



**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting
held on Tuesday 14th March 2017
at Netherfield Centre**

Present: Stan Stanier (Chair), David Evans (Vice Chair), Jeremy Kerswell (Principal), Howard Wood, Jeff Trunkfield, John Moore-Bick, Claudette Atkinson (Academic Staff Governor), Nathalie Boyd (Support Staff Governor), Julie Dougill, Mike Atkinson, John Evans and Sally Kinsey

In attendance: David Stokes (Vice Principal), Mike Groves (Director of Finance), James Hibbert (Deputy Principal), Laura Holt (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies: Bill Pepper, Suzanne Craig, Tom Walker

Meeting commenced: 5.00pm

Minute no.		Action by whom	Action by when
GOV/16 17/14	Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Ian Rideout for the tour of the facility prior to the meeting.		
GOV/16 17/15	Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters arising The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 th December 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The matters arising report was noted.		
GOV/16 17/16	Student Union (SU) Kitty Tucker (Student Participation Officer) gave an update regarding the Students Union. The SU now has a full team of eight student officers representing a strong cross section of the college community; the team are working and visible. The union has a brand and a clear identity. The SU aim to have something happening every lunchtime and a larger event each half term, examples included debating society, soap box race team, table tennis tournaments, board games, roller disco and nerf wars in the library. There are opportunities for students to become Sports Enrichment Leaders, Buddy Peer mentors and part of the first response team (first aid). There are a number of links with external agencies e.g. Camp America, National Citizen Service and Safer Sussex. Focus groups have been held for Student Voice and Plumpton on line. The SU submitted a NUS affiliation application which will be ratified at the NUS conference in April. Once Ratified the SU will begin to make income from NUS extra cards.		

	<p>There is a big project to redevelop the top common room into a zoned space that is accessible and attractive to ALL students. Students are providing input to the design and planning of the space.</p> <p>A governor asked whether chaplaincy for students was being considered. James Hibbert advised that it had been identified that it would be beneficial to have more faith work across the college. In the past chaplaincy had not been embraced by the student body. Moving forward this will be included within the operational plan.</p> <p>Governors welcomed a link with the Student Union through the Student Governor, recognising the importance of the student voice. It was also acknowledged that the SMT have a responsibility to feed in the student voice through the Academic Committee.</p>		
GOV/16 17/17	<p>Briefing: Level 3 Value Added measure</p> <p>This outcome measure for <i>level 3 students only</i> was identified as a weakness by Ofsted at the last inspection. Each student is given an entry score based on their GCSE results. A student with A's & B's is likely to achieve a score of 40+. A student with a score of 27 is likely to have achieved C/D/E's at GCSE. A comparison is made between the entry score and the exit score for all students across the country on a subject by subject basis to create a national average for performance based on entry points. If a student receives an exit score above the national average (based on entry score), a positive value added score will be achieved, conversely a score below national average will attract a negative value added score.</p> <p>The college are using this measure to better inform target setting for students to ensure they achieve their potential. Intervention is in place for students that are not predicted to achieve a positive level 3 valued added score to ensure that all students are stretched. There is an opportunity to develop an in house system for 'distance travelled' at levels 1 and 2 and HE during the next academic year.</p>		
GOV/16 17/18	<p>Minutes and Recommendations of Committee Meetings</p> <p>The Corporation noted the minutes of the committee meetings held since the last meeting of the Corporation. Members considered an executive summary of the key issues discussed by each committee.</p> <p>The recommendations of each committee were considered by the Corporation:</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Julie Dougill to be appointed as Vice Chair of Academic Committee 2. John Evans to be appointed as Vice Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee 3. Mike Atkinson to be appointed as Chair of Audit Committee 4. Suzanne Craig to move from Audit Committee to F&GP 5. Anne Baxter to be appointed as Co-opted Member of Audit Committee 6. Helen Key to be appointed as a Co-opted Member of Academic Committee <p>The Principal advised that Helen Key is Head at Chailey School. As part of a new relationship with the school a reciprocal arrangement has been agreed with Jeremy Kerswell joining Chailey School's Governing Body as a Co-opted</p>		

	Member. Chailey school is well regarded for English and Maths. It is also part of the Newick teaching alliance, which is a beacon of best practice. There could be opportunities for sharing best practice for Teaching and Learning.		
GOV/16 17/19	<p>Strategic Planning</p> <p>The Principal outlined the framework for consultation on the Strategic Plan. Consultation will take place with staff week commencing 27th March, students week commencing 24th April and employers week commencing 1st May. All responses will be collated and a final draft proposal of seven year strategic vision and aims will be presented at the Strategic Planning Workshop on 16th May.</p> <p>Governors asked how the Link Governors could feed in to discussions. It was agreed that the next round of Curriculum Manager link meetings would include discussions on Strategy and curriculum Planning.</p>		
GOV/16 17/20	<p>Executive Summary of the Self-Assessment Report(SAR)</p> <p>The Vice Principal circulated an Executive Summary of the SAR and summary KPI report. Within study programmes, retention of High Needs Students is strong at 98%. Retention of 'Looked after children' and those on free school meals is slightly lower at 95%.</p> <p>The Vice Principal would like to see attendance rates increase, particularly in English and Maths. This has been a focus at the weekly Head of Faculty meeting.</p> <p>16-18 apprenticeship retention remains an area of greatest concern. Some students will complete early this year and it is anticipated that achievement will be around 70-73% at year end.</p> <p>Based on the recent mock exam papers for GCSE Maths, the college is targeting a 40-45% A-C pass rate, which will be comparative to last year and still significantly above the national average. Approximately 12-15% passed the English GCSE mock. A further 23/25% were borderline. The target for A*-C is therefore 30%, which will be significantly higher than last year's equivalent figure of 11% and likely to be above national average. A carefully managed programme of intervention is in place for the remainder of the year including lunchtime revision sessions.</p> <p>Governors asked why the English GCSE results are more challenging than the GCSE Maths. The Vice Principal explained that the GCSE Maths more closely aligns with the students' vocational studies. For the English GCSE the students are studying 20th century texts which are more abstract from their studies. There is also a very tenacious Maths teacher.</p>		
GOV/16 17/21	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>Governors noted the Finance report circulated in advance of the meeting. A copy of a letter received from the SFA was circulated to governors. The letter concludes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the college's financial health grade for 2015/16 (based on the outturn) was good • the underlying financial health grade is good • there are no significant concerns with regard to the College's financial control arrangements 		

GOV/16 17/22	<u>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM</u>		
GOV/16 17/23	<p>Principals report</p> <p>A written report was distributed to members. The Principal outlined the following key areas:</p> <p>After a fairly challenging start to the academic year due to the new structure, new staff in a number of management positions and the incident on the farm, this term has seen core operations begin to run smoothly. There have also been signs that strategies implemented over the past twelve months relating to teaching standards and business growth are starting to pay dividends.</p> <p><i>The Farm</i></p> <p>The operation to remove slurry has come to an end, the dairy herd have returned to their cubicle housing. The Interim Farm Manager is completing a full review of the farm to ensure tight controls are in place. The first draft of his report will be shared with the Farm Advisory Committee on 5th April. James Hibbert will be interviewed by the Environment Agency under caution in relation to the pollution incident in November. The college is working on an extensive mitigation proposal which may result in a civil rather than criminal prosecution. A second pollution incident, caused by a contractor incorrectly installing pipework, was confined to the college estate.</p> <p><i>Teaching and Learning</i></p> <p>The Principal advised that there are still some lessons being observed as grade 4. This is a key risk area. The 4-week intensive programme is still in place and there are members of staff currently on the programme. Curriculum Managers value the weekly data set regarding attendance, retention and achievement. SMT are reviewing planning protocols for September to ensure there is a whole college policy in relation to interventions regarding attendance.</p> <p><i>Staffing</i></p> <p>There has been an exceptionally high number of vacancies over the last half term. The new robust selection and recruitment process has resulted in a high number of quality applications leading to some very good appointments, including recruiting some hard to fill posts. There is reputational risk with so many vacancies being advertised and risks associated with a high number of new staff. A comprehensive induction process is being implemented to minimise risks.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether there were any concerns with attracting staff as the college is located in an expensive part of the world. The Principal advised that it was important to ensure that the Job Description and Person Specification were right and that a market competitive salary is offered. The Vice Principal also advised that a graduate entry teacher training scheme was being considered in some areas.</p> <p><i>Finances</i></p> <p>A re-forecast budget is showing a likely outturn for the year of £17.4m (£16.4m in 15/16), with a surplus of £250k. The Principal advised that an area of risk was the number of applications for 17/18 which are behind this time last year. The internal application process has started later this year accounting for some of the reduction in applications. The number of</p>		

	<p>internal applications should also be higher given the higher number of students here this year compared with last year. There is a marketing strategy in place over the next 5 months including 'Keeping warm' strategies to increase conversion rates. Governors welcomed the weekly newsletter which includes data on the number of applications and places accepted.</p>		
GOV/16 17/24	<p>External Grants</p> <p>The Principal gave an update on the Stanmer park project. Negotiations are taking place with Brighton and Hove Council regarding the lease including a rent free period in recognition of the significant investment required in the facilities. A Project Manager will be recruited to deliver the Stanmer Park project.</p> <p>The college have also been successful in securing the following local growth funding grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2.3 million over 3 years from the Coast 2 Capital LEP. The project relates to estate development to improve efficiency and suitability for exemplar training and education in agricultural land management and in horticulture and woodland management • £140k from the South East LEP. The title of the project is "Science and engineering in tree management". 		
GOV/16 17/25	<p>Annual Operating Plan</p> <p>Governors noted the Annual Operating plan circulated in advance of the meeting. Items RAG rated as red, are items that are at risk of not being achieved by the original deadline set in August. Some items will be completed later than originally planned due to unforeseen circumstances such as the removal of the slurry. All items are expected to be completed by the end of the academic year.</p> <p>The two areas of greatest concern are recruitment for September (discussed under item GOV/1617/23) and apprenticeship success rates (discussed under item GOV/1617/20).</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the importance of stakeholder engagement.</p>		
GOV/16 17/26	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Governors noted the Safeguarding Annual Report circulated prior to the meeting. The Deputy Principal highlighted the increase in number of safeguarding cases. The Student Services team are very busy but the number of safeguarding cases are not unmanageable, however if the rate of increase continues, the capacity of the team will need to be reviewed. The Student Services Manager has a strong knowledge of safeguarding and is a member on both the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) as the post 16 education representative and actively influences safeguarding policy and practice across East Sussex. Governors reviewed the proposed changes to the Safeguarding Policy circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Approved: The Corporation approved the Safeguarding Policy.</p>		
GOV/16 17/27	<p>Whistleblowing</p> <p>The Principal advised that the college had received a whistleblowing</p>		

	complaint from a member of staff in relation to concerns regarding the farm. Following an investigation, a response has been drafted. Governors requested that the whistleblowing policy be reviewed and the review date brought in line with the Safeguarding policy.	Principal/ Clerk	Jul 17
GOV/16 17/28	Health and Safety Policy Governors reviewed the proposed changes to the Health and Safety Policy circulated in advance of the meeting. Approved: The Corporation approved the Health and Safety Policy.		
GOV/16 17/29	Corporation Rules and Regulations Governors reviewed the proposed changes to the Corporation Rules and Regulations which included the appointment of the Student Governor from the Student Union. Discussion took place regarding the term of office for the Chair and Vice Chair. It was agreed that the term of office should remain as one year. Approved: The Corporation approved the Corporation Rules and Regulations.		
GOV/16 17/30	Alternative models of Governance Further to previous discussions at Corporation regarding alternative models of governance, an alternative model (not Carver) is being investigated whereby F&GP and Academic Committees would be dissolved. The number of Corporation meetings would be increased but all governors would be involved in all aspects of business and there would be no duplication of work. A paper will be circulated for consideration in the next few weeks for governors to consider and raise questions, with a final decision being made at the next meeting.		
GOV/16 17/31	Any other Business A Governor highlighted the importance of securing a long term lease for Flimwell and Ivyland. The Principal advised that now that a Business Plan was in place, negotiation discussions will be entered into. At Flimwell the college is operating within its own unit and is no longer responsible for managing the rest of the site (e.g. cleaning, WIFI etc.). Agreed: Income and Expenditure for Ivyland and Flimwell to be brought to a future meeting. The Chair thanked the staff at Netherfield Centre for the excellent catering and enlightening tour.	FD	Jul17

Meeting closed 7.30pm

Signature.....(Chair)

Date.....