

WQE & Regent College Group

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting

Held virtually via Zoom on
23 September 2020 at 17:00

Members of the Corporation present:

Stuart Dawkins, Chair

Wayne Allsopp, Jasmine Andean, Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Walija Fatima, Nisar Navsariwala, Ing'utu Palmer, Philip Parkinson, Jim Phillips, Amrik Singh, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

In attendance:

Tim Cullinan, Carolyn Davies, Andrew Jackson,
Sarah Oldfield, Donna Trusler & Rachel Middleton

Apologies for absence:

Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Neil McGhee

1. Chair's welcome and apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Bernie Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith and Neil McGhee. Wayne Allsopp and Jim Phillips confirmed they were leaving the meeting earlier due to other meeting commitments.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair highlighted the interest which Jimmy Zachariah has, in relation to being one of the Corporation's suppliers. The Chair moved agenda item 12 to the end of the proceedings to enable Jimmy to participate in the meeting and dial out when the sub-contractor item was discussed.

3. Minutes – Paper 001

To approve the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 27 August 2020 as a correct record.

Based on Governor feedback the minutes will be amended to reflect the fact that it was an extraordinary meeting. **Action RM**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. The Clerk will arrange for the Chair to sign the minutes when their next face-to-face meeting takes place.

Action RM and SD

4. Ongoing Matters – Paper 002

The Chair confirmed the following matters had been addressed in the intervening period:

- College Self-Assessment Report – Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Staff Wellbeing Strategy – *This came to the Corporation meeting on 13 June 2020*
- Estates Strategy - Critical path analysis requested along with an impact assessment in relation to students and staff. – *This has been referenced in Paul Wilson's estates updates*

The Chair confirmed the following matter would be referenced within discussion/papers at the meeting itself:

- Student searches – annual update on number of searches carried out- Donna Trusler

The Chair confirmed the following matter would be referred to the relevant board/committee for discussion:

- Vaughan Fund - report on fundraising – to be reported at the Vaughan Committee meeting on 11 November 2020. **Action RM**
- Work Experience - A training & development session on benchmarks and the College's approach to work experience currently postponed and will take place at the next face to face meeting of the Corporation – **Action Andrew Jackson & Kate O'Farrell**
- Curriculum Policy - to come to the Corporation meeting on 14 October – **Action TC**

GOVERNOR BRIEFING

5. Safeguarding Briefing

Donna Trusler – Presentation

A copy of the presentation will be circulated to all governors following the meeting.

Action RM

Donna outlined a number of salient points:

- Governors received a tailored presentation on safeguarding this year. This would be followed with a requirement to undertake training on Safeguarding and PREVENT duty, using the College's online training package. Becky Grove and Rachel Middleton would be coordinating this.
- The College has invested in CPOMS – an online recording mechanism for all reported safeguarding concerns
- Since the return to College three weeks ago, there have been significant mental health challenges as a consequence of lockdown. The College anticipated this would be the case.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) was revised for September 2020. It focuses heavily on mental health post-lockdown. The monitoring of young people who are assigned a social worker are additionally being monitored by Designated Safeguarding Leads within educational establishments. Overt reference is now being made to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES). Most young people experience at least one of these, but these can impact on educational outcomes. Domestic violence is now referred to as domestic abuse to note the broader connotations. KCSiE now links criminal exploitation to child sexual exploitation. Governors were reminded that KCSiE 2019 referenced peer on peer abuse for the

first time. The summary of changes made to KCSiE in this year's edition are summarised in Annex H of KCSiE

- The College introduced a dedicated safeguarding freephone number this academic year
- The College will be focusing heavily on online safety with students this academic year
- Governors were made aware of ID fraud scams and money flipping
- Children missing from education was a challenge faced by the College during lockdown. Staff tracked attendance and flagged any concerns. A small number of emergency house visits were made during lockdown.
- Prevent Update – Sam Slack is the Regional Prevent Coordinator. Sam gave support staff an update, talking through the Prevent strategy and the College's duties. Sam reported that, in general, terrorist groups had been trying to capitalise on lockdown to mobilise recruits. There has been a resurgence of right-wing extremism which can lead to cultural nationalism and then terrorism.
- Referrals through to the Channel programme (multi-agency support) have significantly reduced nationally due to lockdown.
- Unmoderated social media platforms remain a safeguarding concern nationally.

Donna reported a range of issues which students are dealing with, including bereavement, changes of family circumstance, anxiety when moving outside of a tight-knit family bubble to return to College.

Staff have been talking to students about anxiety. There has been a focus on teaching students to recognise when their anxiety becomes a more acute issue.

A Governor asked about the level of support received by students and what the connection was between support received and impact on the student's learning and development.

Donna confirmed students would receive a tailored support package. The tracking of impact is an ongoing matter which the College will be addressing.

OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION

6. Principal's Update

Paul Wilson - Presentation

A copy of the presentation will be circulated to all governors following the meeting.

The Principal reported that:

- 50-60 % of students are on campus at a given time
- there is 87 -90% attendance even with isolations
- the offer for students is now double length lessons plus up to up to 1.5 hours of online sessions. Additionally, teachers are setting structured activities and offering support
- students are conducting personal progress mentoring sessions with staff, virtually
- enrichment sessions will be added to the College offer soon
- live Q &A sessions with students have been beneficial to students and the Principal
- Success at Sixth evening live took place and was online. Attendance was high This was a key opportunity to parental concerns.

- the Principal met with the Student Executive. One of the actions from this is to jointly scope out how to improve the social experience for students in a Covid-safe environment.
- introduction of live update meetings for staff
- there has been a high volume of proactive parental communication from the College – more than ever before. This has included an introduction to the executive team and contact details
- the final number of students on roll will not be confirmed until 6 weeks into term. Provisionally there were 3518 students enrolled, but this is subject to change, as is common at the start of the term
- the prize giving event went ahead virtually and involved over 100 people
- additional catch-up funding from government is available. This will be targeted at students with weaker English and Maths grades. A full plan will be published on the College website.

The Principal explained the current staff absence levels and gave top-level reasons for absence. Given the size of the College and current context, the numbers absent were low.

A Governor queried what the predicted number of students on roll was and how that compared with the current picture. There was also discussion about how the College presents and advertises itself in the market during the year ahead. The Principal confirmed positive messaging about student successes was part of the ongoing parental communications and was due to be released imminently.

The Principal reported provisional planning for on Open Day live online- a structured week of festival events and interactions online, including virtual tours, as well as the ability to book physical tours. Drilling down into curriculum level detail will also be a feature of the week. The College is investing in IT infrastructure to support this. The event will run from 9 – 14 November 2020

Governors raised a query about the viability of the timetable for students in afternoon sessions where this involved them being on campus in the morning for face to face sessions and then needing to travel home in time to log into virtual sessions in the afternoon.

The Principal confirmed this was an issue which arose in the student Q&A sessions and will be reviewed. It is not an issue which is widespread and was the result of a technical problem booking space, rather than a lack of capacity. There is a need to remind students about available access to study centres as well, to prevent the need for some to travel home.

Action PW: to give a verbal update on this matter at next Corporation meeting.

OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

7. Student Outcomes Headlines from 2019/20

Tim Cullinan – Presentation

A copy of the presentation outlining the analysis will be circulated to all governors following the meeting. This will cover agenda item 7 and 8.

Tim outlined the fact that headline figures are submitted to the September meeting, but a fuller picture will be referred at a subsequent Corporation meeting. The value-added reports had not yet been received. Given the changes to the way in which results were

issued this summer, the opportunity to make significant gains on previous years was quite limited.

The Chair asked for Tim's view on the end of year academic performance for the College. He reported he was 'broadly pleased', as almost everything had moved in the right direction. Students have been able to progress on to their next stages.

8. Exams update 2020/21

Tim Cullinan – Presentation (tabled at the meeting)

Tim reported that 255 students made 355 appeals following the Centre-Assessed Grade (CAG) process. Thirteen were eligible for submission to exam boards. Only three had been returned to the College to date, all of which were upheld.

Autumn exams:

- There are 100 A Level entries in October
- GCSE – 350 GCSE English entries in November
- 250 GCSE Maths entries in November

Governors asked what the College foresaw for the coming year in relation to exams. To date there has been no announcement by the DfE or Ofqual. At this point the College needs to assume exams will fall when they normally do. College will be focusing support on students who are vulnerable or have difficulties. Andrew will be working with the mentoring team and Donna will also be looking at this.

The Chair confirmed that the Student Outcomes task & finish group will have student retention as one of its areas of focus this year.

A Governor queried the ramifications of another lockdown on the delivery of the full syllabus to students. The Principal confirmed that if no lockdowns and closures occurred, delivery would not be difficult as a lot of content can be covered in 3-hour face to face lessons, but the challenge for the College is to ensure recovery work sits alongside this. Boosting online capacity and delivery is critical for the College.

The Chair asked Student Governors for any feedback from peers. Student Governors reported that email communication between students and their teachers/mentors was sometimes slow. The Principal asked Student Governors to send on any anonymised examples of this.

Action AJ to review the issues and response times.

The Chair reported that a letter had been received by the Clerk regarding a student's CAG grades. The Principal confirmed this had now been escalated to a formal complaint.

9. Safeguarding Policy - Donna Trusler – Paper 005

Donna confirmed the policy had been revised in line with KCSiE 2020. She drew attention to all of the pertinent revision, highlighted in yellow.

The Chair thanked Donna for her work on the policy. There were no immediate queries from Governors.

The policy was approved, subject to the usual process with Governors highlighting any suggested amendments within two weeks or raising queries to Donna, with the Principal and Clerk copied in. **Action Governors**

OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS

10. Update on the Risk Assessment – Paper 006

Carolyn Davies

Carolyn confirmed that the Covid-19 Risk Assessment continues to be updated weekly. The five main areas of change for this iteration related to shielding, opening up some more dining options for early morning and lunches, additional guidance regarding breaks, first aid and ventilation.

There are 96 actions arising from the RA. Carolyn paid tribute to the many teams who have put so much in place to enable teaching and learning to take place.

The College has received the external report from Hettle Andrews – the College's insurance consultants. This has been cascaded for to the Audit & Risk Committee to review at their 29.09.20 meeting.

There have been some positive tests for students with Covid-19. The cases were unrelated and unlikely to be infections picked up on College campus. Carolyn has worked closely with Public Health England (PHE) and identified close contacts, in line with the College's own track and trace protocols. Seating plans and minimising contact has assisted in the track and trace process.

It was noted that for each of the College's cases, PHE has approved the College's own track and trace process. Infection has been well contained. The Board recognised the hard work that has been done by staff on these systems and processes

Governors received an updated risk assessment following the update completed on 21.09.20

The Chair reiterated the previous formal statement in relation to Governors supporting the approach taken to the risk assessment, recognizing its thorough approach, and the live nature of the assessment and the College's focus on minimising risk. The Chair asked Carolyn to thank all those involved in risk management.

11. Recruitment & Selection Policy & procedure – annual review – Paper 007

Carolyn Davies

This procedure is reviewed annually. KCSiE references safer recruitment. It is important to reference this in the procedure. Two main strands of work have led to the revisions– KCSiE 2020 and a closer working relationship with the HR team on procedures.

There has been some minor editing, reformatting, moving content.

Governors approved the procedure, subject to the standard policy approval process

Action Governors – feed back any queries or comment to Carolyn, copying in Paul and the Clerk.

12. **Sub-contracting: provider review, assurance and compliance declarations**

Sarah Oldfield – Paper 008 and 009

This agenda item was discussed out of sequence due to a declared interest by one of the Governors. Jimmy Zachariah had left the meeting before this item was discussed.

There were no major changes to the policy. Part of the College's due diligence work is to report to Governors that a review has been conducted. Partnership working has been a particular area of focus for due diligence work. An external audit will also begin next week

Action SD to sign the Provider Review following governor approval.

Governors approved the policy, subject to the standard policy approval process

Action Governors – feed back any queries or comment to Sarah, copying in Paul and the Clerk.

13. **Monthly management Accounts** – Paper 010

Carolyn Davies

The minutes for this agenda item are confidential.

EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

14. **Governance matters**

14.1 Governor Conference

The Clerk will liaise with Governors via a Doodle poll to ask for optimal dates for a Governor Conference. **Action RM**

14.2 Governor development

The Chair confirmed that the Sixth Form Colleges Association has a series of webinars aimed at Governors, Clerks and College staff, for the academic year ahead. The Clerk will forward this on to Governors to ascertain interest. **Action RM**

15. **Appointment of task & finish groups** – Paper 011

Rachel Middleton

The Clerk referred to *How we Govern* which states that Governors should review the need for specific task & finish groups ongoing. Once Governors affirm they wish the task & finish groups to continue, the terms of reference need to be approved as well as the core memberships.

The Governors agreed the two existing task & finish groups would continue for the academic year ahead – Student Outcomes and Estates & Finance.

The core memberships were reconfirmed, and all Governors were encouraged to participate.

The terms of reference for the Estates & Finance task & finish group were approved. Terms of reference would be revisited for the Student Outcomes task & finish group by the Chair, Principal and Clerk. These would be submitted to the Corporation at a later date offline. **Action SD, PW and RM**

Action RM– confirm dates for the first task & finish group meetings of the year.

16. Governor recruitment – Paper 012

Rachel Middleton

The Clerk outlined progress on advertising and recruiting an external Governor with financial qualifications and experience as a senior manager or consultant. She confirmed she would confirm an interview date with the panel (SD, JB, PP and AS, as reserve). Governors would be asked to highlight the vacancy to their contacts and also to complete a log of contacts to enable the Clerk to map out sectoral coverage and keep contacts on file for future recruitment. **Action RM**

17. Meeting modes for governance meetings

17.1 Corporation

The Corporation decided to convene meetings virtually for the remainder of the autumn term

17.2 Task & finish groups

The Corporation decided to convene meetings virtually for the remainder of the autumn term

17.3 Link Governor visits

The Corporation agreed that Link Governor visits would be deferred to next term, with the exception of the Safeguarding Governor, Jo Cooke, who will meet with Donna Trusler virtually.

18. Any Other Business

Donation to Peter Butcher in thanks for his long service – a watercolour of the Regent Road camps as well as two aerial photos of both campuses have been sourced, however they are large. The aerial photos could hang in the College itself with a plaque indicating they were donated by Peter Butcher. **Action SD** to present to Peter

19. Confidentiality

The minutes under item 13 remain confidential in the interim and are subject to review.

20. Next Meeting

5.00pm, Wednesday 14 October 2020, remote via Zoom

The meeting finished at 7.15pm.

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Corporation Chair

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Date

ACTION LIST

	Actions arising from 23 September Corporation Meeting	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
1.	Change the minutes of the Corporation meeting to reflect it was an extraordinary meeting (27.08.20)	RM	asap
2.	Arrange a time for SD to sign the Corporation minutes	RM and SD	

3.	Vaughan Fund - report on fundraising – to be reported at the Vaughan Committee meeting on 11 November 2020.	RM	Before 11 Nov 2020
4.	Work Experience - A training & development session on benchmarks and the College's approach to work experience currently postponed and will take place at the next face to face meeting of the Corporation	AJ & Kate O'Farrell	
5.	Curriculum Policy - to come to the Corporation meeting on 14 October 2020	TC	Before 14 Oct 2020
6.	Give a verbal update on student access to the afternoon timetable due to travel	PW	14 Oct Corporation meeting
7.	To review the issues and response times for PPMs/ teachers when students make contact	AJ	
8.	Safeguarding Policy – Governors to send any queries or changes to Donna Trusler, copying in Paul and the Clerk, in next fortnight	All Governors	
9.	Recruitment procedure – Governors to send any queries or changes to Carolyn Davies, copying in Paul and the Clerk during the next fortnight.	All Governors	
10.	Sub-contracting Policy – Governors to send any queries or changes to Sarah, copying in Paul and the Clerk, during the next fortnight	All Governors	
11.	Sign the Provider Review	SD	
12.	Liaise with Governors via a Doodle poll to ask for optimal dates for a Governor Conference	RM	
13.	Issue the Governor webinar calendar from the SFCA to all Governors to seek interest	RM	asap
14.	Revisit the terms of reference for the Student Outcomes task & finish Group	PW, SD and RM	
15.	Determine optimal dates for the task & finish groups to convene this term	RM	
16.	Proceed with series of actions relating to recruitment of an External Governor	RM	
17.	Make a farewell presentation to Peter Butcher	SD	Before 30 Sept 2020