not yet been approved, but had since been granted, with an extended deadline of September awarded for all works.

The VPS advised that 50% of the works would be done by the original deadline, with the rest scheduled for completion the over summer.

**A member thanked** the VPS for the update and added that this had been reviewed in detail at the meeting of the Resources Committee.

**Item 10 - Noted: The Corporation noted the accommodation update**

### **C.21.77 Item 11: Whistleblowing And Fraud Policies**

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the annual review of the Whistleblowing And Fraud Policies to the Corporation for approval. The Committee Chair advised the Corporation that the VPS had consulted with the unions and as a result, made a minor update to the Whistleblowing policy. It was noted that both policies had been checked with Audit Code of Practice to ensure compliance, adding that the Committee had no concerns with only, minor changes made since the previous approval.

With no questions or comments, the Corporation offered unanimous approval for the policies.

**Item 11 - Approved: The Corporation resolved to approve the policies**

**C.21.78 Item 12: Re-Appointment Of Auditors and Proposed Fees**

The Chair of the Audit Committee advised the Corporation that the College management had completed an assessment of the performance of the auditors, monitored against a predetermined set of KPI's. It was concluded that the auditors had performed satisfactorily overall in difficult circumstances, including the management of the delayed sign off due to the funding audit.

The Committee Chair provided detail of the discussions held regarding the tenure of the auditors, with it being the third audit, and this being considered the most appropriate time of year to invite applications to tender. The Committee Chair advised that the terms of reference would allow for the contract to be extended beyond the third year, and following a detailed discussion, the Committee concluded that this would not be the most appropriate year to go through the tendering process. It was noted that the changes within the finance team and the complications caused by the Pandemic along with the satisfactory performance indicated that the continuation for a further 12 months would be advisable. The Audit Chair highlighted the slight increase in the fee equating to 1.4%, considered reasonable based on the market, concluding that the Committee would recommend reappointment for a term of a further year with this to be revisited in 12 months' time.

**Item 12 - Approved: The Corporation resolved to approve the reappointment of the external auditors.**

**C.21.79 Item 13: Critical Incident Management Plan 2020/21**

The VPS advised that following a thorough revision of the policy in the previous year, the framework this year was unaltered and only minor amendments relating to structural changes were recommended for approval.

It was noted that as part of the review by the Resources Committee, they had noted that training for Duty Principal's needed to be in place for September due to the significant changes in the management team.

**A member asked** for the Clerk's name to be amended within the policy, **whilst suggesting** that the statement relating to grab bags needed to be more prescriptive. With no further questions or comments, the policy was approved subject to the requested amendments.

**Item 12 - Approved: Subject to the amendments detailed above, the policy was approved.**

**VP Services**

**C.21.80 Item 14: Tuition Fees Policy 2020/21**

The Resources Committee Chair presented for approval the fees policy, noting that this remained unchanged from the previous year.

The Corporation were advised that the Committee had discussed at length the opportunity and likely impact of amending fees up or down, however, concluded that they were at the right rice point.

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	<p>The Corporation were informed that there had been no change to the funding matrix and HE fees were at the maximum available without approaching the OfS for approval.</p> <p><b><u>Item 14 - Approved:</u> The Corporation resolved to approve the fees policy.</b></p>	
<b>C.21.81</b>	<b>Item 15: Audit Committee Update</b>	
	<p>The Audit Committee Chair confirmed that a meeting had taken place in the previous week, with the minutes reviewed and circulated earlier in the day. The Committee Chair urged anyone with questions or comments following the review of the minutes to contact her through the Clerk, noting that the main points from the meeting had been covered and recommended for approval within the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the risk register had also been reviewed with considerable question and challenge around amendments to the risk ratings, with the Committee satisfied with the responses provided.</p> <p><b><u>Item 15 - Noted:</u> The Corporation resolved to note and accept the update.</b></p>	
<b>C.21.82</b>	<b>Item 16: Resources Committee</b>	
	<p>The Resources Committee Chair advised that there had been two meetings since the last meeting of the Corporation, an Extraordinary meeting held on 27th January 2021 and the scheduled meeting held on 23rd February 2021.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted that in addition to the items recommended for approval, the investment policy had been reviewed. This was considered to have been effective, with previous investments gaining a return above the base rate, although noting that the returns in the future investments were not likely to yield returns as high due to the continued drop in interest rates.</p> <p>The Committee Chair also summarised the detailed discussions regarding recruitment, noting that the Principal's report looked more encouraging than figures previously reviewed. The Committee Chair noted that this needed to be an area for continued focus, highlighting that the minutes of the Committee ask the Corporation to keep recruitment under close review at all times.</p> <p><b><u>Item 16 - Noted:</u> The Corporation resolved to note and accept the update.</b></p>	
<b>C.21.83</b>	<b>Item 17: Standards Committee</b>	
	<p>The Standards Committee Chair noted that the meeting had been held the previous evening; therefore the minutes were not yet available for review. The Committee Chair informed the Corporation that detailed training on the Exceptional Framework had been provided by the VP C&amp;Q, with assurances provided around the robust processes put in place at the College.</p> <p>The Committee Chair also advised the Corporation that a report assuring the Committee that the College was meeting OfS requirements in relation to consumer law had been provided, with a report outlining the assessment of effective student communication provided.</p>	

**Item 17 - Noted: The Corporation resolved to note the details of the verbal update.**

**C.21.84 Item 18: Governance Committee**

The Governance Committee Chair highlighted how a number of the areas had been covered under the Chair's Report, including the streamlining of governance processes.

The Committee Chair advised the Corporation that in approving the streamlining of the processes, the first action would be to re issue the skills audit, which would be simplified into an online format, apologising to those that had completed the process previously.

The Committee Chair explained that this would feed into further actions with timeframes to be confirmed, with all actions expected to be completed within three months.

The Committee Chair informed the Corporation that attendance had increased since meetings moved online, thanking members for their attendance and inviting comments on the future format of meetings. **A member commented** that there were elements missing from online meetings, and the connection with the college and between members was not as strong and it was difficult to see all participants in MS Teams meetings.

The Committee Chair confirmed that the recommendation of the Committee was to look to slowly reintroduce face to face meetings, starting with meetings of the full Corporation, followed by the largest Committee, the Standards Committee, insisting that this would be kept under constant review, acknowledging the benefits of reduced travel time when meeting through MS Teams.

**A member agreed** that there was a lost connection being unable to meet in person, however, in noting the increased attendance gained through online meetings, **asked** if the option to dial in could be maintained when meetings do return to College to maintain the high attendance. The Committee Chair agreed that this would be considered.

**Another member added** that this had been discussed at length by the Committee, and supported the suggestion that the meetings of the full Corporation should be the first to be resumed in person, provided that the space can be suitably set up to allow for airflow, ventilation and distancing.

**A member asked** if the recommended streamline of governance would be in place for the new academic year. The Committee Chair confirmed that this would be implemented as soon as possible, with many tasks in place by July, allowing the Corporation to move into the new academic year having done the tasks and able to analyse the priorities and actions for the new year.

**Item 18 - Noted and Approved: The Corporation resolved to note the update from the Committee and approved the streamlining of governance including the re-issue of the skills audit.**

**C.21.85 Item 19: Date Of Next Meeting**

**Minute  
No.**

**Minutes**

**Action**

The meeting date was confirmed as 29<sup>TH</sup> April 2021, at 5pm

**Item 18 – Noted**

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked members and attendees for their time, in particular, the new Deputy Principal, noting that the new Director of Facilities and Finance would be in place by the next meeting.

The Chair expressed sadness that the VPS and VP C&Q would not be a part of future meetings, wishing them well in their respective futures, with the VPS expressing his thanks on behalf of himself and the VP C&Q.

**The meeting closed at 6.30pm**