

WQE & Regent College Group

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting
Held at the University Road Campus on
20 November 2019
Commencing at 5.00 pm**

Members of the Corporation present:

Stuart Dawkins, Chair
Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Nisar Navsariwala,
Philip Parkinson, Jim Phillips, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

In attendance:

Tim Cullinan, Carolyn Davies, Dawn Haywood, Andrew Jackson,
Sarah Oldfield & Donna Trusler

Apologies for absence:

Wayne Allsopp, Peter Butcher, Sarah Fox, Neil McGhee,
Amrik Singh & Rosie Whitley

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and informed members that Peter Butcher would be returning to work very soon. Members were happy to hear this good news.

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Minutes – Paper 001

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held 30 October 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Ongoing Matters – Paper 002

These were reviewed and noted. It was confirmed that Outlook invitations and the usual email invitations would be sent for Corporation and Committee meetings from this point forward.

There were also two matters arising from the minutes:

- QED Director vacancy – No expressions of interest had been received, however it was confirmed that one Director was sufficient, so the College remained compliant. Philip Parkinson then volunteered for the vacant role and his appointment was unanimously approved.
- Meeting with teaching unions – One union had replied, the other still had not as the representative was currently off work. The Corporation will be updated again once a meeting has taken place.

4. Governor Training: Safeguarding Young People - Presentation

Donna Trusler distributed a set of documents to all Governors together with a declaration to be completed and returned to confirm they had been read and understood. It was noted that this was a statutory duty which must be undertaken. There were also two online training tasks to be completed, links to which would be emailed to Governors after the meeting. It was agreed that ideally all tasks and reading should be completed by Friday 20 December 2019. Donna offered support for any Governor if that was required at any point.

Donna then explained the safeguarding processes at the College and gave a thorough presentation on Safeguarding Young People and the Prevent duty.

Members thanked Donna for the efficient and comprehensive training and reminded themselves of the need to complete the reading and online tasks by the specified date.

5. Governors' Opportunities for Training & Development

No new potential training opportunities were identified by Governors.

OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION

6. Principal's Update – Presentation

The Principal updated the Corporation on the following matters:

- Financial Health
- Future Funding
- NEU National Strike Action
- Student Executive Election

There was also one confidential item and this is summarised in the confidential annex to these minutes.

7. Updated 3 Year Strategic Plan (2019/20 Priorities) – Paper 003

Governors were reminded of the sequence in which the plan was received:

- Last meeting – what has been accomplished
- This meeting – next year's priorities
- December meeting – the extension of plans to include the 2021-22 academic year

Members thanked the Principal for the updated plan, which they noted to be very comprehensive, and looked forward to receiving the final stage in December.

OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

8. Early Weeks Survey – Paper 004

Sarah Oldfield introduced the report, noting that the same survey had been used as in previous years, however the body of students completing it had changed. These results should therefore be seen as a starting point for the new College. Sarah noted that in her opinion the results signalled that the College had work to do, and acknowledged that the first

few weeks of this academic year, whilst always expected to be a challenge, presented more organisational challenges than anticipated.

Governors discussed the results in some detail, particularly with regard to the plans to improve enrolment experience and staff absence and wellbeing. Governors were assured that the College was looking at ways to address all of the issues raised in the survey and they noted the proposed areas for action identified by the College in the report. It was agreed that an update on progress should be presented to the Corporation in the late spring term.

OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS

9. September Management Accounts – Paper 005

Carolyn Davies introduced the accounts, noting that income was largely as expected, with any variances being negligible. With regard to pay expenditure, it was noted that the staff cover budget was spread evenly throughout the year, however less was needed in August/September. There had also been a number of employment gaps which had now been filled. The budget also assumed a pay rise with effect from 1 September, however this had not been agreed and so may be backdated at a later stage. The variance in non-pay costs had arisen largely due to the Regent Road summer project being under budget, and in Exams and Publicity was due to assumptions that had been made with regard to when invoices would be received. The cash balance reflected the working capital profile, as the College receives more money in the first few weeks of the academic year. Net cash at the end of the year was expected to be similar to now.

Governors thanked Carolyn for the accounts and had no questions.

10. Post Audit Financial Position and Planning for Revised 2019-20 Budget – Paper 006

Carolyn Davies introduced the report, noting that the Auditors had almost completed their work. No adjustments to the adjusted operating surplus of £70k in the end of year accounts were proposed, meaning that any risks in terms of bank loans/covenants were effectively neutralised. Further information will be received by the Audit Committee at its next meeting and by Corporation in December.

Governors thanked Carolyn for the update and were pleased to note the positive situation with regard to bank covenants.

11. Policy Update: Reorganisation Policy and Procedure – Paper 007

The Principal introduced the Policy, noting that the changes related only to pay protection and had in effect already been approved at the Corporation meeting on 20 March 2019, to take effect from the start of the 2019-20 academic year.

The updated Reorganisation Policy and Procedure was unanimously approved.

EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

12. Appointment of Governors

a) Support Staff Governor

An election had been held with the assistance of an independent scrutineer and Aaron Winterton was the successful candidate. Once appointed, Aaron would be written to

formally to confirm this, which would then trigger a vacancy for the Teaching Staff Governor role she currently occupies.

b) Student Governor (Academic Year Cycle)

Governors were informed of the application process that had been undertaken and of the selected candidate, Walija Fatima, who had clearly demonstrated the desired experience, commitment and qualities.

The above appointments were unanimously approved.

13. Any Other Business

The Principal informed members of a very successful Open Day, which had been run across both campuses with buses running between. Attendance had been very healthy and the new faster process of registration had worked very well. Governors noted that there had been good coverage on Twitter too.

Philip Parkinson informed members of discussions at the Vaughan Fund Committee meeting which had taken place earlier that day, noting that the increase in applications this year had led to lower grant amounts having to be awarded. The Committee were therefore looking for ways to attract more capital for the future. Suggestions so far included approaching alumni (in particular members of the Old Wyggestonian Association and previous recipients of bursaries) and local business etc.

It was agreed that this item would be brought back before the Corporation towards the end of the spring term for further thoughts from Governors and a paper from the Principal as to how this fundraising task might best be approached.

14. Confidentiality

The following item was identified as confidential:

- Minute 6 – part of the Principal's Update

15. Next Meeting

5.00 pm, Wednesday 18 December 2019 in Room M108 at University Road.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm.

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Corporation Chair

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Date

Corporation 20 November 2019
Confidential Annex

5. Principal's Update – Presentation

Confidential – text removed