

# WQE & Regent College Group

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**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting  
Held at the Regent Road Campus on  
29 January 2020  
Commencing at 5.00 pm**

**Members of the Corporation present:**

Stuart Dawkins, Chair  
Jasmine Andean, Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Walija Fatima, Sarah Fox, Neil McGhee, Philip Parkinson,  
Jim Phillips, Amrik Singh, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

**In attendance:**

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

**Apologies for absence:**

Wayne Allsopp, Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith & Nisar Navsariwala

*The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular the new Student Governors, and introductions were made. It was noted that correspondence had been received from Wayne Allsopp, who hoped to return from his leave of absence around the end of February.*

**1. Declarations of Interest**

Jimmy Zachariah re: item 14, Subcontracting Annual Report.

**2. Minutes – Paper 001**

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held 18 December 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

**3. Appointment of Teaching Staff Governor**

The Clerk reported that three candidates had stood in the recent election and that Ing'utu Palmer had been successful, gaining a 72.2% share of the vote. The Chair therefore recommended the appointment of Ing'utu as a Teaching Staff Member of the Corporation for a four-year term of office with immediate effect. Governors were unanimously in favour and asked the Clerk to bring Ing'utu on board.

## **STANDARD ITEMS**

**4. Ongoing Matters – Paper 002**

These were reviewed and noted. It was felt that the addition of deadline details would be helpful, and the Clerk was asked to add a column for this.

## **5. Governor Training and Development**

### **a) Ofsted Inspection Framework – General Overview**

Sarah Oldfield shared a presentation from the recent SFCA Inspection Conference about what to expect from the new-style Ofsted inspections. The emphasis on Curriculum Intent was noted and Governors were pleased to note that they would be receiving some further training and information around this at the next meeting. Regarding the involvement of Governors in inspection, there was no indication that this would change and unfortunately meetings were likely to continue to be requested at very short notice. Sarah noted that she was soon to visit Long Road College to talk with them about their recent inspection and may have more to report following this.

Governors thanked Sarah for the presentation, which they requested should be emailed to them after the meeting and looked forward to further updates as and when information became available.

### **b) Future Opportunities**

No new potential training opportunities were identified by Governors.

## **OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

## **6. Principal's Update**

The Principal updated the Corporation on the following matters:

- UCAS applications 2019/20
- Staff Engagement Activities, including a meeting with the Unions
- Provisional applications to the College for the 2020/21 academic year
- QAR and performance tables
- National Industrial Action
- Estates matters
- CENBASE/ASCL Leadership Training

The Chair also reported on the meeting earlier that week between the Chair, the Principal and a representative of the two teaching staff Trades Unions, which followed correspondence early in the Autumn Term. The opportunity to meet was well received and the meeting was both constructive and reassuring.

Governors thanked the Principal for his report and asked that:

- a) the Corporation's thanks be passed on to the UCAS team for their excellent work this year under difficult circumstances.
- b) a slide on the development of the role of PPM be included in the next Principal's Update.
- c) the Clerk canvas the Estates and Finance Task & Finish Group to agree a date for their next meeting.

## **7. College Self-Assessment Report – Refresh – Paper 003**

Sarah Oldfield introduced the report and drew members' attention to the extra data added on pages 8-10. This related to those groups of students identified as underperforming and what

the College was doing to try and address this, and to the various categories of disadvantaged students.

After due scrutiny and discussion, the Corporation approved the refreshed SAR as submitted.

**8. Transition Report – Single Integrated Curriculum & Enrolment Impact – Paper 004**

The Principal introduced the report, noting that it had been requested by the Corporation and aimed to articulate the impacts and challenges of the merger and harmonisation throughout the Autumn term. Members thanked the Principal for the thorough report and noted the College's continuing actions towards mitigating the potential for issues arising in the future.

**9. Potential Strategic Event**

The Chair suggested that a strategic event for Governors be organised towards the end of the academic year, similar to that held in June 2019, with external input from an appropriate source. All agreed and the Clerk was asked to look at potential dates.

## **STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES**

**10. Retention and Progress – In-Year Report – Paper 005**

Tim Cullinan drew members' attention to the data regarding Level 3 retention into year two on two-year courses, particularly vocational Level 3 courses, noting that some important progress had been made, although there was still work to be done. In-year student progress was looking positive at this point. MEG data was very broadly in line with last year, alongside the increased retention this year, and indicative of equivalent outcomes in terms of progress. Members thanked Tim for the report and had no questions.

**11. Safeguarding Young People – Serious Incident Policy – Paper 006**

The Principal informed members that whilst there was now a draft of the Serious Incident Policy, the extent of the links within this necessitated further checking and testing, especially with key staff before it could be brought before the Corporation and it would therefore be submitted to the March meeting.

**12. Work Experience – Mid-Year Update – Paper 007**

Andrew Jackson introduced the report, noting that the Capacity Development Fund cohort of students attended two days of work experience per week for the whole year. The other data concerned more general work experience placements and vocational students who were expected to do one or two weeks.

A discussion ensued around the College's approach to finding work placements for students and Governors offered to try and open some doors via their own business contacts. Governors also requested a presentation at a future meeting on benchmarks and the College's approach to work experience.

**13. Lesson Observations Interim Report – Paper 008**

Sarah Oldfield introduced the report, noting that the previous two separate systems had now been brought together. Curriculum Area Observations had been conducted early in the College year for all curriculum areas and partners. Lesson Observations had started a little

later than planned due to the IT incident, however it was anticipated that all could still be concluded before Easter. Sarah noted that the experience so far had been very positive. Members thanked Sarah for the report and had no questions.

*Jimmy Zachariah, having declared an interest in the following item, left the meeting before discussions began.*

## **OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS**

### **14. Sub-Contracting Annual Report – Paper 009**

Sarah Oldfield introduced the report, noting that it was in a similar format to last year's but with some added information around risk management. The checklist had already been signed off by the Chair and Principal in order to meet the ESFA's deadline for submission. Members thanked Sarah for the report and were pleased to note that external assurance had been sought in this inherently risky area.

*Jimmy Zachariah re-joined the meeting.*

### **15. Management Accounts – November 2019 – Paper 010**

Carolyn Davies introduced the accounts, noting that they compared the actual four months' data to the original budget approved last summer. All the variances had been picked up in the revised budget which was the next item for consideration on this agenda. Members queried the underspend in student mentoring and Carolyn explained that this was due to staff vacancies which had taken some time to fill. Members thanked Carolyn for the accounts.

### **16. Revised Budget for 2019/20 and Financial Planning Return – Paper 011**

Carolyn Davies introduced the document, noting that it had historically come to the Corporation towards the end of March, however changes in ESFA reporting requirements had necessitated it being brought forward. The funding factors had not been available at the time of completion but had been received this week, therefore an updated forecast was distributed. The ESFA's Excel model used to put together the return was also not functioning at present – a national problem – so it was not possible to produce a balance sheet, however by looking at the surplus and deficits and adjusting for depreciation it could be seen that the cash position remained sound. From the updated information it could be seen that the core national funding rate had increased, which was positive, and the remodelled income was therefore up by £130k by 2021/22. It had been assumed that the College would reinvest this, therefore the net surpluses and deficits did not change. Other significant assumptions around in-year funding, pay expenditure and capital/maintenance projects were explained. It was proposed that the new figures should be the ones submitted to ESFA.

The Corporation approved the Revised Budget and Financial Planning Return using the updated figures.

### **17. Tuition Fees Policy – Paper 012**

Carolyn Davies introduced the revised Policy, noting that it was proposed to increase fees by 5% in line with the recent funding increase for other students.

The Corporation approved the Tuition Fees Policy for the 2020/21 academic year as submitted.

## **EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

### **18. 2018-19 Governance Self-Assessment Report – Paper 013**

The Clerk introduced the report, noting that it was largely positive. The performance indicators not met were mainly as a result of the Clerk's absence, however attendance at meetings and participation in College events were below target for a handful of Governors and attempts would be made to address this. One change that had been made was the inclusion of individual comments from the Governors' Survey and the Principal's response to these. Governors were reminded that they were always free to contact the Clerk, Chair or Principal at any time if they wanted further information to support effective governance.

### **19. Governor Insight Programme 2019-20 – Paper 014**

The Clerk introduced the proposals for this year, noting that the Curriculum Area Leaders were all comfortable with them, however some concern had been expressed regarding Governors dwelling on operational matters; this would therefore be specifically addressed in the protocols. Governors were reminded that the reflection form should be completed in conjunction with the Curriculum Area Leader and neither should sign it off if there was anything they were uncomfortable with. Governors were happy with the proposals and looked forward to receiving notification of their link areas.

### **20. Colleges' Senior Staff Remuneration Code – Paper 015**

The Clerk reported that the Remuneration Committee had considered the Code at their meeting earlier that day and recommended that the Corporation adopt it along with the Annual Remuneration Statement in Appendix B.

The Corporation unanimously approved the adoption of the Colleges' Senior Staff Remuneration Code and Annual Remuneration Statement.

## **CLOSURE**

### **21. Any Other Business**

Members noted the low temperature in the meeting room and asked that this be rectified for next time.

Members asked if there had been any response to the HMRC query. Carolyn Davies advised that there had not but that the College would know more in March and would report to Governors in April.

### **22. Confidentiality**

Item 24 - Confidential Item.

### **23. Next Meeting**

5.00 pm, Tuesday 10 March 2020 at Regent Road.

**24. Confidential Item - Withdrawal of the Principal, Staff and Students**

The Principal, staff and students withdrew from the meeting in order that a confidential item could be discussed. This discussion is summarised in the confidential annex to these minutes.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

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Corporation Chair

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Date

**Corporation 29 January 2020**  
**Confidential Annex**

- 24. Principal's Appraisal** – Agenda Part 2, Paper 001  
*\*Confidential – text removed\**