

# WQE & Regent College Group

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

**Members of the Corporation Present:**

Stuart Dawkins, Chair  
Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Sarah Fox, Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Neil McGhee,  
Nisar Navsariwala, Philip Parkinson, Jim Phillips, Amrik Singh, Rosie Whitley, 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, Royston Bayliss & Peter Butcher

*The Chair welcomed all to the first Corporation meeting of the new academic year and introduced Donna Trusler, Associate Principal (Students & Welfare). Donna gave some background on her career so far and thanked everyone for the warm welcome.*

*An update was given with regard to Peter Butcher, who had returned to work as planned but had then suffered a family bereavement and would therefore be away from College for a while longer. The Corporation wished Peter well.*

*The Chair informed members that Simon Catchpole had resigned from his role as Governor due to conflicting commitments. The Corporation wished to record their thanks for Simon's service over the years and wished him well. It was noted that Simon's resignation had led to a vacancy on the Audit Committee and if any Governor was interested in joining that committee they were asked to please let Stuart, Paul or Dawn know.*

*As this was Royston Bayliss' last meeting a certificate had been prepared for him expressing the Corporation's gratitude for his service over the last year. Unfortunately Royston was not in attendance but Dawn will ensure that he receives his certificate with the Corporation's thanks.*

**1. Declarations of Interest**

Jimmy Zachariah declared an interest in item 10, Sub-Contracting and Supply Chain Policy, due to having a sub-contract with the College.

**2. Minutes – Paper 001**

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held 3 July 2019 were approved as a correct record subject to one amendment to reflect that Jimmy Zachariah was in attendance.

It was noted that no comments had been received in regard to item 9, Health and Safety Policy, and this had therefore been approved as submitted.

**3. Ongoing matters – Paper 002**

These were reviewed and noted. It was confirmed that work on filling the Support Staff Governor vacancy was progressing in Peter Butcher's absence and that the Estates & Finance Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference were on the agenda for this meeting.

**4. Governors' Training & Development**

**a) Refresh on Measuring & Reviewing Student Outcomes – Paper 003**

As all members had previous experience of measuring and reviewing student outcomes and/or had attended one-on-one training with Tim Cullinan, it was proposed that no refresher was needed and Tim would address any questions with regard to methodology when the full outcomes report was given later in the year. For today's meeting a top level overview of results would be given. It was noted that Paper 003 was a reminder of what the Corporation had received in December. Governors queried whether the College would report separately on disadvantaged/safeguarded/looked after students and Tim confirmed that it would, in the fuller report. Any Governors wishing to receive refresher training were advised to contact Tim via Dawn for an appointment.

**b) Future Opportunities**

No potential training opportunities were identified by Governors. The Chair informed members of a new series of SFCA Webinars that had recently become available; Dawn will circulate details.

## **OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

**5. Principal's Post Summer Update - Presentation**

The Principal updated the Corporation on a number of matters including:

- Student Outcomes Headlines
- Update on Student Numbers
  - Impact of Numbers
  - Managing Growth
  - Reducing Movement Issues and Risks
- Fire Evacuation Testing
- Funding Announcements
- NEU National Industrial Action Over Pay & Conditions in SFCs
- Prospectus & Open Day (Saturday 9 November, 10.00 am – 4.00 pm, all welcome)

A good discussion was had around the larger than expected growth in student numbers and the strain this was putting on resources in a number of ways including premises and staffing, particularly at University Road. Governors took assurance that the College was looking at all possible ways to mitigate the issues arising, however the Corporation had some concerns over how the growth had impacted on the student experience. A Student Voice exercise was suggested and the Principal confirmed that the College conducts an Early Weeks Survey of student views during October, the results of which are reported to Corporation. Governors looked forward to receiving this and also requested an official impact assessment report in a few months' time. The Corporation also requested that it be updated on the issues raised by this discussion each month.

## OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

### 6. **Student Outcomes Headlines from 2018/19**

Tim Cullinan presented the headline student outcomes, noting that a more detailed commentary would be submitted to a later meeting. The methodology for calculating the achievement rate was explained, as was the adverse effect on retention rates caused by the move to linear qualifications and the associated change to a two-year retention calculation. It was noted that national figures had a one-year time lag, therefore those presented were last year's. This year's national figures would not be known until early spring 2020.

Governors noted the fairly positive picture with regard to A Level, GCSE, L2 Vocational, L1 and Entry Level courses. L3 Vocational and L3 Extended Certificate courses appeared to have fared less well, however the College's decision to measure retention on these courses over two years was acknowledged as a factor in the overall achievement rates. It was confirmed that the College had begun work on drilling down into these courses to find out the reasons for the dip in performance and what could be done to bring about improvements. The Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group will also very likely be looking at these courses in greater depth this year.

### 7. **Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group**

#### **a) Update on Subjects Supported During 2018/19** – 004, verbal update

Tim Cullinan updated members on the progress of the five subjects under the Task & Finish Group, noting that a more detailed report would be submitted to the Group at its first meeting of the year. Jimmy Zachariah requested some further information with regard to ALPS scores etc. and Tim advised that he contact Dawn to make an appointment for some training.

#### **b) Terms of Reference and Appointment for 2019-20** – Paper 005

The Chair confirmed with members that the Corporation still wished to retain a Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group. It was noted that the remit was unchanged, as was the core membership. Governors were asked to please email Dawn if they were interested in joining the core membership, and were also reminded that any Governor was welcome to attend any meeting of the Group as a guest at any time. All Governors will be emailed with dates of meetings once finalised.

The Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference and Appointment for 2019-20 were unanimously approved.

## OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS

### 8. **Recruitment & Selection Policy** – Paper 006

Carolyn Davies introduced the Policy, noting that as KCSiE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) guidance was updated every September the Policy was also updated to reflect changes. The main changes this year related to Section 128 checks, clarification around references and clarity around when the College can have a new employee working on a Risk Assessment if not all pre-employment checks have come through. Carolyn asked Governors to read the Policy carefully and email any questions to her directly within the next two weeks.

The revised Recruitment & Selection Policy was unanimously approved, subject to comments.

**9. Sub-Contracting & Supply Chain Policy – Paper 007**

Sarah Oldfield introduced the Policy, noting that the main changes were in paragraph 2.2 around College commitments. Sarah requested that any questions be emailed to her directly within the next two weeks.

The revised Sub-Contracting & Supply Chain Policy was unanimously approved, subject to comments.

Governors enquired whether the College had an Environmental Policy and the Principal stated that this was one of the policies due for update and that the Corporation would be advised in due course as to when it would be brought before them. It was noted that Governors had a particular interest in this Policy due to the increasing focus on such matters from students of the College and elsewhere.

Governors noted that the two Policies seen at this meeting were inconsistent in formatting/presentation and requested that this be addressed for the future.

**10. Capital Works - Update**

Carolyn Davies gave an update, with photographs, on the capital project at Regent Road, noting that it had come in under budget and had been completed in time for the start of teaching, apart from the outside canopy which it was hoped would be completed by October half-term. There had also been a number of small planned maintenance projects, some condition survey works and some property strategy work. All had gone really well. Revenue maintenance was ongoing and there would be additional requirements. Other condition survey works needed will be discussed with the new Estates & Finance Task & Finish Group. Carolyn noted a need to start planning now for 1920/21 to ensure any works run as smoothly as possible. Next steps include dealing with snagging issues, the knock-on effect of which will be seen in the revised budget. The Principal extended an open invitation to all Governors to visit the Regent Road buildings and view the new spaces created.

**11. Management Accounts July 2019 – Paper 008**

This item was considered to be confidential at this stage and is contained in the confidential annex to these minutes.

**12. Estates & Finance Task & Finish Group – Terms of Reference & Appointment – Paper 009**

The Chair introduced the proposal and confirmed with members that the Corporation still wished to set up an Estates & Finance Task & Finish Group. All members were comfortable with the remit and the core membership as stated. Governors were asked to please email Dawn if they were interested in joining the core membership, and were also reminded that any Governor was welcome to attend any meeting of the Group as a guest at any time. All Governors will be emailed with dates of meetings once finalised.

The Estates & Finance Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference and Appointment for 2019-20 were unanimously approved.

## EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

**13. Meeting Calendar 2019-20 – Paper 010**

The final calendar of meetings for 2019-20 was approved, including meeting locations. Governors requested that the calendar be attached to the agenda for each meeting from this point forward and that dates of Task & Finish Group meetings should also be added once known.

**14. Ongoing Governance Items – Programme Summary – Paper 011**

The Chair introduced Peter Butcher's paper, which set out those governance items which had been deferred due to his absence at the end of the last academic year, together with target dates for their submission to Corporation. It was confirmed that nothing essential had been allowed to slip. The paper was noted and Governors looked forward to receiving the outstanding items.

**15. Any Other Business**

Jimmy Zachariah asked that the College provide a report later on in the year reflecting on and assessing the outcome of the merger, both in terms of student outcomes and the sense of morale/identity/culture within the College. Dawn will add this to Ongoing Matters, to be picked up at an appropriate point.

Jim Phillips wished to pass on his congratulations to the Prizegiving Team, noting that this year's event had remained very slick and professional whilst the new cabaret format had created a more intimate and friendly atmosphere.

Members were informed that Kim Pearson would be leaving the College on Friday. Kim had worked at the College for 20 years and had been a member of the Leadership Team at Regent Road prior to merger. The Corporation recorded its formal thanks to Kim for her hard work and dedication over the years and wished her the very best for the future.

**16. Confidentiality**

The following item was identified as confidential:

- Minute 11 – Management Accounts July 2019.

**17. Next Meeting**

5.00 pm, Wednesday 30 October 2019, Room M108 at University Road.

The Meeting closed at 7.10 pm

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Corporation Chair

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Date

**Corporation 25 September 2019**  
**Confidential Annex**

- 11. Management Accounts July 2019 – Paper 008**  
*\*Confidential – text removed\**