

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held via Teams on
Wednesday 30th September at 5.00pm**

Present: Christine Bampton
Margaret Boneham
Michelle Brabner - Principal
Dyese Bruce – Student governor
John Fell
Veronica Fell - Chair
Rob Firth
Mark Grutters
Vickie Hayes – Staff governor
Carla Kennaugh
Alex Kenny
Suzanne Knowles – Staff governor
Mo Kundi
Jonny Lea – Parent governor

Kathy Passant – Vice Chair Corporation
Katy Robinson
Vipin Trivedi

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

Prior to the Board meeting a presentation on Safeguarding in the Covid-19 environment was provided to governors by the AP as a training and awareness session. Q&A followed.

The convened Board meeting was confirmed as being quorate. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Action.

C.21.01 Item 1: Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from staff governor Carol Reid.

C.21.02 Item 2: Declarations of Interest

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

C.21.03 Item 3: Minutes of the meetings on 1st July and 25th August 2020

Minutes were agreed as a correct record for Chair to sign.

C.21.04 Item 3: Matters Arising/Actions Summary

The actions summary was confirmed as complete other than:

C20.111 - Strategic Plan 2020/23 is currently ongoing with a full report to December Board meeting.

C20.113 – Risk Register Mapping Plan - review requested by Audit committee due to commence this week.

It was agreed to include an 'expected by completion date' in future action summaries.

C.21.05 Item 4: Confidential Items

It was agreed that there no items of a confidential nature in the minutes. Agenda item 12 of today's meeting would remain confidential.

C.21.06 Item 5: Chair's Report

The Chair informed members of various activities undertaken during the summer recess. These included meeting with the Local MP and Principal on 27th July when the ongoing covid-19 challenges both practical and financial were discussed. The Chair and Principal expressed their concern as to the impact on the local economy and job opportunities. The Chair, Principal and MP met again on A level results day and the MP agreed to refer immediately to the education minister over the inconsistencies in results.

The Chair joined the SLT for a scheduled meeting with the EFSA on 24th August to discuss the financial budgets. The 20/21 recruitment numbers reported to Board on the same day were also discussed. The Chair advised the EFSA that the Board would be taking immediate proactive action and thanked governors who were able to volunteer on the recently convened task groups. These groups will specifically review current strategies - outcomes will be reported to December Board and in the intervening period to respective committees to ensure timely actions.

The Chair also referred to the recently published Dame Mary Ney Governance report (available on AOC website) which identified the need for a shift in the relationship between government and colleges to one of a more nurturing environment.

The Chair thanked the Principal for the regular updates on COVID issues and also thanked the SLT and all college staff for their commitment and resilience as the COVID restrictions continued to impact college life. Governors were advised that meetings would need to continue online until at least the new year.

C.21.07 Item 6: Principal's Report

The Principal presented the report covering both successes and areas for improvement (AFI's). She referred to recruitment numbers in the 16-18 cohort which were now at 1654 an increase on the figure of 1643 shown in the report. Some churn of numbers is still expected, however, recruitment is continuing with 4 students enrolling today. Governors asked questions about recruitment target initiatives as enrolments overall

are somewhat short of the strategy agreed with TU numbers. The Principal is currently working with the marketing and school liaison teams on the key areas listed in her report. The recently convened recruitment and school liaison governor task group will join those discussions and report to the next Standards meeting. Further questions followed about how many 'A' level students achieved their first choice university - promoting this success would be a useful marketing tool. Discussions also centred around students support channels both in relation to safeguarding and counselling, particularly during COVID. The Principal advised that the college actively promoted and invested in these areas and referred to the examples in her report. Additional investment if available in pastoral support would be directed to these areas. In response to a question the VPS said the new catering contractors appointed over the summer seemed to be working well for the students although no formal survey had been circulated.

The Principal referred to the Strategic Plan on the actions summary. Intensive work continues with the SLT and CMT teams and committees to be kept apprised ahead of the December Board.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report.

Item 7: Strategic Issues

C.21.08 Item 7.1: Headline Targets 2020/21

Governors asked a series of questions on the predicted outcomes for 19/20 which when finalised will inform the SAR process that is presently ongoing. The improving picture was acknowledged by governors. The VPQ&C confirmed in answer to a question that although there are improvements to be made the SLT felt it was appropriate to set targets ahead of the NR to mirror the commitments of the strategic aims.

The Board resolved to receive and approve the targets set for 2020/21.

C.21.09 Item 7.2: Enrolments 2020/21

The VPC&Q referred to the earlier discussions on enrolment in the Principal's report and added that whilst recruitment of school leavers was showing an increase 21% on 19/20 conversion rates from some feeder schools had not increased. Urgent investigation is already underway and a strategy KPI for the Marketing and Recruitment task group to consider. Governors raised comments on the data tables and asked that an analysis be undertaken to identify 'unknowns' and to understand the disparity between two Formby schools which was currently showing a reversal of last year.

It was noted that an update on this report is due at the next Standards committee.

VP C&Q

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report.

C.21.10 **Item 7.3: IFMC Return**

The VP Services presented the summary report and reminded governors that the financial budget forecasts approved at the Board meeting were populating this Return along with reflecting an improved position for the outcome on 19/20 as detailed in the report. Resources committee had considered the Return in detail at their meeting and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Resources had met with the VPS ahead of the committee convening. The VPS added that the glitch in reporting interest had not as yet been rectified by the MOT and no adverse comment was fed back to the college following the submission of the February Return.

The Resources committee had asked for additional narrative to be included in the report attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Governors asked questions about the outcomes table and noted that key information is currently going through the validation process. VPS confirmed year 7 related to the academic year 23/24 when the undertaking with the TU would be complete. The table was not structured to show the intervening years.

Subject to including the additional narrative The Board resolved to approve the submission of the IFMC Return. VP Servs

C.21.11 **Item 8: COVID Risk Assessment Exceptions Report**

The Board meeting on 25th August had requested that an exceptions report be presented at each meeting following the approval of the COVID Risk assessment. The VPS advised that the assessment had been reviewed and updated on two occasions and weekly review meetings continue to ensure all arising and current issues are addressed. The budget set aside for contingencies was 70% utilised and the catering contract contingency would be assessed once the first month's trading figures known.

Governors were informed that the SLT were adopting an agile approach to the whole of college delivery constantly reflecting on what can be done differently to support student and staff vulnerability, blended learning and contingency plans in case of a more stringent lockdown. Quality assurance of curriculum models was constantly under review to ensure students were receiving the best experience of learning in the current environment.

The Board resolved to receive and accept the report.

C.21.12 Item 9: Safeguarding Report 2019/20 and Policy 2020/21:

The AP presented the report for 2019/20 and the data sets of information. Discussions followed about the impact of covid-19 and the additional measures put in place to support timely interventions, which had reduced in 19/20. This was attributed to an increase in face-to-face consultations during COVID remote working.

The governor safeguarding lead had attended the recent college safeguarding update meeting and had been appraised of the content of pre board training slides and presentation.

The Safeguarding policy for 2020/21 had been circulated to all members.

The Board resolved to receive and approve the policy for 2020/21.

Item 10 Committee Reports:

Item 10.1: Governance Committee

C.21.13 Item 10.1.1: Governance Committee Minutes

Board Approval required in respect of the following recommendations from the Governance committee:

C.21.14 Item 10.1.2: Committee Memberships for 2020/21

The Dir of Gov had circulated the committee memberships for 20/21. No further proposals were suggested at the meeting.

C.21.15 Item 10.1.3: Re-Appointment of Rob Firth as an independent governor for a 4 year term of office

Governor Rob Firth's term of office is due to end on 16th November 2020. He is willing to serve a second four year term and is presently serving on the Resources and Governance committees.

C.21.16 Item 10.1.4: Governor Training & Development Plan 2020/21

The Governor training plan had been distributed to governors for 20/21. No further proposals were suggested to the plan at the meeting.

The Board resolved to receive and approve the recommendations as outlined above.

C.21.17 Item 10.1.5: Instrument & Articles of Government and Standing Orders

The Chair of Governance advised the Board that the I&A of Corporation and Standing Orders would be reviewed through a working party to be convened during this term and report for Board approval in the new year. In the meantime any amendments of critical importance to be dealt with at the next governance meeting and if appropriate brought to Board in December.

Item 10.2 Standards Committee:

C.21.18 Item 10.2.1: Standards Committee Minutes

The Chair of Standards reported that the first early meeting of the academic year had reviewed the recruitment and achievement reports as available and now updated on management reports.

Board approval required in respect of the following recommendations from the Standards committee;

C.21.19 Item 10.2.2: Policies

The following policies have been circulated to all members.

Admissions 2020/21
HE Admission 2020/21
Freedom of Speech 2020/21

The Board resolved to receive and approve the recommendations.

C.21.20 Item 10.3: Audit

The Chair of Audit confirmed that the recommendations from the Audit meeting on 24th June had been considered at the Board meeting on 1st July. There were no further items to report apart from the progress on the risk register mapping exercise referred to earlier in the meeting.

C.21.21 Item 10.4: Resources

The Chair of Resources provided a verbal update on the Extraordinary meeting convened on 4th September and the scheduled meeting of 29th September.

Board Approval Required on the following recommendations of the Resources committee:

C21.22 Item 10.4.2: Accommodation Update

The committee considered an updated report on the accommodation strategy from the VPS. This report had been circulated to Board at item 10.4.2. The VPS reminded governors of the terms of the Pennington contract requiring a 10% college contribution and as previously reported the effect of the project costs being below the original budgeted figure. Further works have been identified at an estimated total cost of £200k (with a 10% contribution from the college of c£20k) which otherwise would represent a capital repayment by the college of C£200k. Governors asked questions about the list of further works and VPS confirmed some items listed maybe interchanged as the project developed.

The Board resolved to approve an increase in capital expenditure of up to £200k.

C21.23

Item 10.4.3: HE Tuition Fees and Refund and Compensation Policy 2020/2021

HE Tuition Fees Policy 2020/21 - circulated to all members.

The Board resolved to receive and approve the HE Tuition Fees R&C Policy for 2020/21.

C21.24

The Chair concluded the meeting summarising the Approval items;

- Headline targets 20/21.
- IFMC Return due for submission 30/09/20.
- Safeguarding Policy 20/21.
- Independent Governor Reappointment for 4 year term – Rob Firth.
- Governance Training Plan 20/21.
- Admissions and HE Admissions Policies 20/21.
- Freedom of Speech Policy 20/21.
- Increase in Capital Expenditure on the Pennington Bldg.
- HE Tuition Fees & Refund & Compensation Policy 20/21.

C21.25

Item 11: Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 2nd December 2020 5pm

C21.26

Item 12: Staff Pay Award (Confidential)

A separate confidential minute was recorded.