

WQE & Regent College Group

MINUTES

Corporation Meeting

10 November 2021, 17:00, Room R201, Regent Road Campus

Members of the Corporation present:

Stuart Dawkins (Chair), Wayne Allsopp, Jo Cooke, Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Jash Maadhavji, Neil McGhee, Nisar Navsariwala, Philip Parkinson, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

Other attendees:

Carolyn Davies, Andrew Jackson, Sarah Oldfield, Tim Rogers, James Kewin, Rachel Middleton

Apologies:

Joyce Black, Jim Phillips, Ing'utu Palmer and Amrik Singh

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from Joyce Black, Ing'utu Palmer, Jim Phillips and Amrik Singh. Allfaz Samnani was not present at the meeting.

The Chair issued Jash Maadhavji with a certificate of appreciation for his work as a Student Governor last year, and continued success in the role this academic year.

The Chair welcomed James Kewin, Deputy Chief Executive from the Sixth Form Colleges Association, to delivering a talk, followed by questions from Governors.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in matters on the agenda.

3. Minutes and matters arising– Paper 001

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 13 October 2021 were approved as a correct record. The matters in the action list were discussed and updated.

Those matters tabled for discussion at the meeting, which have subsequently been removed from the action list were:

- Table a report from the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group, focusing on Entry Level and Level 1 at the November meeting of the Corporation.
- Confirm to Clerk if Governors are attending Open Day
- Table revised Permanent Exclusion Policy at November Corporation meeting for approval

The following matters will be pursued offline and have subsequently been removed from the action list:

- To liaise with the Clerk about the best time to bring an update to the Corporation relating to benchmarking College careers work to other local providers (AJ and RM)
- Sign the sub-contracting review paperwork in November (SO and SD)

GOVERNOR BRIEFING

4. **Guest speaker** – James Kewin, Deputy Chief Executive, Sixth Colleges Association

James provided Governors with a sectoral update focusing on the following matters:

- 16-19 revenue funding
- 16-19 capital funding
- The future of BTECs
- Assessment in 2022
- Ofsted

Governors asked James a range of questions about what other colleges had said post-inspection about Ofsted's interest in students' mental health, and experiences of Ofsted conducting deep dives.

The Chair thanked James for his informative update and for the opportunity for Governors to pose questions and hear about other colleges' experiences in the sector.

Thanks were expressed to Tim Rogers for suggesting an input from James for the Governors' benefit.

OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION

5. **Principal's Update** – *For information and questions*

Paul Wilson – Presentation

The Principal's Update focused on the following matters:

- Student attendance at the half-term point
- Responses to the Early Weeks Survey from students: headline – 96% of respondents would recommend the College, an increase on last year of 2%.
- An update on Safeguarding trends within the College, referencing referrals relating to mental health, general causes for concern and students' concern about family matters.
- Teaching and learning priorities and two focused days of CPD for staff in College in November
- Budget announcements
- Outcome of a bid for the Post-16 Capacity Fund
- College events, including the Open Day on 13 November
- A promotional video highlighting the College
- A Women in Innovation Award for Kate Parkinson, a College alumnus

6. **College Development Plan Review**

Paul Wilson

6.1 WQE Strategic Development Plan 2021-2024 - Paper 002a - *For discussion*

The Chair thanked Neil McGhee for feedback received outside of the meeting, on syntax within the paper.

The Principal provided a verbal update on work which had been undertaken since the initial draft was seen by Governors. This included work on:

- demographic profiling, following work with the local authority on securing this data.
- Responsiveness to the curriculum offer
- Introducing the values encapsulated by the statements about Community, Consideration, Commitment, Curiosity and Challenge, and embedding reference to these across all levels in the College

Governors queried whether the College actively monitored any community development opportunities afforded through Section 106 planning applications, to see if it may be possible to apply for funds in areas of development close to either campus. The Principal welcomed further feedback from Governors outside of the meeting.

Governors commended the document.

A key next step will be to consider the College's strategy relating to vocational education and consideration of T Levels, given the lengthy lead in timeline for introducing T levels. Governors raised the Green Economy as an area which might be a possible focus from the perspective of local skills needs. Governors discussed the East Midlands consortium tasked with looking at the development of skills as one of the government's 8 trailblazing regions. The role of the LEP in articulating local response to the development of skills was also referenced.

The Chair stated that by the December Corporation the background research on the local and regional skills offer would be undertaken and that this would frame up a strategic conversation for Governors in the new year.

Governors asked whether student voice would feature in the discussions about where students see their future career pathways. The Principal highlighted that patterns of choice around subjects at WQE give some indication of this, and this is enriched further by the intelligence gathered as part of the careers education and guidance programme, where students articulate their career aspirations.

6.2 Strategic Development Plan summary of themes – Paper 002b – *For information*

The Corporation supported the paper and anticipates a January/February 2022 Governor Conference where strategic discussions relating to the future of the College's curriculum offer will be discussed. This is likely to include discussion about T levels, the landscape re academisation and securing funding for the future.

OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

7. Update from the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group - Presentation 003

Tim Rogers

Tim outlined the discussion held at the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group meeting on 3 November, summarising the discussion as:

- Review of the courses and sub-groups that were part of the T&F activity in 2020/21

- L1 performance in 2020/21
- Terms of reference for the Task & Finish group
- Discussion around data presentation for future meetings
- Triangulation of quantitative data with qualitative data
- Identification of sub-groups for scrutiny in 2021/22

Tim confirmed the priority groups in focus to be:

- Retention of students with visual and hearing impairment
- Achievement of students with EHCPs
- Achievement of students with moderate learning difficulties
- Achievement of African students on L1 courses
- Achievement of Disadvantaged students
- Achievement of White / Black African students

Tim confirmed the College was running a student voice pilot and one of the aims of this was to triangulate the student experience of identified groups with the student performance data presented to Governors at the task & finish group.

8. Contemplation & Prayer Policy – annual refresh - Paper 004

Aaron Winterton

The Corporation noted that the main change relating to the Covid-19 protocol had been included in the policy wording. The Corporation approved the policy, subject to the two-week period in which Governors can subsequently raise any matters to address within the policy.

9. Revised Exclusion Policy – Paper 005

Andrew Jackson

The Corporation approved the amendments to the latest iteration which had been revised since the last Corporation meeting in light of feedback received. The policy has now been approved.

OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS

10. Monthly management accounts (September 2021) Paper 006

Carolyn Davies

Carolyn highlighted two areas for Governor focus:

- A heads up about those matters which had been RAG-rated as Red on the KPIs, to track these ongoing, and the fact that two matters had been RAG-rated as Amber, but only just.
- Noting an ESFA overpayment error which would be remedied in future accounts.

EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE

11. Annual Self-review of College governance 2020-2021 Paper 007

The Chair thanked Governors for completing the annual self- review of College governance. The Chair, Principal and Clerk have already looked over the data and the Corporation will receive an action plan at the December Corporation meeting outlining governance development points in response to the self-review.

The Corporation affirmed the grading of College governance as being **Good**. All respondents returned a vote of Good or Outstanding. There were no votes for requires improvement or inadequate.

ROUND-UP

12. Any Other Business

- The Chair reminded Governors about the possibility for them to attend the WQE Open Day on 13th November.
- The Chair prompted Governors to liaise with staff members to agree a date for Governor Insight Visits as the Clerk has written out to all Governors and associated staff with their curriculum or support service allocations for this academic year. Visits should take place before Easter 2022.
- All Governors with outstanding online safeguarding and PREVENT training to complete will be prompted by the Clerk.
- Vaughan Endowment Committee feedback - The Committee met prior to the Corporation to discuss this year's round of applicants for funding from The Vaughan Endowment Fund and The Thornton Fund. Nine applicants applied for the Vaughan Endowment Fund and two for The Thornton Fund. The Chair reminded the Corporation about the background to the funds and reported that all applicants will receive a sum of £600. The Chair also reported that the Committee had discussed the management of the funds by the current bank and that they felt there was some inconsistency in their service and responsiveness. Over the course of the next 6 months a Task & Finish group will convene to determine what Governors would like to see included in a re-tendering process to more effectively manage and invest the funds for optimal returns, which will benefit students in future.

13. Confidentiality

The Corporation considered there to be no confidential matters on this occasion.

14. Next Meeting

5.00pm, Wednesday 15 December 2021, blended meeting, Room R201, Regent Road campus

The Chair reminded Governors that there would be two parts to the next Corporation meeting. The first would include all Governors, and the second would hear the recommendations of the Remuneration Committee which will have considered the Principal and Clerks' performance over the last year. This is open to External and Parent Governors only.

The meeting closed at 18:50.

Signed:
Chair of the Corporation

Date:

Action List

	Actions arising from 22nd September 2021 Committee meeting	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
1.	Complete online safeguarding training	Governors	To be completed before next Corporation meeting
2.	Update the sexual abuse action plan in readiness for presentation at the January 2022 Corporation meeting	AW	Jan 2022 Corporation meeting
	Standing item	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
	To refer any matter which could be externally assured to the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee	All Governors	
	To ensure Curriculum Policy is updated if needed once mission/values work with Governors is completed	TR	