

# WQE & Regent College Group

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Corporation Meeting 25 January 2023, 17:00, Room G01, University Road  
Campus

**Members of the Corporation in attendance:**

Philip Parkinson (Chair), Orhan Ahmed, Joyce Black, Jo Cooke, Sofie Dadge, Stuart Dawkins, Shamir Ghumra, Bernadette Green, Shelley Harvey, Ing'utu Palmer, Julia Pastuszek, Paul Wilson, Aaron Winterton & Jimmy Zachariah

**Other attendees:**

Carolyn Davies, Andrew Jackson, Rachel Middleton, Arlo Mulligan-Vassel (agenda item 16),  
Tim Rogers

**Apologies:**

Wayne Allsopp, Upneet Kang, Neil McGhee, Anas Mohamed, Sarah Oldfield, Jim Phillips,  
Amrik Singh

## MINUTES

### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Wayne Allsopp, Upneet Kang, Neil McGhee, Anas Mohamed, Sarah Oldfield, Jim Phillips and Amrik Singh.

The Chair confirmed this was Anas' final Corporation meeting and that the Clerk was making arrangements to send on his certificate of thanks.

The Chair welcomed new Student Governor, Julia Pastuszek. Julia is due to complete her induction with the Clerk on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

The Chair also welcomed Arlo Mulligan-Vassel, who was in attendance to present the report from the Student Executive (agenda item 16, Paper 011). It was determined that Arlo would present following the approval of minutes and action list, so that they could then leave the meeting immediately afterwards.

The Chair acknowledged the fact that this meeting was to be Jo Cooke's last as she is leaving the Corporation after many years' service. The Corporation made a presentation to Jo in recognition of her commitment and support as a Governor and additionally as the Link Safeguarding Governor.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Jimmy Zachariah declared his interest as one of the College's sub-contractors. He left the room for discussion of agenda item number 8 (Paper 005).

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

The Part 1 minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 14 December 2022 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

The action list was discussed and updated accordingly.

The following actions were completed during the intervening period between Corporation meetings:

- Issue full SAR to Governors for feedback direct to Tim Rogers
- Meet to identify action points based on results of self-review of governance
- Clerk to send revised Governor Insights protocol and feedback pro formas to all Governors

The following action point was tabled at the meeting for inclusion within the Principal's update and subsequently removed from the action list:

- Provide an update on the costs associated with the use of agency staff for the next Corporation meeting, to enable Governors to have a holistic understanding of the impact across the College

The following action is tabled for inclusion on the agenda of the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and has therefore been removed from the Corporation action list:

- Present data on the destinations of students who have left Level 3 vocational courses due to not passing the exam element of the course

**4. Minutes from the closed Part 2 meeting of the Corporation – (Circulated to eligible Governors in advance) - *For approval***

The Part 2 meeting minutes from the closed meeting of the Corporation meeting held on 14 December 2022 were approved as a correct record.

**OVERSIGHT OF FINANCE, RESOURCES & ASSETS**

**5. Estates Update - Presentation**

Carolyn Davies

Carolyn presented Governors with an update on work undertaken to date as part of the Estates Master Plan, and work planned in the short- and mid-term.

Phase 2A of the Master Plan is due to be delivered in Summer 2023.

Carolyn talked Governors through considerations relating to timelines and deliverability as well as the estimated budget for works. A confirmed budget is due imminently.

The Corporation considered the mechanism for reviewing financial forecasts and approving early purchase orders to enable design work and purchase of materials to take place. The Corporation approved delegated authority to the Estates & Finance

Task & Finish Group to approve Phase 2A spending based on a detailed financial analysis at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Carolyn updated Governors on the DfE's financial contribution towards energy efficiency costs and confirmed funds could be used to replace windows.

Carolyn notified Governors about receipt of funds from the ESFA as a direct consequence of the ONS reclassification of Colleges. Based on the application of a formula, the College has been granted a sum to continue working on capital projects.

## **6. Monthly management accounts**

Carolyn Davies

### **6.1 November 2022 – Paper 002**

The Corporation noted the November 2022 management accounts.

### **6.2 December 2022 – Paper 003**

The Corporation noted the December 2022 management accounts.

## **7. Tuition Fees Policy 2023/24 – Paper 004**

Carolyn Davies

Carolyn reminded Governors that the College is required to have a Tuition Fees Policy and that this is renewed annually. In the last few years the College has had a couple of overseas students on roll. The policy suggests an increase of 10% to the fees payable by overseas students which reflects the inflationary rate applied by the College to other costs, and also factors in the additional 40 hours of tuition for all students, stipulated by government.

The Corporation approved the policy.

## **8. Sub-contracting annual report – Paper 005**

Jimmy Zachariah left the meeting at this point.

This paper was presented by Paul Wilson and Carolyn Davies.

Paul affirmed that the 2022/23 revised teaching and learning model for English and Maths is working well, with college staff attending the premises of partners to deliver these elements, replacing the need for students to travel. This model was well received and there were no concerns relating to delivery or student performance in these areas to highlight to Governors. The model of delivery through sub-contracted provision factors in some growth, e.g. students arriving from Ukraine. The model enables overall growth in College student numbers without an adverse impact on the College's physical capacity. Governors supported the resulting modest growth outlines, recognizing that this aligned with the rising demographics and the college's own growth in direct provision

Governors asked questions about what the hybrid model of delivery looks like in practice and students' access to pastoral provision. Governors asked about whether any future growth in sub-contracted provision would have any impact on the quality of teaching and learning and the student experience.

## OVERSIGHT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### 9. **Principal's Update** - Presentation

Paul Wilson

The Principal's Update focused on:

- Agency staff spending (presented by Carolyn Davies)
- 16-18 funding rate
- Capital allocations
- Intervention/tuition
- Right of way update
- Confirmation of strike dates
- November English and Maths GCSE results
- Unlock Oxford programme
- Local skill partnerships
- Progress towards creating an alumni scheme – Old Wyggestonians Association

### 10. **Strategic Context update (3)** - Presentation

Paul Wilson

The Principal provided a strategic context update focusing on FE and the schools system and the College's local context. This was the third presentation of the series and is a precursor to in-depth discussion at the forthcoming Governor Conference.

## OVERSIGHT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES & EXPERIENCES

### 11. **Retention and Progress In-Year Monitoring Report** - Paper 006

Tim Rogers

Tim reminded Governors that they had viewed the 2-year retention report at the December 2022 meeting.

Governors noted an overall positive position relating to retention and progress in-year.

Tim confirmed that the Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group, convening on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023 will review the performance of sub-groups.

Governors asked questions about the progress measures used to compile evidence in the report. Additionally, they asked questions about how performance data was quality assured and moderated. Governors asked whether any work was being undertaken to map the accuracy of teacher assessments to final grades secured by students, as part of the College's quality assurance activity. Tim reported on the work of the CSLG which has been looking at the College's quality assurance strategy and encouraged to visit outstanding colleges and schools to investigate their approaches and to consider best practice.

**12. Student Attendance Monitoring Report - Paper 007**

Andrew Jackson

Andrew confirmed that attendance levels across the sector were lower nationally than they were prior to the pandemic.

The introduction of an online automated absence reporting system which will notify both students and parents/carers of any absences, is expected to impact positively on attendance rates.

Governors asked questions about whether students could still access an online education with access to learning materials, if they have authorised absences. Andrew confirmed that Schemes of Work are on Teams, however the optimal solution for students in terms of their learning and outcomes, is to be in College.

Governors noted that attendance on Level 2 courses remains an area of concern and recognised that the College is exploring student motivation on Level 2 courses and any link between aspiring to come to WQE at all costs, based on its reputation alone rather than students being committed to a specific course. There are plans underway to have a small enrolment team focusing specifically on guiding prospective Level 2 students to enable them to make the optimal choice.

Governors asked for an update on the impact of the automated attendance monitoring system at a subsequent Corporation meeting. **Action AJ**

**13. Work experience and employability mid-year update - Paper 008**

Andrew Jackson

Governors asked questions about the impact of using a third-party provider to secure work placements. Andrew reported that the student take-up of via the third party was positive and students are due to go out on placements shortly and into early March 2023.

**14. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Interim Report 22/23 - Paper 009**

Sarah Oldfield

This agenda item was introduced by Paul Wilson in Sarah's absence.

Paul reminded the Corporation that the College had moved to a broader suite of indicators and moved away from a model focused solely on lesson observations.

Governors commended staff on developments in this area.

Paul confirmed there is now a group of staff across the College whose role is to drive targeted CPD activity based on teacher feedback.

**15. Complaints Report – Paper 010**

Sarah Oldfield

Paul Wilson introduced this item in Sarah's absence.

Governors noted the robust process in place to review complaints.

Governors asked whether there were any trends emerging around complaints, with the most common area relating to individual one-off staff behaviours.

**16. Student Executive report and financial statement – Paper 011 (tabled)**

Donna Trusler

Donna supported Arlo Mulligan-Vassel, member of the Student Executive to brief the Corporation.

The Corporation noted the Student Executive report and financial statement. Governors asked Arlo about some of the highlights which the Executive achieved and whether there were opportunities for handover to the incoming Executive to sustain some of the activity which has already proved a success. Governors asked whether there was anything which Arlo would have liked the Executive to have achieved but couldn't within the timeframe. Arlo reported that the introduction of a broader range of clubs for students to join would be a positive future focus.

Donna reported on developments in the student mentoring programme, as well as staff support being offered to unaccompanied asylum seekers.

The Principal also highlighted that, whilst not directly referenced in the report, the student executive had worked closely with the College on aspects of sustainability and that this had led to helpful engagement with local authority representatives and informed the sustainability strategy developed. He thanked the Student Executive for this contribution too.

## **EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE**

### **17. Recommendations from the Governance & Search Committee meeting 25.01.23**

Joyce Black

Joyce highlighted the following matters to the Corporation:

- Update on work undertaken to date by the working party overseeing preparations for the external review of governance (Vice Chair and Clerk). A theme has been identified and an action list to focus on with the external reviewer. When ready to put the proposal out to tender, the working group will make a recommendation to the Corporation to consider and approve.
- Outcomes from the Vice Chair and Clerk's review of the self-review of governance responses – the questionnaire will be revised to focus more on Governors' decisions and their impact.
- Governor exit interviews are being introduced as part of the continuous cycle of reflection and governance development. An approach will be piloted and reviewed at the October meeting of the Governance & Search Committee meeting.

#### **17.1 Committee Chair role profile - Paper 012**

Joyce thanked the Clerk for preparing the role profile. This role profile complements the Governor, Vice Chair and Chair of the Corporation role profiles which have been refined over the last year. This role profile takes a slightly different format to support those stepping up to a more 'senior' governance role and is split into key responsibilities, key deliverables, inclusive chairing behaviours and core personal attributes.

The Corporation approved the adoption of the Committee Chair role profile.

The Corporation approved the recommendation from the Governance & Search

Committee to implement annual self-reviews for those holding a Committee Chair or Board Chair/Vice Chair role. This will involve self-reflecting on performance against the relevant role profile. There will then be a follow-up discussion with the following personnel:

- Committee Chairs will have a discussion with the Chair of the Corporation
- The Vice Chair of the Corporation will have a discussion with the Chair of the Corporation
- The Chair of the Corporation will have a discussion with the Vice Chair.
- Feedback from the Corporation will be sought by the Clerk on the performance of the Chair of the Corporation and Vice Chair of the Corporation respectively.

### **17.2 Link Safeguarding Governor role profile - Paper 013**

The Governance & Search Committee recommended the refreshed Link Safeguarding Governor role profile to the Corporation, subject to a minor wording change under bullet 17 and moving the list of information and reports which may need to underpin updates to the Corporation from bullet 12 to a separate appendix.

The Corporation approved the role profile.

Sofie Dadge left the room at this point.

The Corporation discussed the recommendation from the Committee to appoint Sofie to the role as Link Safeguarding Governor.

The Corporation approved the appointment.

The Committee reviewed the current membership of the Corporation.

Joyce Black left the room whilst this agenda item was discussed.

Philip Parkinson made the case to Governors to re-appoint Joyce Black for a third term of office, reiterating the rationale proposed at the Governance & Search Committee meeting. Due to the fact that Joyce has a skill set which is unique to the Corporation, the Corporation approved her re-appointment for a further four-year term of office. As a condition of Joyce's re-appointment the Corporation requested that she actively supports the Corporation with mentoring and succession planning before her final term of office concludes.

## **ROUND-UP**

### **18. Any Other Business**

#### **18.1 Dates to note**

- Weds 15 February 2023, 5:00pm - Student Outcomes Task & Finish Group (Teams)
  - Thurs 16 February 2023, 4:00pm – Estates & Finance Task & Finish Group (face to face)
  - Weds 08 March 2023, 5:00pm – Governor Conference, Room G01, University Road campus
- The Chair prompted Governors to book their Governor Insight visits ahead of the Easter deadline

- The Chair thanked Joyce for working with the Clerk on preparations for the external review of governance

**19. Confidentiality**

Subject to discussions during the meeting, the Corporation considered the following matters and papers confidential: papers relating to the Estates Plan, strategic context update and Principal's update.

**20. Next Corporation Meeting**

Wednesday 29 March 2023, 5:00pm, Room G01, University Road campus

**Action List**

<b>Actions arising from 25 January 2023 Corporation meeting</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>
Update on the impact of the automated attendance monitoring system at a subsequent Corporation meeting	AJ	
<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	