

Minutes of Corporation Meeting No. 144

Wednesday 20th September 2023

Chair: M Atherton

Members Present: S Codling, Ian Mac, Mike Atherton, K Finnigan, D Stebbings, J Owens, Jo Johnson, Jo Tallentire, D Morran - remote

In Attendance: Assistant Principals: J Cadman, I Fraser, A Frost, S Prince, G Rayner, S Williams (Senior HR & Administration Manager), N Goldsmith (Finance Manager)

Clerk: Charlotte Bowen

Members of the Corporation are both governors and trustees. For the purposes of these minutes and in the context that minutes are published on the website for public information, the generic term 'governor' has been used where it has been deemed appropriate to do so. Minute numbering follows the order of discussion

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present. Attendees were made aware that virtual conferencing facilities would be in use throughout the meeting and that the meeting would be recorded to facilitate minute taking

144.1 Apologies for absence

One member joined the meeting remotely via Teams. Apologies were received from, June Leslie, Scott Townshend and M. Sherer. L Russel and G Callegari and I Vipond were absent.

144.2 Any other business

144.2.1 The Clerk of Governors has been medically signed off from duty. Charlotte Bowen will be taking minutes and providing administrative support in the interim.

144.2.2 The Chair updated Governors on the investigation into academisation. A further meeting in October has been scheduled which will include representatives from the Department of Education. 'Non-Disclosure' and 'Sharing of information' documents have been signed. Copies of those documents will be made available to governors. A portal for sharing information will be created in the next few weeks.

144.3 Declaration of interest

None declared

144.4 Minutes of previous meeting

144.4.1 The previous discussions on academisation were placed within the Confidential section of the agenda. It was suggested by a governor that the discussions moving forward go back into the confidential section. A decision was made to leave discussions regarding academisation in the main body of the meeting and not move it to the confidential section.

144.5 Principal's strategic matters

The Principals September report, circulated in advance of the meeting was taken as read.

Grade deflation. The Principal updated governors on the impact of teacher assessed grades at GCSE and the A level grade deflation on the 22/23 cohort of students.

Enrolment. The Principal informed governors of a modest deflation on enrolment this year. Cenbase Colleges also reported a similar trend for the 2023/2024 academic year in which there was a decrease in students qualifying for level three courses and an increase in students qualifying for level two courses.

Essex schools RAAC. The Principal informed Governors that although the College does not have any RAAC there could be an impact to the College in terms of the disruption to learning current year 11 students are possibly facing. A discussion was undertaken regarding the possibility for a need to adjust entry requirements or if any adjustments would be provided by exam boards.

Premises. This summer the premise team co-ordinated a complex and demanding schedule of work. Huge thanks are given to all of those involved. The works are mostly complete with the exception of further digging in the drive to access a gas pipe which was previously dug incorrectly. The dig for access to this pipe will likely take place over half term.

Pay award. We are currently awaiting a decision from the National Bargaining Collective.

144.6 Strategic plans and priorities

- (i) Assistant Principal Pastoral - highlighted that the strategic priorities documents are 'our' documents and not generally circulated externally. The strategic priorities will be completed this Autumn with a review in May.
- (ii) A Governor requested that the headline reports from the recent EDI staff and student surveys be provided

144.7 Operational and Statutory reports

(i) Pastoral

The College 'Child Protection Policy' and 'Procedure for dealing with safeguarding allegations against adults in college' were circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Assistant Principal – Pastoral outlined the main changes in the child protection policies relate to the 'Keeping Children safe in Education' document.

Lead governors were supportive of both documents.

The Staff Code of Conduct, Recruitment Policy, and Public Interest Disclosure Policy are to be circulated to governors for E-Resolution.

The College Community Code and Physical Intervention documents were circulated to governors prior to the meeting. A Governor questioned how students are made aware of the code. Students are made aware via a series of tutorials with their Personal tutor. It was suggested that the College Community Code could be brought to students' attention when accepting their place to study and signing a commitment.

(ii) Finance

The finance report was received in advance of the meeting and the Finance manager updated governors on the current year's financial situation. The Finance manager

presented the July accounts that remained close to the final accounts for last year. The finance department is currently awaiting responses from small insurance claims and the possibility of claiming back business rates as far back as six years. The Finance Manager informed Governors of the new HSBC accounts which will be considered as an emergency fund providing the ability, for example, to pay staff in the instance of cyber-attack.

Four major changes to the previous forecast were presented to the governors – first being the LGPS charge for the 2022-23 academic year. The remaining three changes being Annual leave accrual, the Caretakers house: excavation and repairs and maintenance including emergency lighting repairs.

All amendments to the budget were approved by governors.

The approval of the Audit regularity self-assessment questionnaire was not sought. This is to be circulated to the audit committee first and deferred to a later FGB meeting.

These minutes were approved by the Corporation on Monday 30th October
