



**CORPORATION MEETING**  
**6.00pm Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018**  
**BT5, Sussex Rural Business Centre, Plumpton College**

**Present:** Stan Stanier (Chair), Jeremy Kerswell (Principal), Leeni Lear, Sarah Blake (Support Staff Governor), Bill Pepper, Mike Atkinson, John Moore-Bick, Tom Walker (Student Governor), John Evans, Julie Dougill, Howard Wood, Suzanne Craig and Claudette Atkinson (Academic Staff Governor)

**In attendance:** Chris Knell (Director of Finance), David Stokes (Vice Principal), James Hibbert (Deputy Principal), Theresa Bray (Vice Principal), Laura Holt (Clerk to the Corporation), Shirley Collier (NLG) and Becky Taylor (Manager HE, Research and Scholarship) (Item GOV/1718/88 only)

**Apologies:** Sally Kinsey, Jeff Trunkfield, Tim Laker, Helen Key and David Evans (Vice Chair)

Minute no.		Action by whom	Action by when
GOV/17 18/85	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received Sally Kinsey, Jeff Trunkfield, Tim Laker, Helen Key and David Evans (Vice Chair)		
GOV/17 18/86	<b>Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b> Members considered and approved the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2018 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.		
GOV/17 18/87	<b>Matters arising</b> Members considered the report of matters arising which included those from previous Corporation meetings, Academic, and Finance and General Purposes Committees. All matters arising were either complete, in progress or on the main agenda.		
GOV/17 18/88	<b>HE</b> Becky Taylor (Manager HE, Research and Scholarship) gave a presentation to Members regarding the Office for Students (OfS). Key points included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OfS is the new regulator for English higher education, replacing HEFCE.</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OfS is outcomes driven and covers all our HE students. The four primary regulatory objectives are that all students, from all backgrounds, and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from, higher education.</li> <li>○ Receive a high quality academic experience, and their interests are protected while they study or in the event of a provider, campus or course closure.</li> <li>○ Are able to progress into employment or further study, and their qualifications hold their value over time.</li> <li>○ Receive value for money.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The college will be applying for approved (fee cap) registration.</li> <li>• Risks for the College and mitigation.</li> <li>• Deadline for application – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018.</li> </ul> <p>Governors asked whether the college was confident that the college will successfully register. Assurance was given that the college was confident of successful registration.</p>		
GOV/17 18/89	<p><b>Minutes and recommendations from Committee meetings</b></p> <p>Members noted the minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March and the Audit Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March. Members considered an executive summary of the key issues discussed by both Committees. The recommendations of each committee were considered for approval by the Corporation:</p> <p>Stan Stanier left the room whilst Corporation considered his re-appointment as a governor for a two year term of office. The Principal Chaired the meeting in his absence.</p> <p><b>Approved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stan Stanier to be appointed for a two year term of office</b></li> </ul> <p>Stan Stanier returned to the room, and resumed Chairing the meeting.</p> <p><b>Approved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>With effect from the summer term:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Julie Dougill to join Audit Committee</b></li> <li>○ <b>Leeni Lear to join Search Committee</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Amendments to the Link Governor Arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Stan Stanier to be appointed as Prevent Link Governor</b></li> <li>○ <b>Mike Atkinson to be appointed as Link Governor for Risk</b></li> <li>○ <b>Mike Atkinson to be appointed as Link Governor for Business Development</b></li> <li>○ <b>John Evans to be appointed as Commercial Link Governor (to include Events)</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Amended Terms of Reference for the Search Committee which remove the requirement for a co-opted member of the committee.</b></li> <li>• <b>Amended terms of reference for Audit Committee</b></li> </ul>		
GOV/17 18/90	<p><b>Student Union Report</b> The Student Governor reported that the RaG day in aid of Chestnut Tree House, which had taken place that day, had been a great success.</p>		
GOV/17 18/91	<p><b>Principal's Report</b> The Principal highlighted a few key points from his report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The college is on the cusp of an agreement with Sussex Coast College for non-levy Apprenticeship starts from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.</li> <li>• Netherfield – Phaedra Tanghe is managing the centre for the rest of the term and is working to resolve issues relating to student behaviour.</li> <li>• New MIS Manager starts in May</li> <li>• SMT Planning Day – Details of the Employee Engagement Programme and minor revisions to the staff structure to be presented to the next meeting.</li> <li>• Greenoak Centre – There are covenants defining Agricultural use for the site which affect the market value of the site. The removal of such covenants is currently being explored.</li> <li>• Bwlch Mwlchan (Wales Centre) – This is managed by the Outdoor Ed Curriculum area, basic maintenance is outsourced to the National Trust. The lease extends to 2042. Consideration is being given to the educational value of the centre, given the maintenance costs, and whether an alternative model could deliver better value for money. SMT will bring a paper to a future Corporation meeting regarding the future of the centre.</li> <li>• RAU – The first stage of the validation application will be reviewed internally on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018. PR regarding the partnership has been positive, with many messages received from across the South East.</li> <li>• Landex – CMT received constructive and positive feedback from the Landex Peer Review, which gave managers valuable confidence and assurance ahead of the Ofsted inspection.</li> <li>• Ofsted – The Principal thanked governors for all their work which was recognised by several members of Ofsted. The Principal shared an e-mail he had received from Stewart Jackson (HMI) congratulating him and the Senior Managers for the good Ofsted report. The Lead Inspector had reported to Stewart that the improvements were sustainable and on-going. Governors formally congratulated the Principal and Senior Management Team.</li> </ul> <p>Questions were invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors asked whether a decision had been reached by the</li> </ul>		<p><b>May 18</b></p> <p><b>TBC</b></p>

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	<p>Environmental Agency regarding the potential fine. The Principal reported that it hadn't, but a decision was expected by the end of March.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors asked whether a long term lease had been signed for Netherfield. The Deputy Principal advised that a lease is due to be signed by 19<sup>th</sup> June. It is believed that the delays may be due to gaining vacant possession of the farm house. It is not viewed as high risk.</li> <li>Flimwell – The Principal advised that David Stokes has joined him on the Woodland Enterprise Board. SMT will bring a paper to a future meeting regarding Flimwell.</li> <li>Governors sought clarification regarding the issues identified in the Ofsted Report regarding High Needs Learners. Theresa Bray explained that there are 179 High Needs Students across all curriculum areas of the college, including 50 Rural Pathways students at Plumpton and 16 at Netherfield. The inspectors reported that the teaching learning and assessment of Rural Pathway students was not good enough. The teaching and learning across the curriculum did not translate targets in the EHCP plans in to the classroom.</li> <li>Governors asked why Apprenticeships were still 'red' risk rated. The Principal advised that the red rating will remain until the anticipated sub-contract with Sussex Coast College is signed.</li> <li>Governors asked the Principal to quantify the amount of funding at risk due to the inaccurate ILR reporting in relation to English and Maths condition of funding. The Principal reported potentially up to £300k, however David Stokes is working with MIS to provide evidence to reduce this to £150k. Given the growth this year and last year it is likely that growth will exceed any clawback.</li> <li>Governors asked what had been put in place to backfill Phaedra Tanghe to ensure that her absence (whilst Centre Manager at Netherfield) does not have a detrimental impact on the English and Maths department. The department Co-ordinators are doing a good job managing the mock exams and robust processes are in place for tracking student progress.</li> </ul>		TBC
GOV/17 18/92	<p><b>Monitoring performance: retention/attendance</b> Members noted the above report. Governors asked for an explanation for the drop in retention for apprenticeships. Management responded that this was due to students leaving for full time employment, attracted by higher pay. Governors asked what we can do to address this. Management replied that the college needed to improve the relationship with the student. The interim Curriculum Manager for Vet Nursing has recently been appointed on a permanent basis. Theresa is confident that the new CM will increase retention.</p>		
GOV/17	<b>Position statements for Teaching and Learning, Apprenticeships and</b>		

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18/93	<p><b>English and Maths.</b> Members noted the above reports.</p>		
GOV/17 18/94	<p><b>Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) March update</b> Members noted the above report.</p>		
GOV/17 18/95	<p><b>HE – correspondence from HEFCE</b> Members noted the letters from HEFCE dated 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018. The later refers to the previously reported poor NSS Student Satisfaction scores for last academic year. A number of actions have been taken including a re-structure of HE with two new posts. A significant increase in student satisfaction is anticipated this year.</p>		
GOV/17 18/96	<p><b>Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare including Student Disciplinary</b> James Hibbert gave a brief outline of the above paper highlighting the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data cannot be compared year on year as there has been a change to the Student Disciplinary policy, which captures intervention by CM's as the first stage of the disciplinary process.</li> <li>• There has been a spike of sanctions towards the end of the first term.</li> <li>• The number of the escalation of sanctions issued to students is not consistent with gender. Very few females who receive First Formal Warnings go on to receive a Second Formal Warning.</li> <li>• Some students bypassed the earlier stages of our policy and reverted straight to a Second Formal Warning due to the seriousness of the issue presented</li> </ul> <p>Governors asked whether staff were more lenient with the girls. James Hibbert advised that this is not the case as the number of First Formal Warnings are fairly evenly split between males and females. In general the females respond to the First Warning and there is no escalation. Males are not responding to the First Formal Warning in the same way, and work is underway to try to understand why this is the case.</p> <p>Governors asked whether any divisions have a higher number of sanctions. The Agric team have a high number of sanctions. Staff have been acting promptly to address behaviour issues and this has led to high attendance rates for the division.</p> <p>Governors asked whether there is a higher percentage of sanctions at Netherfield. Management responded that the failure to implement the Student Disciplinary Policy had led to issues with student behaviour at that site.</p> <p>Generally student behaviour is good.</p>		
GOV/17 18/97	<p><b>Policies for Approval</b> Governors reviewed the proposed changes to the policies circulated in advance of the meeting.</p>		

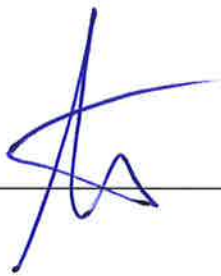
Minute no.		Action by whom	Action by when
	<p><b>Approved:</b>  <b>The Corporation approved the following policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health and Safety Policy.</b></li> <li>• <b>Student Health and Safety Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Safeguarding Policy</b></li> </ul> <p>Governors commented that it was good to see the reasons for changes highlighted in the header sheet, it would also be helpful to see the changes marked within the text (tracked changes) for future policies.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Environmental policy, Freedom of Speech policy and Freedom of Information policy will be brought to future meetings (the later in line with GDPR).</p>		
GOV/17 18/98	<p><b>General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>Members noted the GDPR implementation plan. The Deputy Principal advised that the live date for the legislation is 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018, however actions in the plan go beyond this date. Protection against data breaches will be in place by 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and rapid progress will be made thereafter will everything in place for the start of the new academic year.</p> <p>The Audit Committee will include GDPR in the audit and assurance programme for 2017/18.</p>		
GOV/17 18/99	<p><b>Stanmer Park Project Highlight Report</b></p> <p>Members noted the above report. Governors asked the reasons for the 9 month delay. The Deputy Principal advised that Stage 3 approval was granted January 2017. There were delays obtaining the permission to start. The Deputy Principal took over as project lead for Plumpton College in May 2016 and permission was granted in July (7 month delay). A further 2 month delay was due to the re-design of the garden. The college expects to be in the new facility in September 2019, with the gardens opening to the public in Spring 2020.</p> <p>Governors asked what the financial implications were for staying in the facility longer. Management responded that the commercial benefits will not be realised sooner.</p> <p>The Finance Director is re-visiting the business plan in respect of the commercial performance of the venture, shop etc.</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group are monitoring progress of the project.</p>		
GOV/17 18/100	<p><b>Finance Report</b></p> <p>Members noted the period 7 management accounts and the ESFA letter and dashboard. The Clerk advised that the following papers had been added to the portal that day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR-Payroll project report</li> <li>• Budget Reforecast paper</li> <li>• Revaluation reserve report</li> </ul> <p>The Finance Director reported that he had a link meeting booked with Suzanne Craig and Mike Atkinson to discuss the revaluation reserve. Discussion took place regarding the Reforecast paper. At the last meeting</p>		



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	the Finance Director reported that the college was on target to achieve a surplus of £221k at year end and outlined actions being taken by management to achieve a 3-5% surplus. Since the last meeting at least £166k of savings have been identified to increase the surplus to £387k (fractionally above 2% of income). The Principal and Finance Director were disappointed to not achieve the 3% surplus and have identified lessons learned for next year.		
GOV/17 18/101	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that this was Tom Walkers last meeting. The Chair advised thanked Tom for his contribution, the Corporation have greatly valued his input. Governors wished him good luck for the future.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated John Moore-Bick for his appointment as High Sheriff of East Sussex.</p>		

7.40pm - meeting closed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_

1/5/18

