

# WQE & Regent College Group

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## Corporation Meeting Minutes

22 September 2021, 17:00, Room R01, Regent Road Campus

### Members of the Corporation in attendance:

Stuart Dawkins (Chair), Joyce Black, Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Jash Maadhavji, Neil McGhee, Nisar Navsariwala, Ing'utu Palmer, Jim Phillips, Alfaz Samnani, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

### Other attendees:

Carolyn Davies, Sarah Oldfield, Tim Rogers, Donna Trusler & Rachel Middleton

### Apologies:

Wayne Allsopp, Jo Cooke, Andrew Jackson, Philip Parkinson and Amrik Singh

## AGENDA

### 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the first Corporation meeting of the new year, which was held both in-person and via Microsoft Teams.

He confirmed the aspiration to hold such blended meetings for the year ahead.

Apologies received from Wayne Allsopp, Jo Cooke and Amrik Singh. Andrew Jackson was absent representing the College at an event.

Thanks were expressed to Jash Maadhavji, Student Governor, for his service over the last year. **Action RM:** to organise a certificate of appreciation.

The Chair welcomed Tim Rogers, new member of ELT, whose role is Associate Principal (Curriculum and Planning).

Thanks were expressed to Donna Trusler for her work supporting governance and warm wishes for her maternity leave.

Congratulations to Aaron Winterton who is assuming the role of Associate Principal – Students and Welfare to cover Donna's maternity leave.

Sarah Oldfield was coordinating the online meeting via Teams and was responsible for monitoring the chat and indicating to the Chair when remote participants had raised hands and wished to contribute or query.

The Chair asked any Governors who had experienced issues with their ID passes to contact RM as soon as possible. **Action Governors**

### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes and matters arising – Paper 001

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 30 June 2021 were approved as a correct record. The action list was discussed and updated:

The following matters were completed during the intervening period between meetings, and subsequently removed from the action list:

- Send all governance meeting dates to Governors and ELT for 2021-2022
- Communicate to Governors the arrangements for car parking passes at both campuses
- Cascade on thanks to Tim Cullinan for his significant contribution to the Corporation over time
- To discuss the multi-deprivation indices and impact on the College
- Inform Governors during first week of term whether September Corporation meeting will be face to face or virtual
- Contact PW if interested in viewing/discussing the estates proposals further

## **GOVERNOR BRIEFING**

### **4. Safeguarding and PREVENT briefing**

Donna Trusler – Presentation

Donna presented a 30-minute annual briefing to Governors on-screen focusing on safeguarding and PREVENT. Donna highlighted the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021). Donna reminded Governors that if there was a safeguarding allegation made against a member of College staff, the process would be for this to be referred to the Principal, and then on to the Chair of Governors, via the Clerk. Donna highlighted the benefits of the Safe Zone app for students and staff, as well as the Student Assistance Programme which offers listening support 24 hours a day. The slides would be made available to Governors following the meeting. Governors will be invited to complete the annual refresher training online, which will be coordinated by Becky Grove and the Clerk. **Action Governors:** complete the online safeguarding training in a timely manner.

Governors discussed the issue of students being made to select male or female as their gender for the purposes of the ILR and reporting to the ESFA. There are widespread societal issues for non-binary students. Governors asked the Principal to raise this with the SFCA and possibly to offer some case studies in terms of good inclusive practice around non-binary students' experiences at the College. **Action PW**

Staff have received equality, diversity and inclusion training.

Donna confirmed that the College works collaboratively with other colleges on matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, to discuss issues and share support and resources.

Governors queried whether the safeguarding team monitored trends through the CPOMs system, with a view to identifying priority areas to support further. Donna confirmed that the safeguarding team reviews referrals every fortnight. Governors asked Donna if there were any resourcing matters which needed consideration for funding, to support safeguarding activity. Donna confirmed this is under regular review, but there has been recent investment in the team.

Governors thanked Donna for her presentation and her team's work on keeping students safe and focusing on their wellbeing.

## OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### 5. **Principal's post-summer update** – Paper 002

Paul Wilson – Presentation

The Principal's update covered the following matters:

- Teacher assessed grades and results 2021
- Enrolments which have exceeded targets
- New leadership colleagues
- New teaching colleagues
- New support team colleagues
- The staffing headcount – 147 teaching staff and 147 support staff
- Start of year CPD
- Funding position relating to disadvantaged students
- Rise in National Insurance costs
- Staff wellbeing and support for vulnerable staff from HR
- Each team has been asked to reflect on their wellbeing needs
- The Safeguarding team is now being offered supervision to support their wellbeing

The Principal reported that vulnerable students all had an Individual Learning Plan in place on the lead up to TAGs and reported that 77% of these students achieved their MEG or better.

Sixty-six students appealed their TAGs, relating to 77 of their outcomes. Seven appeals are still in train and an additional one has gone back to the exam board for further investigation.

The Principal shared the College's 5 C's outlining what had emerged from further internal consultations about what it means to be part of the WQE College community, namely Community, Challenge, Curiosity, Commitment and Consideration. These will be promoted widely around campuses and would provide the language through which we will seek to express what WQE is about, what we do and things we seek to develop and value at WQE.

Governors queried whether there were any gaps in staffing due to the enrolment figures. The Principal confirmed that there was a full staffing composition. A Clearing-style enrolment process enabled the College to recruit students to courses with gaps.

Staff Governors asked whether there could be a wellbeing monitoring exercise based on those departments with high staff turnover and/or sickness. The Principal noted the suggestion.

## OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

### 6. **Refresh on measuring student outcomes**

Tim Rogers – Presentation – Paper 003

Tim provided a refresher to Governors on the key 16-19 accountability measures. The Chair affirmed that the presentation referenced historical data.

Governors queried what the College's aspirations for performance were. Tim confirmed that the College was seeking to beat the national average, and benchmarks itself against similar colleges with similar demographics.

**7. 2020-2021 Student outcomes headlines**

Tim Rogers – Presentation – Paper 004

Tim highlighted:

- The first cut of results which are still going through the QA process
- Results indicate stronger levels of achievement and retention
- Level 3 Extended Certificate is on an upward trend in terms of performance
- Level 1 – there has been an exam board change
- There has been an upward trend in performance at grades 9-4 in Maths and English GCSE

Governors requested a focus on Entry level and Level 1 performance. **Action TR:** table a report from the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group at the November meeting of the Corporation.

TR confirmed that stable performance data will be presented at the October Corporation meeting.

Governors queried whether there was any mapping between student outcomes and local business need. The Principal confirmed that there was a sound curriculum match, particularly to local STEM needs, and that having a broad curriculum offer was most likely to meet local market need.

**8. Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group – verbal update on subjects supported during 2020 – 2021**

Sarah Oldfield

This item was deferred to the next Corporation meeting.

**9. 16 – 19 Tuition Fund Overview Update Paper 005**

Sarah Oldfield

Sarah confirmed the funding packet available for the year ahead, some of which included rollover from the previous academic year.

The criteria have been broadened this academic year meaning that more students fall into the eligibility criteria, in fact 1200 students qualify for support. This number will be refined down and will depend on which students are underperforming. Group sizes can now be five students as opposed to three students last year.

Tutors have already been lined up and know the programme of delivery.

**10. Safeguarding young people – annual refresh of policy & procedure – Paper 006**

Donna Trusler

The Corporation noted the highlighted tracked changes. Subject to a fortnight in which Governors can flag up any changes to Donna, the policy was approved in principle.

Governor request – to remove references to 'children' and replace with 'students' wherever possible in the document. **Action DT**

DT confirmed that the FE Safeguarding Forum had advised using the word 'children'.

**11. Prevention of Sexual Abuse Action Plan – Paper 007**

Donna Trusler

Governors queried whether the deadlines outlined in the action plan had passed and

whether there was an update. DT confirmed that the action plan would be updated in readiness for the January 2022 Corporation meeting, by Aaron Winterton.

**Action AW:** bring an updated action plan to the Jan 2022 Corporation meeting.

Governors queried what the College's approach was to working with parents and carers. Donna confirmed this was a significant area for development. A review of welfare and skills commenced today.

**12. PREVENT Risk Register - Paper 008**

Donna Trusler

Governors noted the document.

Donna confirmed that she had been invited to present on practice within the College to the PREVENT Strategy Group.

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

**13. Verbal update on the Risk Assessment**

Carolyn Davies

Carolyn highlighted:

- The high volume of tracking and tracing still taking place across both sites
- There have been challenges in the following areas – staff absence levels and supply chains
- The College is required to have an Outbreak Management Plan – this does not factor in a return to full online teaching and learning. The Plan factors in communications to stakeholders, including Governors.

**14. Summer/ capital works – verbal update**

Carolyn Davies

Carolyn highlighted:

- Progress on Phase 1A of the estates plan – works completed in buildings G, J, R and S
- The College's IT network refresh
- Temporary accommodation measures
- Condition Improvement Fund works
- Challenges with estates developer staff isolations
- Snagging plans for addressing during the October half term
- The IT team have improved the speed of connection at the RR campus
- Firewalls have been updated across the College
- £2.6m budget for the works – with the out-turn looking to be the same

The Chair thanked all involved with the estates project for their hard work.

Governors noted the significant programme of work which had been completed, to time and on budget.

Governors asked if progress on meeting the JISC recommendations would be coming to a future Corporation meeting. Carolyn confirmed that this would be tabled at a future Audit Committee. At present the College is commencing a piece of work on digital technology.

## **EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

**15. Appointment of Task & Finish Groups – Paper 010**

Rachel Middleton

Rachel reminded Governors that at this point in the academic year there were three decisions for the Corporation to make:

- whether the Task & Finish Groups are still appropriate
- whether they have relevant terms of reference (these have been refined this year)
- to confirm their core membership for the year ahead.

Governors adopted the revised terms of reference.

The Estates & Finance and Student Outcomes Task & Finish Groups were approved for the academic year ahead. There were no additional Task & Finish Groups proposed.

The core memberships of the groups were approved. All Governors are invited to attend.

**16. Governor recruitment – verbal update**

Rachel Middleton

Rachel confirmed that a letter encouraging Student Governor applications had been circulated to students, with a closing date of 27<sup>th</sup> September for receipt of statements of interest. Interviews would be conducted by the Chair of the Governance & Search Committee and the Clerk to Corporation.

An update on recruitment of an External Governor will be provided at the Governance & Search Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

**16. Attendance at Meetings and Information Access Policy – Paper 011**

Rachel Middleton

Revisions related to the publication of Committee terms of reference on the WQE website; moving Corporation meeting agendas off the website, and conventions for public access to minutes and arrangements for the retention of minutes in physical storage.

Governors approved the policy.

**17. Any Other Business**

The Chair reminded Governors to be responsive to requests from the Clerk in relation to declarations of eligibility, codes of conduct and biographies for publication.

**18. Confidentiality**

There were no confidential items.

**19. Next Meeting**

5.00pm, Wednesday 13 October 2021, Room R201, Regent Road Campus

The Chair thanked Sarah Oldfield for her technical assistance prior to and throughout the meeting, which made a blended meeting possible. Remote participants reported that there were a few occasions when they struggled to hear quieter voices. This was noted as a point to raise at the start of next Corporation meeting.

## Action List

	<b>Actions arising from 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 Committee meeting</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>
1.	Investigate options for a portal or repository for governance documents	RM	Report back to November Corporation meeting following trial
	<b>Actions arising from 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Committee meeting</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>
2.	To discuss the Travel Plan at a future Corporation meeting	PW	
	<b>Actions arising from 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Committee meeting</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>
3.	To discuss how to assist the Student Executive to report on their effectiveness and to review the question relating to this in the Cross-College questionnaire for next academic year	DT and SO	
4.	Complete an appraisal relating to a range of matters about public access to the UR campus	PW	
5.	Signage celebrating the wild area of the UR campus	PW	
	<b>Actions arising from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 Committee meeting</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>
6.	Generate certificate of thanks for Jash Maadhavji	RM	asap
7.	Governors with ID badge issues to report these to RM	Governors	asap
8.	Complete online safeguarding training	Governors	By mid-October
9.	Contact SFCA to report the issues faced by non-binary students with the ILR	PW	
10.	Table a report from the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group, focusing on Entry Level and Level 1 at the November meeting of the Corporation.	TR	November Corporation meeting
11.	Replace the word children with the word students wherever possible in the Safeguarding Policy	DT	asap
12.	Update the sexual abuse action plan in readiness for presentation at the January 2022 Corporation meeting	AW	Jan 2022 Corporation meeting
	<b>Standing item</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>
	To refer any matter which could be externally assured to the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee	All Governors	