

# WQE & Regent College Group

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Corporation Meeting 18 May 2022, 16:00- 17:30  
Room G01, University Road campus

## MINUTES

### **Members of the Corporation in attendance:**

Stuart Dawkins (Chair), Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Sofie Dadge, Shelley Harvey, Bernadette Green, Neil McGhee, Nisar Navsariwala, Ing'utu Palmer, Philip Parkinson, Jim Phillips, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

### **Other invitees in attendance:**

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

### **Apologies:**

Wayne Allsopp, Jash Maadhavji, Anas Mohamed and Amrik Singh

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

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Shelley Harvey was welcomed to the Corporation as a new Governor. Sofie Dadge was welcomed back to her second meeting and Donna Trusler was welcomed on her return to face-to-face Corporation meetings.

Apologies were received from Wayne Allsopp, Jash Maadhavji, Anas Mohamed and Amrik Singh.

The Chair confirmed that an external speaker would be joining Governors for the start of the Governor Conference – James Kewin, Deputy CEO of the SFCA.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Minutes and matters arising-** To review the matters arising captured in the action list - Paper 001

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 06 April 2022 were approved as a correct record.

The action list was discussed and updated. The following actions were completed during the intervening period between meetings:

- For Governors to set up their insight visits in College, with a view to completing a follow-up Governor Insights reflection form.
- Update on T Level implementation from the perspective of a College which has undergone the process, as well as any policy and implementation updates - Discussion was held via Zoom with Governors and senior team members from Stoke Sixth Form College.
- Confirm appointment as External Governor to Shelley Harvey, subject to DBS and Section 128 checks.

Donna Trusler provided a verbal update to Governors with regards to this action point: Requests for information- number of fast-track applications which converted into student enrolments last year. She provided a breakdown of data and presented the up-to-date picture to Governors in relation to applications to date for the 2022-23 academic year.

**Action PW:** include an up-to-date snapshot of student applications in the Principal's Update for the June Corporation meeting.

Governors approved moving the following actions from the standing agenda items into the cycle of the 2022-23 Business Plan:

- To ensure Curriculum Policy is updated if needed once mission/values work with Governors is completed
- To update the Corporation on progress towards completion of actions within the annual self-review of governance action plan, at a timely point in the business plan
- To report on the emerging themes around student changing narratives work in the Principal's Update as appropriate from time to time

## **OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

### **4. Principal's Update** (Presentation to follow)

Paul Wilson

The Principal provided an overview of the plan for summer estates work, tendering, supply chain issues and building in contingency to the budget and timelines. If tenders are significantly above predicted levels then this may require modification to the planned works. In the situation that tenders are well outside of the margins in the contingency budget, the Chair will ensure that suitable actions are taken and Governors involved appropriately.

Governors asked questions about whether the College had considered the contractor's capacity to deliver, for which assurances were provided.

Governors considered whether there was further support they could lend with regards to employability and careers education, information and guidance. Governors offered to send in comments about opportunities to work with small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to boost the work experience opportunities for students.

#### **4.1 Ofsted Report – Final - Paper 002**

The Principal confirmed that the Ofsted Report was not official until publication on 20 May and that it remained confidential to Governors and senior staff until such point.

The Principal provided an overview of the highlights, priorities for ongoing improvement and the emerging post-Ofsted responses from College staff.

Governors asked questions on the following matters:

- Impact on student attendance rates for those studying across campuses
- Attendance monitoring procedures
- Tutorial programme

## OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS

### 5. **Monthly management accounts** (March) – Paper 003 – *For information and questions* Carolyn Davies

Carolyn confirmed that reporting on the breakdown of capital and revenue expenditure for the estate works would change dependent on receipt of tenders. She reported that the Corporation would receive financial targets for 2022-23 at the next Corporation meeting with a further plan to update Governors via a revised 5-year financial plan once student numbers for the autumn term have been confirmed.

## OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

### 6. **Course evaluation questionnaire** - Paper 004 – *For information and questions* Sarah Oldfield

Sarah reported there had been an increased response rate this year to the course evaluation questionnaire. Action points in response to the questionnaire include:

- More students taking up catch up sessions (886 students pursued Easter catch up sessions)
- Curriculum analysis revealed that lessons are varied and interesting (all Health & Social Care students indicated this to be the case)
- Students would like to receive more feedback about their learning and progress – this requires further investigation before arriving at a defined action to address this point

There is an aspiration to join up Student Voice with lesson observations and PRD work.

Governors raised questions about Looked After Children and a further analysis of their issues and whether there is a language barrier relating to the accessibility of the questionnaire. Governors felt that assumptions about students' reading comprehension skills in relation to understanding and completing the questionnaire needed to be investigated further.

### 7. **PREVENT Risk Assessment and Action Plan** - Paper 005 – *For information and questions*

Donna Trusler

Donna confirmed that the risk assessment and action plan had been validated by Ofsted as well as the PREVENT regional lead and that this was a positive endorsement for the College.

Governors queried whether multi-faith spaces were functional. Donna confirmed that there were spaces available at both campuses.

Governors asked whether the College resource to tackle this area of focus were adequate. Donna confirmed that there were processes in place to flag up any worrying spikes in activity and risks are monitored at whole College level internally every fortnight.

## EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

### 8. Recommendations from the Governance & Search Committee – 27 April 2022

Joyce Black

Joyce provided a verbal update on matters discussed at the Governance & Search Committee which convened on 27 April. Highlights included:

- Governor succession planning. Jimmy Zachariah comes to the end of his first term of office as an External Governor at the end of October 2022. The Committee recommended to the Corporation that Jimmy be offered a second term of office.
- Governor insights programme - the Vice Chair, Principal and Clerk reviewed the reflections forms submitted by Governors following their Spring term Governor Insight Visits. The learning from this exercise was fed into the Governance & Search Committee. Common themes emerging from Governor Insight visits included: inconsistencies in accommodation across both campuses, the consistent management of student absences, data systems, working practices, CPD consistency and tailoring to need.

Governors commented that the insights visits provided a timely opportunity to feed back to Ofsted inspectors with live experiences and observations relating to the College, which were well in line with the observations inspectors made themselves.

Changes to the insights programme for 2022-23 have been proposed to the Governance & Search Committee and were recommended to the Corporation. These included:

- a move to enhance the visit reflections form to add further value, with a section dedicated to identifying which learning points each Governors wished to cascade on to the wider Corporation in light of their visit
- to include teaching and learning and teacher CPD in the terms of reference for the Student Outcomes task & Finish Group
- to strike a balance between insight visits in support departments as well as curriculum areas, enabling Governors to conduct two visits a year in inter-related areas
- to enable greater flexibility to conduct insight visits which can now take place after the October half term and up to, but not beyond Easter.

All recommendations from the Governance & Search Committee were approved by the Corporation.

#### 8.1 Revised terms of reference for the Audit & Risk Committee - Paper 006

– *For approval*

Subject to a clarification relating to some of the wording, the Corporation approved the terms of reference for the Audit & Risk Committee.

#### 8.2 Role profiles for Chair and Vice Chair of Governors - Paper 007

- *For approval*

Governors noted the proposed changes to the role profiles for Chair and Vice Chair as well as the role of Governor. These included a commitment to engagement with wider College life as well as to ongoing CPD and personal development, and the encouragement of other Governors to pursue training and play as active a role in governance as possible. All role profiles affirmed a

commitment to participate in self- and external reviews of governance.  
All role profiles were approved by the Corporation.

### **8.3 Procedural arrangements for the appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporation – Paper 008 - *For approval***

The Chair outlined the fact that he has just one further year's tenure as Governor on the Corporation and consequently it was not his intention to seek an extension to his role as Chair of the Corporation, a role which he will have held for two terms of office at the end of the summer term 2022.

The role of Vice-Chair is also due to be re-appointed at the end of this term.

The Chair outlined the procedural arrangements drafted by the Clerk to Corporation for the appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporation.

Governors noted the recommendation to separate the start and end dates for incoming Chair and Vice Chairs' tenures to ensure a smooth leadership transition in the future and to mitigate against the loss of experience at the same point in time.

Accordingly, the Corporation approved a single year's tenure for Vice Chair for the period 2022 -2023 to provide this separation. The Corporation approved a two-year tenure for the position as Chair for the period 2022 -2024. Recruitment for a Vice Chair for a two-year tenure for the period 2023-2025 will be scheduled on the Business Plan for the next academic year.

Governors noted that dates relating to Governors' end of tenure followed a different pattern to those for Chair and Vice Chair, which the Corporation had previously affirmed should always coincide with the end of an academic year. In order to prevent barriers to eligibility for those External Governors in their second term of office with time remaining, but whose tenures as Governor would end before the close of an academic year, the tenure of a successful Chair or Vice-Chair nominee would be extended to the end of the relevant academic year.

Governors approved the procedural arrangements relating to nominations and elections for the Chair and Vice Chair. The Clerk affirmed that nominations would open for both roles the day after the Corporation meeting and that appointments would be ratified at the Corporation meeting on 29 June 2022.

### **8.4 Revisions to Instrument and Articles – Paper 009 – *For approval***

The Chair confirmed that the Clerk had undertaken a research exercise looking at the Instrument and Articles, comparing these to the annotated versions provided by Eversheds Sutherland which highlight changes in policy and practice over time. The Corporation noted minor differences but determined that these were not substantive enough to warrant passing a resolution to approve any changes. The research exercise will be picked up again in Spring 2023 as part of the standard review cycle. In the meantime, the Corporation requested that the cover sheet for the Instrument & Articles be updated to reflect the fact that they had been reconsidered and re-approved and to ensure the document version number and date was amended to reflect this.

### **8.5 Governance calendar for 2022-2023 – Paper 010 – *For adoption***

Governors noted the rationale for making changes to the 2022-2023 governance calendar. Changes included removal of the September Corporation meeting from the schedule to enable more meaningful student data to be presented at the early October Corporation meeting instead. Governors noted that the meetings of the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group had been added at the outset, to enable

these to be committed to diaries. Governors also noted the date for the Governor Conference.

The governance calendar for 2022-23 was approved by the Corporation.

## ROUND-UP

### 9. Confidentiality

Governors were asked to maintain confidentiality with regards to the Ofsted outcome until 20 May 2022, when the official report would be published.

### 10. Any Other Business – *For discussion*

#### 10.1 Deed of Novation

The Chair confirmed that AIB had sold their loan book to Allica. As a consequence, the Corporation was asked to sign a deed of novation. This was signed by two Governors and witnessed by the Clerk to Corporation and returned immediately to the bank concerned. The Corporation was asked to note this information. No objections were raised, in light of having heard about the transfer at previous meetings of the Corporation and the Audit & Risk Committee.

### 11. Next Meeting

Weds 29 June 2022, 17:00 - Corporation meeting

The meeting closed at 17:31.

	Actions arising from 02 March 2022 Corporation meeting	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
1.	Report on the number of disadvantaged students progressing into HE	AJ	To be circulated via email
	Actions arising from 18 May 2022 Corporation meeting	Who is responsible?	Date for completion
2.	Include an update on student application numbers at the next Corporation meeting within the Principal's Update	PW	29 June 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	

Signature: .....  
Chair of the Corporation

Date: .....