

# WQE & Regent College Group

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## Corporation Meeting Minutes

13 October 2021, 17:00, Room R201, Regent Road Campus

### **Members of the Corporation invited:**

Stuart Dawkins (Chair), Wayne Allsopp, Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Bernadette Green, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Jash Maadhavji, Neil McGhee, Nisar Navsariwala, Ing'utu Palmer, Philip Parkinson, Jim Phillips, Allfaz Samnani, Amrik Singh, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

### **Other invitees:**

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

#### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting. All Governors were present. The Chair confirmed that Jash Maadhavji had agreed to serve a second as Student Governor, and thanks were conveyed to Jash on behalf of the Corporation.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair confirmed that Jimmy Zachariah had a declared interest in agenda item 15 (Sub-contracting: provider review, assurance and compliance declarations). This is due to his employment with one of the organisation's subcontractors.

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

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 22 September 2021 were confirmed as a correct record. The Clerk will arrange a time for the Chair to sign the minutes.

The action list was reviewed and updated accordingly.

The following actions were completed between Corporation meetings:

- Investigate options for a portal or repository for governance documents
- Complete an appraisal relating to a range of matters about public access to the UR campus
- Signage celebrating the wild area of the UR campus
- Generate certificate of thanks for Jash Maadhavji
- Governors with ID badge issues to report these to RM
- Replace the word children with the word students wherever possible in the Safeguarding Policy

The following actions have been removed from the action and a suitable date for tabling at future Corporation meetings will be organised by the Clerk in liaison with members of the Executive Leadership Team:

- To discuss the Travel Plan at a future Corporation meeting (PW)
- 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)

The following actions were addressed under tabled agenda items and subsequently removed from the action list:

- Contact SFCA to report the issues faced by non-binary students with the ILR – included in Principal's Update

### **GOVERNOR BRIEFING**

#### **4. The Gatsby Benchmarks and work experience – a refresher**

- Presentation - Paper 002

Andrew Jackson

Andrew provided an overview of the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks:

- A stable careers programme.
- Learning from career and labour market information.
- Addressing the needs of each pupil.
- Linking curriculum learning to careers.
- Encounters with employers and employees.
- Experiences of workplaces.
- Encounters with further and higher education.

He confirmed that the College regularly reviews its progress in meeting the benchmarks by using the Compass evaluation tool from the Careers & Enterprise Company.

Andrew confirmed a new College appointment had been made - Developing Young Professionals Co-ordinator, to work specifically on benchmark 4 (as well as contributing to benchmarks 2 and 5).

The College has changed providers with regards to the online work experience programme. This now integrates into the College MIS, to enable better integration of data about students and reducing manual recording across systems.

Andrew confirmed that students are asked about their career aspirations at the point of enrolment. They are also discussed with their PPMs as well.

Andrew confirmed that a full report and action plan is available for scrutiny which outlines how the College maps itself against the benchmarks and addresses plans for future development.

Andrew outlined the challenges faced by the College in fully addressing each of the benchmarks, as well as development objectives for meeting or extending practice within each of the areas covered by the benchmarks.

Governors queried what the aspiration for the College would be in relation to careers education, information and guidance. Andrew confirmed the aspiration to become a nationally recognised provider. Additionally, the College aspires to tailor provision to meet individual student need and also to bring in young professionals to share their experiences of progression from college/school to professional life.

Andrew confirmed that there was information available which outlines the performance of the College compared to other local providers, but that this had been shared in confidence for internal purposes only. It would be necessary to present this in a more generic way. **Action AJ:** to liaise with the Clerk about the best time to bring an update on this aspect to the Corporation.

Andrew confirmed that the staff team responsible for this area use a self-assessment using Ofsted criteria to evaluate current provision, and that this, in turn, feeds into the College-wide self-assessment.

Governors queried whether the College was confident about its performance in this area in terms of Ofsted judgements. Andrew confirmed this to be the case.

## OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### 5. Principal's Update

Paul Wilson – Presentation

The Principal's update covered the following matters:

- SFCA national pay settlement for teachers' agreement and recommendation to colleges
- Exams information 2022
- Digital Strategy 2022
- College Open Day - 13 November 2021
- Student attendance figures
- ESFA response to feedback from the College in relation to recognition of non-binary students
- Applied general qualifications and their future

The Corporation formally approved the adoption of the teachers' pay agreement for the College.

The Principal confirmed that the SFCA were continuing to work towards a pay settlement for support staff in the coming months.

The Principal invited members of the Corporation to join a strategic group looking further at the detail underpinning the College's Digital Strategy. Neil McGhee volunteered to support this.

The Principal invited Governors to the College Open Day on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

**Action Governors:** confirm to the Clerk if able to attend.

## **6. Update on progress against Strategic Development Plan – Paper 003**

Paul Wilson

The Principal and members of the Executive Leadership Team reviewed the progress that was possible to make during a pandemic. There have been some significant gains made in terms of building a sense of community, developing space and the College estate.

The Chair reminded Governors that a look back on what has been achieved is tabled at the Corporation at this time of year, and that a future meeting will focus on looking forward strategically.

Governors asked questions about the definition of 'mindset', and whether there were issues in relation to the timeliness of students starting courses where their enrolment was delayed.

## **OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES**

## **7. Student Outcomes headlines – Paper 004**

Tim Rogers – Presentation

Tim confirmed that the College was looking at the process of quality improvement and looking to embed a College-wide data dashboard which will monitor progress against targets. This would have the benefit of being interactive and enabling staff at a range of levels to extract, interpret and effectively use student data.

Tim highlighted the following development points:

- The College is looking at achieving marginal student performance gains of 1+% where performance was already considered to be above benchmarks, with more specific targeted progress in other areas.
- The Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group plays a helpful role in communicating the progress of student sub-groups
- Headline figures for 2020/21: pass rate of 97.1%, retention rate of 97.9%, achievement rate of 95.1%
- A level achievement rate of 97.4%, Level 2 achievement rate of 93.5%

Tim provided an overview of the areas of focus for the Student Outcomes Task &

Finish Group to focus on.

The date of the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group was confirmed as Weds 3 November at 5pm.

Governors questions focused on:

- sub-sets of students and a request to focus on disadvantaged students from poor backgrounds, as identified in secondary schools;
- clarification in relation to whether the data dashboard will provide a live view of student performance
- where current data is collected within the College

Tim invited any Governors with professional experience of handling big data to contact him for a discussion.

**8. Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group Impact Report – Paper 005**  
Sarah Oldfield

Governors noted the report, making observations about the impact of retention in some of the targeted provision from last year at Level 1 and Level 2. The College will also be investigating this by drilling down further into student characteristics.

**9. Curriculum Policy - annual review – Paper 006**

Tim Rogers

This provided the Corporation with the opportunity to outline what the curriculum offer is.

The Principal confirmed that there was a piece of follow-up work to undertake with Governors in relation to the mission and values.

Governors queried the efficiency of continuing to offer subject areas with small student uptake. The Principal confirmed that these courses meet a local need and it is therefore not tenable to remove these from the curriculum offer.

It was noted that the work on mission and values, when complete, may need to be reflected in the policy in due course. A Governor queried whether further work was needed to the policy with respect to the focus on a specific skill in advance of this. The Corporation voted on whether to adopt the policy without changes and a majority decision was carried, with two votes against.

**Action TR:** to ensure policy is updated if needed once mission/values work is completed

**10. Permanent exclusions from College**  
Andrew Jackson

**10.1 Permanent Exclusion Policy – annual review – Paper 007**

Governors noted the proposed changes which had been highlighted on the revised policy. Governors noted reference to gross misconduct as a reason for permanent exclusion.

Governors requested changes to the policy to better describe what constitutes 'poor behaviour' and 'students not being in sympathy with something' and

also some clarification on procedure in relation to appeals panels. It was agreed that the revised policy be tabled again for approval at the November Corporation meeting. **Action AJ**

**10.2 Report on 2020-21 permanent exclusions – Paper 008**

Governors noted the report and the fact there were no permanent exclusions last academic year.

**11. Admissions Policy - annual review - Paper 009**

Donna Trusler and Aaron Winterton

All changes highlighted in the policy were noted by the Corporation and the policy was approved in principle, subject to the fortnight post-meeting review cycle.

**OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS**

**12. 28 September Audit & Risk Committee recommendations**

Philip Parkinson

**12.1 Annual Procurement Report – Paper 010**

**12.1.1 Appendix 2 – Supplier Spend Analysis Aug 2020 - July 2021**  
- Paper 011

**12.1.12 Appendix 4 –Tendering and Value for Money Aug 2020 –  
July 2021 - Paper 012**

**12.2 Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire – Paper 013**

**12.3 Covid-19 Regulatory Self-Assessment Questionnaire – Paper 014**

**12.4 Data Protection & Freedom of Information Annual Report 2018-20 –  
Paper 015**

**12.5 Audit & Risk Committee annual report – Paper 016**

Philip provided a verbal precis of the papers which the Corporation were being asked to note or approve.

The first three papers for the Corporation's attention relate to protocols around purchasing goods and services. The regulatory self-assessment questionnaire was interrogated at the recent Audit & Risk Committee meeting. The annual report from the Audit & Risk Committee was noted, as was the Data Protection & Freedom of Information Annual Report 2018-20.

The Chair thanked the Committee for its scrutiny.

**13. Provisional July accounts – Paper 017**

Carolyn Davies

The meeting received the July accounts and a verbal update from Carolyn.

**14. Recruitment & Selection Policy and Procedure – annual review – Paper 018**  
Carolyn Davies

Carolyn reminded the Corporation that they review the policy and procedure annually following the yearly update to Keeping Children Safe in Education, which comes into force every September.

All changes were highlighted. The main highlight for Governors to note was the removal of the option to risk assess agency staff before their DBS check has come through. The DBS certificate now needs to have been returned before any agency staff can enter College premises.

The policy was approved in principle subject to the fortnight review period beyond the meeting.

**15. Sub-contracting: provider review, assurance and compliance declarations – Paper 019 and Paper 020**

Jimmy Zachariah recused himself from the meeting at this point due to his interest.

No changes have been made to the policy. Due diligence work on subcontracted providers has been completed. The College recommends that it keeps working with all the sub-contractors outlined in the report.

**Action SD:** to sign the document in November

## **EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

**16. Recommendations from 13 October Governance & Search Committee**

Joyce Black

- The Committee discussed the training and development needs for the Corporation in light of a renewed focus on rigour and reporting of Governors' training and development. A paper proposing a programme of development will be tabled at the December Corporation meeting.
- The Committee reviewed the Governor Insights Protocol and deemed it fit for purpose for this academic year. Governors considered the curriculum and student service areas and the proposed Governor allocations and tasked the Clerk with rolling the programme out to staff and Governors, once the Principal had revised the list of staff in curriculum and student service areas, as this dated back to the 2020/21 academic year and there had been some staff changes since.
- The Corporation welcomed the opportunity to get back into College and speak to staff to boost their own learning and to hear staff views. It was agreed that the Governor Insights programme could commence in the autumn term this year and extend into the spring term as usual.
- The Committee recommended Jash Maadhavji as a Student Governor for a second year as he represents a student who has made progression between levels within the College over subsequent years and he is willing to serve for a second year.

- External Governor recruitment is still ongoing. The Committee agreed that a promotional Governor Information pack be drafted and published for distribution to interested parties and for publication on the website.
- Proposed Governor re-appointments for a second tenure: Jo Cooke, External Governor whose first term concludes on 30. 6.22 has agreed to serve another term. Bernie Green whose first term concludes on 31.12.21 has agreed to serve another term.  
The Corporation approved a second term of office for Jo Cooke and Bernie Green and thanked them for their service to date and ongoing commitment.
- Wayne Allsopp has agreed to assume the role as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee following the December Committee meeting.  
The Corporation approved the appointment and thanked Wayne. Thanks were expressed to Philip Parkinson for his service in the role as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee and for his agreement to support Wayne in the transition.

### 17. Any Other Business

Familiarity with BACA – Jimmy Zachariah extended an open invitation to Governors to learn more about BACA as one of the College’s sub-contractors.

### 18. Confidentiality

The Corporation considered the following papers to remain confidential those relating to sub-contracting and procurement.

### 19. Next Meeting

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

### Action List

	Actions arising from 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2021 Committee meeting	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
1.	Complete online safeguarding training	Governors	By mid-October
2.	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
3.	Update the sexual abuse action plan in readiness for presentation at the January 2022 Corporation meeting	AW	Jan 2022 Corporation meeting
	Actions arising from 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 Committee meeting	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
4.	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	
5.	Confirm to Clerk if Governors are attending Open Day	Governors	Before 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
6.	To ensure Curriculum Policy is updated if needed once mission/values work with Governors is completed	TR	

7.	Table revised Permanent Exclusion Policy at November Corporation meeting for approval	AJ	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 Corporation meeting
8.	Sign the sub-contracting review paperwork in November	SD/SO	
	<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	

**Signed:**  
**Chair's signature**

**Date:**