

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held via Teams on
Wednesday 1st July 2020 at 5.00pm**

Present: Christine Bampton
Margaret Boneham
Michelle Brabner (Principal)
John Fell
Veronica Fell (Chair)
Rob Firth
Vickie Hayes
Carla Kennaugh
Suzanne Knowles
Kasraa Mohammadi
Lisa Owens
Kathy Passant
Carol Reid
Katy Robinson
Vipin Trivedi

In Attendance: Anne-Marie Francis – Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality
Eddie Green – Vice Principal Services
Nicola Hurst – Director of Teaching & Learning & Sixth Form
Caroline Jenkinson – Director of Governance
Jesamine Kelly – Assistant Principal

Action.

C.20.102 Item 1: Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Dyese Bruce, Mark Grutters, Alex Kenny, Mo Kundi and Jonny Lea.

C.20.103 Item 2: Declarations of Interest

A standing declaration of interest was received from Veronica Fell (Chair) as she is married to John Fell.

C.20.104 Item 3: Minutes of 29th April 2020

Minutes of 29th April 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

C.20.105 Item 4: Matters Arising/Actions Summary

C.20.94 It was confirmed that numeric targets against objectives on the HE Marketing Strategy was complete.

The Principal confirmed HE recruitment would be reconsidered in line with the tracking of students' progression which will be reported to the Standards Committee meeting on 8th September 2020.

C.20.106 Item 5: Confidential Items

Items 9.5 12.3 (in part) of today's agenda was considered confidential.

C.20.107 Item 6: Written Resolution

The Director of Governance confirmed a written resolution on COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Re-opening was approved by the Corporation on 11th June 2020.

C.20.108 Item 7: Chair's Report

Appointment of Audit Chair

The Chair referred to the recently advertised vacancy for the Chair of Audit. The current Chair was stepping down from the role following a two year term of office and would remain as a member of the Audit Committee.

The Director of Governance confirmed one governor, Carla Kennaugh, who had expressed an interest in the position, had received several nominations. Under paragraph 3.1 of the Standing Orders the Board were asked to give approval for the appointment.

The Board resolved to approve the appointment of Carla Kennaugh as Chair of the Audit Committee for a two year term of office.

The Chair reflected that this academic year had been notable for several events, not least the recruitment of the new Principal, the accolade of being the first college in the country to gain the Rainbow Flag Award and the achievement of a very positive Ofsted report. These very successful events came ahead of the dramatic lockdown of the College due to Covid-19 just as the new Principal had taken up post 10 days previously.

The Chair reiterated the Board's previous thanks and commended the College for the way they had responded and adapted to the working environment during the lockdown.

The Chair asked that congratulations and many thanks from the Board be passed on to students for their determination to carry on in such uncertain times. Plans were in place to celebrate with students on A Level results days as well as the students receiving results through vocational routes.

C.20.109 Item 8: Covid-19 Re-opening Update

The Principal presented the report and noted the College had moved to the next stage of re-opening. A small number of students had recently been onsite to complete assessments from areas such as plumbing electrical engineering, with hairdressing planned in the near future.

Corridors had been marked out at 2m intervals and these were going to be left in place even though the distance rule had been lowered to 1m+.

The Covid-19 Working Group had progressed to the next steps with plans being made around enrolment and curriculum delivery for September. Online enrolment will be used and combined with face-to-face enrolment scheduled to take place in August.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report.

C.20.110

Item 9: Strategic Issues

Item 9.1: Corporate Performance Report Term 3

The Principal presented her report and confirmed its presentation had been updated however, this is the last report to be presented to Board in this format as the new Principal will be adopting a different reporting system to Board in the new academic year. The report included information on key activities in the college for Term 3 together with a summary of recent actions against the original 8 strategic objectives.

The submission of centre assessed grades to the appropriate awarding bodies had been a key priority and thanks were noted to all those involved, including the VP C&Q who had completed the Quality Assurance process.

The next priority moving forward being around recruitment activities. These recently involved a Virtual Open Event which was live on the Southport College website for two weeks and will go live again in the near future. Plans were also in place to implement a similar event for KGV.

The Vice Chair acknowledged the proactive activities which had taken place in such difficult and changing times and asked what other actions were planned. The Principal confirmed Marketing are currently investigating the use of live chat facilities and video introductions by lecturers to be available on the websites. Collaborative work had also taken place with local secondary schools involving the sending out of joint letters to students.

The Chair referred to objective 3 and the +122 figure for all 16 yrs old enrolments. The Principal confirmed, dependent upon the impact and many variables around Covid-19, the indicators show that overall recruitment is expected to come in around target. The picture for school leavers is looking positive.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report.

C.20.111 Item 9.2: Strategic Plan 2020/2023

The Principal presented the Strategic Plan for 2020/2023. She referred to the strategic objectives which had been a focus of the Governor Strategy Day in May. The pertinent points from the day had been captured within the report and it had received good feedback from the College Consultative Group.

It was proposed that the original 8 objectives be condensed into 5 key objectives. Once approval of these new objectives had been obtained the next step was to develop strategic aims and actions under each objective. An associated action plan would then be compiled which would subsequently be monitored by the appropriate committee.

Principal

The Chair and Vice Chair noted the significant changes to the strategic objectives and thanked all those involved including the governors for their contributions at the Strategy Day in May. Congratulations were offered to the senior team for creating a succinct and memorable framework for moving forward.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report and approve the Strategic Objectives.

C.20.113 **Item 9.3: Risk Management Plan**

The VP Services presented the Risk Management Plan which was reviewed annually ahead of looking at the Financial Forecasts. The review and reporting framework throughout the year was set out in paragraph 2.1

The Audit Committee had considered the Risk Management Plan at their meeting on 24th June and the Resources Committee the High Risks Sensitivity Analysis at their meeting on 1st July 2020.

The VP Services referred to the Risk Register at Annex 1 which was considered termly by the Risk Management Group. 4 additional high risks had been identified with regards to Covid-19 and these had been included in the High Risk plan for governors to consider.

The Vice Chair of Audit confirmed in depth discussions had taken place during the Audit meeting with regards to risk mapping and the Committee had put forward a number of suggestions to the VP Services and Director of Governance in respect of how the risks could be mapped going forward. The VP Services confirmed it had been agreed at the Audit Committee meeting that the internal auditors would review Risk Management for the new academic year working alongside members of the Audit Committee.

VP Servs

The Chair of Resources confirmed the Committee had also considered a review of risks in 2019/20. It had been recognised that Covid-19 had actually given rise to savings in some areas and there was the chance of mitigating some of the high risks in the coming year provided student numbers were achieved.

The Board resolved to approve the Risk Management Plan and the amendments to the Risk Management Policy subject to format and mapping review being undertaken.

C.20.114 **Item 9.4: Financial Forecasts 2020/21 to 2023/24**

The VP Services presented the revised Financial Forecasts for the period 2020/21 to 2023/24 and explained that due to Covid-19 the ESFA had recognised that the information submitted in the January return may now have changed. For this reason an interim simplified return, due to be submitted to the ESFA by 31 July, was required. The information to be submitted was contained in annexes 9 and 10 of the report

The commentary accompanying the forecasts highlighted the salient points. It could be seen that Covid-19 would have a particularly negative impact on Apprenticeship and HE income, as outlined in the table at paragraph 2.2. Over the period of the forecasts the total negative impact on income and expenditure was just under £2m.

The VP Services confirmed the costs of growth are built into the forecasts and staffing savings would still be required, even if recruitment growth was achieved. Savings for 2020/21 had been planned and identified for early in the year followed by targeted planned savings of £500k for 2021/22.

As a result of the above current forecasts now indicated a return to 'good' for financial health had been put back a year to 2022/23. This health score moving forward would be dependent upon achieving growth.

The VP Services referred to Annex 1 and noted the 16-18 income decrease which had resulted from the lack of growth had been compensated for by an increase of c7% in funding. However, it was recognised that had the growth figures been achieved this 7% increase would have been reinvested in other areas of the College.

A governor thanked the Principal and VP Services for responding to questions she had sent to them the previous day with regards to the forecasts.

It was recognised that many factors hinged on achieving growth and it was acknowledged that increasing market share had always been the intention and part of the merger plan.

As discussed in the Resources Committee meeting, it was noted that T Levels had not been included in the forecasts. The VP Services confirmed this was due to the uncertainty around income and costs and as the College only had 3 T Level subjects their omission was not expected to have a significant impact on figures.

A governor questioned if, due to social distancing, reduced class sizes had been captured within the sensitivity analysis. The VP Services confirmed there was a risk that more teaching hours may be required. This had been identified within the HR plan and the Risk Sensitivity Analysis and had been modelled at a 25% increase for the first term. The Principal added that solutions were being considered to prevent the necessary of increasing teaching hours. Year bubbles at KGV, and class / area bubbles at SC with normal class sizes were being anticipated for September with a focus on blended learning together with maximising face-to-face learning where possible.

The Chair referred to Annex 4 which included 3 growth models. She noted that last year 'good' financial health was anticipated to be achieved in 2021/22 and the current financial forecasts were putting that back to 2022/23. The growth models indicated the direction of travel if the anticipated growth was not achieved. She emphasised the importance of the Board supporting the College in achieving the budgets that were now being approved today.

The Board resolved to approve the Financial Forecasts and approve the commentary, financial health calculator and simplified cash flow model for submission to the ESFA.

C.20.115 Item 9.5: Pension Fund Covenant Review

This item was considered confidential and a separate confidential minute was recorded.

The Director of Teaching & Learning and Sixth Form joined the meeting at 6.20pm

C.20.116 Item 9.6: Review of Equality and Diversity

The Director of T&L&SF presented her report and outlined the achievements made against the objectives for 2018/19. The proposed changes to the policy for 2020/21 were highlighted with the additions reflecting the inclusive approach to blended learning.

A governor noted she had raised the issue of 'Black Lives Matter' and how this should be taken forward in the programme. It was agreed that this should be included as part of Equality and Diversity.

**Dir T&L
&SF**

It was agreed the timing of the report and policy being presented to Board was to be changed to the second half of the autumn term moving forward to align with the College SAR.

**Dir T&L
&SF**

The Board resolved to:

- ***receive and accept the information and data analysis***
- ***move the report and Policy to the Autumn Term from 2020/21***
- ***approve the College Equality and Diversity Policy and the Equality and Diversity Objectives for 2020/21***

The Director of Teaching & Learning and Sixth Form left the meeting at 6.30pm

C.20.117 Item 10: Accommodation Strategy Update

The VP Services presented the report and gave an update on the Pennington Refurbishment project. He explained work had originally been planned to commence over the summer but this was no longer practical and had instead moved to a September start. Requests to the ESFA via the LCR for a 6 month extension to the March 2021 spend date had been unsuccessful.

The consultant was currently working on the tender packages for the main contractor and these were due to be presented on Friday. The tenders were due back from contractors by 13th August with a proposed meeting of the Corporation required prior to the 20th August for the approval of the main contractor.

The VP Services confirmed work was underway regarding the rehousing of students, including the possibility of the erection of a temporary structure on one of the car parks. The goal was to have students back in Pennington for the new calendar year.

With regards to the LCR Skills Investment Fund grant which had already been paid to the College, the VP Services confirmed contractors were now getting back up and running. The College would now reengage with the contractors with a view to completing the works outlined in the table at paragraph 2.12 by March 2021.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report.

C.20.118 Item 12: Committee Reports

Item 12.1: Audit Committee

The Vice Chair of Audit gave a verbal update from the meeting held on 24th June 2020. She confirmed the internal auditors had been asked to carry out an audit of Remote Processing of Payroll and Purchase Ledger due to the potential financial risks of Covid-19. This audit would replace the previously planned Ofsted Inspection Audit which was now no longer required.

Significant time had been spent during the meeting considering the current format of the Risk Register and how this could be improved to aid monitoring by governors. As discussed earlier in this meeting the VP Services would be reviewing the format for the new academic year taking into account the Audit Committee's proposals for risk mapping. Subject to this undertaking the Audit Committee were recommending the approval of the Risk Register to the Board.

The Board also received the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 3rd June 2020.

The Director of Governance presented the items for approval following recommendation by the Audit Committee.

The Board resolved to approve the:

- **Terms of Reference: Remote Processing of Payroll and Purchase Ledger Audit in place of the Inspection Support Audit**
- **Reappointment of Internal Auditors**
- **Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21**
- **External Audit Plan for 2019/20 Financial Statements**

C.20.119 Item 12.2: Standards Committee

The Chair of Standards gave a verbal update from the meeting held on 10th June 2020. She confirmed most of the critical points from the meeting had been discussed during today's meeting, including student centre assessed grades and safeguarding. It had also been noted that remote counselling was proving more popular with students than the usual face-to-face.

HE recruitment was noted as a big concern and the action to remedy this was underway.

The Director of Governance presented the items for approval following recommendation by the Standards Committee.

The Board resolved to approve the:

- **Quality Strategy 2020/21**
- **Complaints Policy 2020/21**
- **HE Quality Strategy 2020/21**

The Assistant Principal joined the meeting at 6.45pm.

C.20.120 Item 11: HE Student Protection Plan

The Assistant Principal presented her report and noted there were no major changes to the Plan for this year following a review against the new guidance. Students had also reviewed the Plan and were satisfied that its contents were suitable for the intended audience and that it covered any key concerns.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report and approve the HE Student Protection Plan.

C.20.121 Item 12.3: Resources Committee

The Board had received draft minutes of the meeting of 29th April 2020.

The Chair of Resources gave a verbal update from the Extraordinary meeting held on 17th June 2020 and the meeting held on 1st July 2020. He confirmed the HR Objectives had been considered at the meeting of 17th June and the meeting on the 1st July had considered the Financial Forecasts that Board were being asked to approve at today's meeting and recommended their approval by the Board.

The revised Learner Support Funds Policy had also been presented at the Resources meeting that day and confirmed it did not contain any significant changes other than technical support for 16-18.

The Director of Governance presented this item for approval following recommendation by the Resources Committee.

The Board resolved to approve the Revised Learner Support Funds Policy.

C.20.122 Item 12.4: Governance Committee

The Chair of Governance gave a verbal update from the meeting which had been held the previous day. Membership had been discussed along with the imminent need to recruit governors with project management and financial commercial experience. The AoC Diversity Campaign had also been discussed and was something to consider during the recruitment process.

The Committee noted that the procedure for appointing a new Chair of Audit had been followed in line with the Standing Orders. It was also noted that a vacancy remained for the Chair of Resources and due to the current situation with regards to Covid-19 the current temporary Chair of Resources be asked to stay on until the end of the first academic term of 2020/21. It is understood the Chair of Resources is agreeable to continue as the interim Chair.

The governor link schedule had been discussed and arrangements were in place to produce an addendum to the Governor Link Protocol in light of Covid-19. The importance of governors completing visit records following their link visits which would then be fed back to the Board was also emphasised.

Following yesterday's meeting a revised schedule of governor links was circulated to the Board that evening.

The Board resolved to approve the revised governor link schedule and that the Chair of Resources continued until at least the end of the first academic term for 2020/21.

C.20.123 Item 13: Timetable of Meetings 2020/21

The Director of Governance presented the proposed timetable of meetings for 2020/21. It was noted that the Chair of Governance had requested the meeting scheduled for 8th September have a start time of 1.00pm. The timing of holding Resources and Corporation meetings on the same afternoon in September 2020 and April 2021 was also to be reconsidered in addition it is necessary to hold a Board meeting in August on the Accommodation Strategy, therefore a revised timetable will be submitted to governors in the near future. **Dir of Gov**

The Chair noted guidance would be sought from the Principal with regards to how meetings would be undertaken moving forward. It was currently envisaged that meetings would remain on Teams for the foreseeable future.

The Director of Governance will forward a revised timetable.

The Chair concluded the meeting with sincere thanks to the Principal, SLT and all college staff, congratulated them for their commitment and hard work this year and particularly during lockdown. Governors were also thanked for their continued support and invaluable contributions to the College

The Board and the SLT conveyed their thanks and best wishes to a student governor for their future career on leaving the college this summer term.

C.20.124 Item 14: Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 30th September 2020.