

<b>APPROVED:</b> <i>Chair</i>	<b>DATED:</b>
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**OPEN MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETING**  
**Monday 7 December 2020, 17.30, via Microsoft Teams**



**Present:** Lloyd Taylor (Chair)  
 John Stebbing (Vice-Chair)  
 Silvia Berny  
 Michael Boakes  
 Marie-Ange Coxhead  
 David Kelly  
 Alison McInnes  
 David Padmore  
 Pat Strickson  
 Karen Hucker (Principal)  
 Elisabeth Lawrence (Staff Governor)

**In Attendance:** Dave Brown (VP)  
 Mike Groves (Director of Finance)  
 Jackie Taylor (Director of Services Supporting Learning)  
 Debbie Vockins (Director of HR)

**Minutes:** Alison Dennett (Clerk to the Corporation)

**Apologies:** Lorraine Brown

**STANDING ITEMS**

**NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No new Declarations of Interests were made in respect of items on the agenda.  
 Lloyd Taylor reiterated his previously declared interest as an owner of the Detective Agency.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Open and Confidential minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 12 October 2020 were agreed as correct.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

There were none.

**MAIN AGENDA**

**PART A PUBLIC & CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

**CORP20/06. BRIEFINGS ON EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AND SAFEGUARDING / HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Link Governors provided a summary of key issues that had been considered at the Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding / Health & Safety meetings as follows:

**Safeguarding / Health & Safety**

- With regards to the new build, all was progressing as expected and a comprehensive report was given to the meeting.
- Work Placements were currently not taking place due to Covid although preparation work continued with students
- It was confirmed that Public Health England guidelines for Education Settings had been followed and no cases of Covid-19 had been reported within the nursery to date.
- The Link Governor highlighted that Safeguarding was not just effective, but good. Teams worked effectively together and staff & students knew what to do and who to go to if they had any safeguarding concerns to raise.

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### Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- The meeting had reviewed the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion report for 2019/20 which had been updated to include the College's response to the BLM movement and Covid-19. A discussion had been had around what the BLM movement meant for the College; a statement had been include don the College website and it would be discussed in tutorials highlighting how to tackle blatant as well as subtle forms of racism.
- The E,D&I action plan had been considered which focused on high needs students and the retention of students with regard to the anxiety and pressures they have faced or may be facing as an effect of Covid-19.
- In relation to Covid, there was a real focus in support for students' anxiety, mental health and emotional resilience. This was an ongoing focus for staff training to ensure they were able to direct students for appropriate support in these matters.

The Corporation thanked the Link Governors for their updates.

### CORP20/07. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: DECEMBER 2020

Key issues outlined within the Principal's report included:

#### **Covid-19:**

[Confidential note].

#### **Funding & Budget:**

[Confidential note].

#### **Curriculum, Exams and Work Experience**

- Work Experience was understandably on hold due to Covid-19 and it was reported that some students were also feeling reluctant to go into places of work at the current time. The Government were yet to make adjustments to courses with a requirement for work experience and it was expected that required hours would be a challenge to meet if some flexibility was not put in place. Lobbying was taking place on behalf of colleges by the AOC to encourage the DfE to recognise that there were other ways to develop student related learning rather than being in a workplace which was significant for the College given that a lot of work experience sectors were high risk i.e. hospitality, hairdressing etc.
- The second phase of the Applied General's consultation had been announced and some movement had been seen which was positive. The College would be submitting a response by the deadline.
- The Corporation also discussed the various concessions that had been announced by the Government with regards to the 2021 summer exams. These were still surrounded by uncertainty which was not beneficial to students and the anxiety they were experiencing at this stage. Further details were expected in early 2021.

#### **Recruitment**

[Confidential note].

#### **Building Projects**

- The STEM building project was on track and scheduled to be completed with a handover date of 18<sup>th</sup> December. Plans to switch to the new transformer had now been moved to January which meant that the College would move to online learning for two days to accommodate the change.
- [Confidential note].

#### **Self Assessment Report**

The Vice Principal gave a presentation summary of the College SAR, looking at key aspects of the report in more details for Governors. [Confidential note].

The Principal and Vice Principal were thanked for their presentations.

### CORP20/08. COMMITTEE REPORTS – ITEMS FOR CORPORATION APPROVAL

Governors were presented with individual items for Corporation approval, as recommended from the Committee meetings held in the last cycle of meetings.

Each item for approval was considered as follows:

#### **a. Search Committee – 2 November 2020**

No items for approval.

#### **b. Personnel Committee – 9 November 2020**

**Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy PG4**

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The annual update to the Policy reflected amendments recommended by East Sussex County Council as a result of changes made to the Keeping Children Safe in Education document. The Committee had considered the amendments and were satisfied that the Policy was suitable and fit for purpose for the College.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy PG4.**

#### **Capability Procedure PG3**

Minor changes had been proposed to the Policy which reflected the Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA) model and ACAS good practice.

The Committee had considered the amendments made which included reference to employees on extended sick leave and how a case could be reviewed in their absence.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Capability Procedure PG3**

#### **Educational Visits Policy PG25**

No change had been made to the procedures within the Policy. Instead, the Committee had been asked to consider an appendix that had been added to the Policy to reflect specific recommendations related to Covid for student trips. The appendix was reflective of guidance contained in the College's main Covid Risk Assessment.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Educational Visits Policy PG25**

#### **Pay Award Update**

[Confidential note].

### **c. Audit Committee – 23 November 2020**

#### **Signing of the Representation Letters for both audits by the Chair and Principal and Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July, together with the members' report therein**

Detailed discussions had been had with Dominic Blythe from RSM UK who had attended the meeting to present the findings from the External Audit and the financial statements.

The Committee reported a strong working relationship with RSM and had been very satisfied with the information and explanation of the audit that had been given to them.

[Confidential note].

It had been confirmed that the financial statements were considered to cover all required points in terms of Governance and Internal Control as well as additional disclosures required to be made in connection with the College's registration with the Office for Students.

A slight increase in the audit fees had been noted and the Committee was satisfied that this was reflective of additional work that had been required to be undertaken.

In a joint resolution with the Finance and Property Committee, the Committee had recommended that the Audited Financial Statements should be adopted and signed by the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the signing of the Representation Letters for both audits by the Chair and Principal.**

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the signing of the Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2020, together with the members' report therein.**

#### **Reappointment of RSMUK as the College's Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors for the 2020/21 financial year.**

The Committee were positive with regards to the service that RSM UK provided to the College and the detail that they ventured into through their External Audit work.

[Confidential note].

The Corporation supported the recommendation that RSM UK be appointed as the College's Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors for 2020/21.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the reappointment of RSM UK as the College's Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors for the 2020/21 financial year.**

#### **Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019/20**

The Annual Report of the Audit Committee summarised the duties carried out by the Audit Committee and confirmed the work of the Committee throughout the year. The report also included the Committee's advice on the effectiveness of the College's risk management, control and governance processes, and any significant matters arising from the work of the auditors.

The Corporation supported the Committee recommendation that Annual Report of the Audit Committee to Corporation be approved.

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**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019/20.**

**d. Strategic Planning, Policy & QA Committee – 23 November 2020**  
**College Self-Assessment Report 2019/20**

As part of the Principal's report earlier in the meeting, the Corporation had received a detailed presentation on the College SAR which reflected on the College's performance over the past year.

The Strategic Planning Committee had considered that the SAR demonstrated that the College had performed very well in a challenging environment.

The Committee had been confident in supporting the overall judgements and gradings contained within the College SAR to Corporation for approval.

This recommendation was endorsed by the Corporation.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the College Self-Assessment Report 2019/20.**

**Quality Improvement Plan 2020/21**

The Committee had considered the QIP for 2020/21 which detailed where emphasis would be placed over the next year continuing improvement and tackling problems in key areas.

Corporation approved the QIP on the recommendation of the Committee.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Quality Improvement Plan 2020/21.**

**College Targets 2020/21**

The College Targets for 2020/21 were set against the previous year's outcomes and national rates (where available).

[Confidential note].

Corporation approved the College Targets on the recommendation of the Committee.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the College Targets 2020/21.**

**Beeching Road Studios Project**

The Beeching Road Studios Project, which had been outlined to the Corporation at their October meeting, had now progressed to the stage where a detailed business plan had been developed. This had been presented to both the Strategic Planning and Finance & Property Committees for further consideration.

[Confidential note].

The Strategic Planning Committee had been supportive of the project and felt it was an exciting and valuable opportunity for the College.

In a joint resolution with the Finance and Property Committee, the Committee had recommended the proposal to the Corporation for approval and that the Principal should be approved to sign the contract on behalf of the College in order for the project to continue.

**RESOLVED: That the proposal is approved by the Corporation.**

**RESOLVED: That approval is given to the Principal to sign the Contract on behalf of the College in order for the project to continue.**

**e. Finance & Property Committee – 24 November 2020**

**Health and Safety Policy FG2**

No substantial changes had been made to the Policy and an additional section had been included with regards to Covid-19.

No material changes had been proposed and the Corporation approved the policy.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the Health and Safety Policy FG2.**

**Treasury Management Annual Report 2019/20**

[Confidential note].

**Beeching Road Studios Project**

The Corporation had considered the project in detail through the recommendation from the Strategic Planning, Policy and Quality Assurance Committee earlier on the Agenda.

[Confidential note].

In a joint resolution with the Strategic Planning, Policy & Quality Assurance Committee, the Committee had recommended the proposal to the Corporation for approval and that the Principal should be approved to sign the contract on behalf of the College in order for the project to continue.

**RESOLVED: That the proposal is approved by the Corporation.**

**RESOLVED: That approval is given to the Principal to sign the Contract on behalf of the College in order for the project to continue.**

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**The Signing of the Financial Statements on the Corporation's behalf by the Chair and Principal**

The Committee had noted the very detailed document which demonstrated a positive year for the College in terms of finances, and a continued healthy financial position for the College. In a joint resolution with the Audit Committee, the Committee had recommended that the Audited Financial Statements should be adopted and signed by the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal.

**RESOLVED: The Corporation approved the signing of the Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2020.**

CORP20/09. **COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR NOTING**

The full Open and Confidential minutes from the Committee meetings held since the last Corporation meeting were noted.

CORP20/10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Corporation was scheduled for Monday 26 April 2021. The Agenda for the meeting will close on Thursday 22 April 2021.

The Chair thanked the Staff Governor and SLT who departed at 19.10.