



CORPORATION MEETING

4.30pm Tuesday 10th December 2019

Room BT5, Plumpton College, Ditchling Road, Plumpton, East Sussex, BN7 3AE

MINUTES

Present: Stan Stanier (Chair), Jeremy Kerswell (Principal), Julie Dougill (Vice Chair), Mike Atkinson, Leeni Lear, John Evans, Helen Atkinson, Bill Pepper, Ruby Franklin-Goddard (Student Governor), John Moore-Bick Sally Kinsey, Helen Key (Co-opted Member) and Stephen Waite, Sarah Blake (Support Staff Governor) and Doug Jackson (Excluding item GOV/19/20/60)

In attendance: James Hibbert (Deputy Principal), David Stokes (Vice Principal), Alison Kent (Vice Principal) (Excluding item GOV/19/20/60), Chris Knell (Director of Finance), Laura Holt (Clerk to the Corporation),

Apologies: Tim Laker

Minute no.		Action by whom	Action by when
GOV/19 20/60	<p>Governor Training – Safeguarding Sarah Bolland (Safeguarding and Mental Health Manager) delivered annual safeguarding training to governors. Key areas covered included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of safeguarding: ‘Safeguarding’ is the proactive and reactive actions that we take to promote the welfare, protection and safety of our students. • Local issues in East Sussex • Reported Level 3 concerns over term 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of cases doubled to 89 ○ Top 5 reasons: Suicide attempts and plans, Well Being (This could be a student who is struggling with their mental wellbeing, under nourished, unhealthy, welfare), Drugs and Alcohol, Sexting and Sexual Assault (Off site but affecting students who attend). • Students who were referred for non-urgent welfare concerns such as needing anxiety support, counselling referral, self-harm, financial difficulties, bullying, bereavement and many more. 18 of these students have been referred multiple times. • Legal Framework and Governors responsibilities: • The Governing Body must ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They comply with statutory safeguarding procedures; ○ They have regard to the Department for Education statutory 		

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	<p>guidance in particular recent papers such as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools and colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Body should satisfy themselves that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff have read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education; including the updated 2019 release within the first term of this academic year. <i>A pop up was added to PoL to ensure that all staff read the KCSIE update before being able to progress.</i> ○ The college contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018; ○ The college has a safeguarding policy, a policy for adults at risk, safeguarding procedures and a staff code of conduct which are given to all staff on induction, reviewed annually and made available publicly e.g. on the college website. ○ Clearly appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead (<i>Sarah Bolland</i>) to have appropriate authority and capacity to fulfil role – training updated every 2 years; cover always available for this role; ○ The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Designated Member of Staff (<i>Sarah Bolland, Tracy Tourle, & James Hibbert</i>) undergo child protection training which is updated regularly, in line with LSCB guidance; ○ The college has appointed a designated member of staff to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after (<i>Tracy Tourle</i>). • The Governing Body does not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have a role in dealing with individual cases; ○ Have a right to know the details of individual cases (unless it is in relation to an allegation against the Principal, in which case the Chair of Governors should lead on this matter). • Prevent Duty – keeping students safe from radicalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governing Body responsibilities ○ Group tutorials and PoL have been utilised to ensure all students have an understanding and awareness. • Annual Governors' Safeguarding Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose of annual report is to enable the governing body to monitor compliance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and to identify areas for improvement. • New Ofsted Framework - Safeguarding won't be graded specifically in the new EIF for September 2019, but it will be referenced in the Leadership and Management section of the report. • This year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 93% of students feel safe at college, meeting our KPI target. ○ Creation of Safeguarding & Mental Health Manager role 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sarah Bolland managing the Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing strategy which is currently in consultation stage. ○ Safeguarding Practice Review (ESCC) of Netherfield completed with positive feedback in response to new processes and improvements. ● Going Forwards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launch of MHEW Strategy for Staff and Students ○ Safeguarding Refresher training to all staff in February 2020 ○ S175 return to ESCC ○ ESCC Mental Health in Education working groups hosted at Plumpton ○ ESCC Designated Safeguarding Lead supervision/sharing practice hosted at Plumpton ○ Parental Engagement Neuroscience Seminars <p><i>Q: The number of level 3 case has doubled why? Does this reflect the real number of cases doubling, or is the increase due to improved monitoring and access? Do you have benchmark data?</i></p> <p>A: The evidence is anecdotal, in the age of uncertainty (Brexit, climate change, wars) with over 70% people living with someone with mental health issues, students are arriving at college without the skills to cope with the ups and downs of life. We are seeing more suicidal students and this is becoming a trend, previously it was self-harm.</p> <p>Helen Key (Head of a local Secondary school), confirmed that her school (and other Secondary Schools) are also seeing a doubling of high level safeguarding cases. Helen agreed with everything Sarah Bolland had said, staff are more aware but students are arriving at school not equipped to deal with life.</p> <p>The Student Governor was not surprised by the figure.</p> <p><i>Q: Can the college cope with this level of safeguarding concerns?</i></p> <p>The capacity is far greater this year than last year, with the creation of the Safeguarding and Mental Health Manager role (Sarah Boland). The Residential Co-ordinator and Netherfield Co-ordinator have also undertaken Designated Safeguarding Lead Training. Whilst it does not change overall safeguarding roles and responsibilities, it does offer a wider ability to have deeper staff knowledge in key areas and therefore respond to and observe concerns college wide. The college is looking to build capacity further with student social workers.</p> <p><i>Q: How long do students have to wait to see a college counsellor? Do we have enough councillors?</i></p> <p>A: The waiting time is a few weeks, at the moment the only wait is for the initial assessment. A new charity provider is providing the counselling. The provider is able to expand the service quickly in response to demand, provides added value in relation to anxiety and will see residential students out of hours. They are also delivering a resilience10 week programme in January.</p> <p><i>Q: How many of these level 3 concerns were known at enrolment? If the concerns are a surprise there is the risk that college may not be able to meet the student's needs.</i></p>		

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	<p>A: Quite a few were known about. Sarah Bolland is working with the EAG team to ensure that students disclose mental health issues from day one, and is also looking to build resilience training into the student induction.</p> <p><i>Q: Are the other external agencies gearing up in response to the increase in number of level 3 cases?</i></p> <p>A: The capacity of Sussex Police to respond to serious issues is not satisfactory. The college has lodged a complaint with the Clerk of Sussex Police and awaits a response.</p> <p><i>Q: How aware are parents of the issues surrounding mental health?</i></p> <p>A: The college engages with parents on a daily basis. The college recognises the need to engage with parents and has developed a programme with Andrew Wright to support parents to support their child.</p>		
GOV/19 20/61	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Tim Laker. Doug Jackson and Alison Kent joined the meeting.</p>		
GOV/19 20/62	<p>Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising</p> <p>Members considered and approved the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 26th November 2019. Subject to a minor amendment, they were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Members considered the matters arising report. It was agreed that as the only item outstanding in relation to reserves is the risk appetite, the other completed actions will be removed from the report.</p>		
GOV/19 20/63	<p>KPI Data Dashboard and Principals report</p> <p>The Principal advised that the month data will only include month end data from the previous month to ensure a clean consistent approach. The only exception is finance data for November. Due to the December Corporation meeting being held earlier than normal due to Christmas, the November data is not yet available.</p> <p>Action – December management accounts to be circulated by e-mail</p> <p><i>Q: Strategic aim 3 and 4 do not have national benchmarks, how is the RAG rating applied?</i></p> <p>A: Based on target.</p> <p><i>Q: Where national benchmark data is included is this for all colleges or land based colleges?</i></p> <p>A: Specialist colleges which include Land Based.</p> <p>The Principal highlighted key items in his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding – Apprenticeship recruitment remains the priority, additional cohorts have been targeted in key areas. An extended SMT meeting at the end of the week will look at the year to date position. • Brexit - The college continues to model and evaluate the potential impact of the outcome of Brexit and as such has now produced a Brexit Risk Register which analyses these risks in more detail, and against three different possible scenarios • The new Head of Account Management started yesterday. <p><i>Q: The Brexit Risk Register identifies direct threats, but does not consider indirect</i></p>	CK/LH	Dec 19

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	<p><i>threats such as the impact Brexit may have on the employers we serve and the skills needs of those employers.</i></p> <p>A: The Brexit Risk Register will shift as the position changes, detail on the impact on employers can also be added.</p> <p><i>Q: How many international students do we have?</i></p> <p>A: less than 5 non EU students, 82 EU students. The Wine division has the most number of international/EU students.</p>		
<p>GOV/19 20/64</p>	<p>Vice Principals report</p> <p>Further to the request from Corporation at the last meeting Ali Kent gave an update on what is being done to increase attendance. Ali reported that attendance has improved by 1% in the last week in response to marked improvement in absence intervention. A new cross-college attendance monitoring process has been implemented which uses an automated text system to parents to query absence using first registered absence of the day; this 2 way approach to improve immediate communications with families.</p> <p><i>Q: What do you do in the case of chronic illness?</i></p> <p>A: The student is kept up to date with the college VLE and may come in for targeted tutorials. The college has very few students with chronic illness.</p> <p><i>Q: Does attendance vary from site to site?</i></p> <p>Attendance at Netherfield is higher than Plumpton. The cohort at Stanmer is predominantly adults and attendance is high.</p> <p><i>Q: Does the lack of public transport to Plumpton impact attendance? If a student misses a bus, they can't attend for the day.</i></p> <p>A: Students who miss the bus are a very small proportion of the students not attending. If a student misses the bus the college will go and collect them from Lewes train station.</p> <p><i>Q: Is there an overlap with wellbeing and mental health and non-attendance?</i></p> <p>A: The data has not been triangulated to that level, but those with level 3 safeguarding concerns tend to attend college regularly to access support. The attendance for 22 students who are 'Looked After Children' (LAC) is 81%. If you remove the attendance for three students from the data, this increases to over 90%. The college is contacting all students with poor attendance who have free school meals, to advise them that their bursary is dependant on attendance at college. Apprenticeship attendance is strong at the moment, very few students are missing college to attend work. The college is working with employers to ensure that students are not kept at work. Some changes to timetables has been necessary as butchers are very busy in December.</p> <p><i>Q: English and Maths attendance is below target again, could we have a specific report to the next meeting to outline the colleges plans to address this please?</i></p> <p>A: Yes, there is a new teaching team and there is a need to reflect and review processes and give the new team the opportunity to influence change using their experience and expertise.</p> <p>Attendance remains a top priority because of the impact it has on retention and achievement. It is worth noting that attendance at the college is up in the top quartile nationally.</p> <p>Actions: Reports to January Corporation meeting on:</p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the college is addressing below target attendance for English and Maths. • Year to date position and forecasts for apprenticeship recruitment • Residency – financial implications of occupancy below target and what the college is doing to address the shortfall. 		
<p>GOV/19 20/65</p>	<p>Finance Directors report <u>Finance Training Proposal</u> Members considered the finance training proposal circulated in advance of the meeting. The learning aims of the four sessions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to scrutinise and challenge the financial information presented • Understand the key risks facing the College and the potential impacts on its financial health • Understand the governing body's main legal responsibilities in approving budgets • Understand the role of internal vs external audit <p>The training will be delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guy Baigent (External). Guy works for Tim Laker and is providing some interim part time cover prior to the Head of Finance starting in the new year. Guy has experience of delivering training for Amex. • Jenny Allchorn (Internal) Head of Finance starting in January. • ICCA (External) College Internal Auditors. <p>Approved Corporation approved the Finance Training Programme for Governors.</p> <p><u>Finance Record</u> It was not possible to present the Finance Record to Corporation at the same time as the Annual Report and Accounts due to ESFA providing the template late. The college has been traditionally graded as 'good' with a score of approximately 180. The score for 18/19 is 170 which is slightly below previous years and at the top end of Satisfactory/Requires improvement. The College is forecast to return to a Good score in 2019/20 based upon the approved budget and forecast</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the need for caution when considering the ESFA financial health grade. The grade is based on a select list of criteria, and whilst the college aims for a good or outstanding grade, there are other important financial criteria to consider when judging the financial health of the college for example cash flow, quality and capacity to borrow and duration of borrowing. A good score must not be grounds for complacency.</p> <p><i>Q: If the Brexit risks were overlaid what would happen to the score? Would it move from 210 to 200 or 150?</i></p> <p>A: That sensitivity analysis has not been completed but there are buffers within the budget to respond to circumstances if needed.</p> <p><i>Q: How forward looking is the analysis? At what point should a college notify the ESFA that they have a problem?</i></p> <p>A: The FE Commissioner and the ESFA look to provide early support and intervention, so should be notified as soon as a college identifies a problem.</p>		

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	<p>As a result of the requires improvement score for 2018/19 the college remains in early intervention with the ESFA. The college is in regular dialogue with the ESFA and sends a copy of the management accounts and cash flow on a monthly basis.</p> <p><u>Working Capital</u> The Finance Director reported that the Whitehall facility is now in place. The first step was to test this facility which we did with 10 suppliers on 21st November and we have successfully drawn down £250k. We will use the facility in a staggered way up to the March/April peak period and will end May with full repayment and funds in the account. <i>Q: Are you confident that you can manage the cash flow of March and April with Whitehall in isolation?</i> Yes however the college will still engage Sancus.</p> <p><u>Borrowing</u> (Confidential)</p>		
GOV/19 20/66	<p>College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 18/19 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 19/20 A SAR validation meeting took place on the 26th November where the whole college SAR was examined in detail. The SAR validation panel included an external validator from Landex and two governors. The final version of the SAR and QIP reflect the constructive feedback provided at the validation panel meeting. Approved Corporation approved the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 18/19 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 19/20 Ali Kent will bring updates on the QIP at the start of each term.</p>		
GOV/19 20/67	<p>Induction Survey and Action Plan Members considered the Induction Survey, which has been RAG rated with the following rating: Green - Greater than 90% and above college average White - Divisions that are at or above the college average, but not above 90% Red - Less than 90% and less than college average. Alison Kent highlighted key points from her reports including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response rate is high with 83% of students completing the survey. • A restructure of the admissions department this time last year resulted in a new EAG (Enquiries, Advice and Guidance) team. The changes have taken a long time to work through, this team have probably shown the greatest improvement and the results of the survey are the result of legacy issues. Applications, joining information and enrolment are all the focus of planning workshops throughout the autumn term to reflect on the learning from changes made this year. 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student's satisfaction with feeling they are treated fairly and with respect is too low at 82%, down 11% on last year's survey. A student focus group in November 2019 indicated that most students felt college staff did treat them with dignity and respect, more work is required in target areas to understand this further, in particular with Animal Management/Equine with regard to routines and Level 3 Agric students who have returned from a year in industry. Action – Update from focus groups in response to the student survey to be presented to the next meeting. Governors were disappointed with the feedback on the library. This is an area the college has struggled with historically however had improved recently. Ali Kent advised that the Library Manager has completed a coherent piece of work to re configure the space to make it an inclusive learning environment. Discussion took place regarding how libraries are used by students. Further investigation will take place regarding satisfaction with the reliability of college buses The bus company data indicates 91% service reliability, however student satisfaction is 44%. There have been some issues with transferring over to the new provider at the beginning of term. The push notifications on the app will not be live this academic year, a work around has been implemented to track buses. The college needs to manage student expectations that buses which arrive on campus by 9am are on time. A financial dispute with the previous provider has led to some local coach companies not wanting to take on routes. However timely payment of invoices with the new supplier has restored some confidence with local coach companies. There were road works in September which were not known about in advance and had a big impact on journey times at the beginning of term. There has been a big improvement in the service since the beginning of term and the buses are much nicer this year. <p><i>Q: Was there any results that surprised you?</i> A: The score for being treated with dignity and respect. The students settled quickly in to college. There was a bumpy start to the year with enrolment being impacted by other events. It was a pleasant surprise. Discussion took place regarding the reliability of the data. The Principal has worked closely with one or two cohorts that have had a difficult start to the year, whilst these cohorts have reported to the Principal they are happy with their course, this has not been reflected in the results of the survey. The survey is a snapshot of how the students feel on that day. Discussion took place regarding the need to review the Learner Voice Strategy, as the results of the survey should reflect the face to face feedback. Discussion took place regarding the effectiveness of the class rep system, the mechanism for collecting class opinions, class rep training and the impact and value of the class reps. Action: Learner Voice Strategy to be added to the agenda of the July Corporation meeting <i>Q: If you have concerns regarding the reliability of data, can you use the results to inform planning for next year?</i></p>		

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	A: The survey is not used in isolation to plan for next year, other sources of information e.g. feedback from teaching staff and the complaints log are used to triangulate the data.		
GOV/19 20/68	<p>Strategic Projects and Priorities: Stanmer and GDPR</p> <p><u>Stanmer</u></p> <p>John Moore-Bick (Link Governor Horticulture) reported that he had attended the Open Morning at Stanmer on Saturday. He was given an excellent guided tour by the Grounds and Garden Manager. Contractors were on site and were very busy. James Hibbert displayed photos of the site.</p> <p><i>Helen Key left the meeting.</i></p> <p>James highlighted key items from his project report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The priority is getting into the site • The C2C additional funding has now been secured. Unfortunately the RDPE bid was rejected. Project scope remains unchanged but the option to reduce overall borrowing is no longer possible. • There has been an objection to the Trademark application for One Garden Brighton • Occupation of the class rooms was due to take place on 16th December, but this may move to 3rd January. • Weather has had an impact on planting. The lawns will be turfed to mitigate and ensure that the lawns are good for the opening. • The first staff will start in January. <p><i>Q: The college part of the redevelopment is being completed to a high standard, but will it be let down by the standard in other areas of the park, e.g. the road?</i></p> <p>A: There are plans to patch repair significant areas of the road, unfortunately there is not the budget to repair the whole road.</p> <p><i>Q: Brighton is known for expensive parking, is this a concern?</i></p> <p>Staff and students will not need to pay for parking midweek. The garden will be free to enter and the price point in the café will take in to account the cost of parking. The primary risk is around the farm shop for regular customers, the college will negotiate a period of free parking for customers.</p> <p><u>GDPR</u></p> <p>Members noted the GDPR action plan. It was agreed that Corporation will monitor GDPR compliance on an Annual Basis.</p> <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to add Annual GDPR compliance report to the schedule of business for Corporation 		
GOV/19 20/69	<p>Strategic Planning meeting held on 12th November 2019</p> <p>Members considered and approved the minutes of the Strategic Planning meeting held on 12th November 2019 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The Principal outlined the next stages of the Strategic Planning cycle. The college AGM and CAP (Curriculum Advisory Panel) event will take place in January. This will be an opportunity for the Board to engage with employers, joining their respective link areas for the CAP meetings. Clear Terms of</p>		

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	<p>Reference and Agendas will be set for the CAP meetings, linked to the EIF (Ofsted Education Inspection Framework).</p> <p>In February members of Corporation will meet to discuss emerging trends and consider priorities. All members of CMT will meet separately to feedback findings from research and industry engagement.</p> <p>In March members of Corporation and CMT will come together to agree key strategic updates to the 4 work streams and discuss strategy for how each work stream progresses.</p>		
GOV/19 20/70	<p>Governance SAR and QIP</p> <p>Members considered the above documents. The Search and Governance Committee will monitor progress against the QIP.</p> <p>Approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporation approved the Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 18/19 and Governance Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 19/20 		
GOV/19 20/71	<p>Impact of Governance in month</p> <p>Governors reported on link activity which they had completed since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leeni Lear attended an Academic Quality Review meeting for Machinery, Metalsmithing and Motor Vehicle. The review looked at attendance, target setting, students where there were any concerns, including mental health issues. Leeni was able to triangulate information provided by SMT and discussions at Corporation meetings with actions at the meeting. The Principal asked all governors to triangulate information at Corporation meetings through link visits, and to complete a link visit report. • John Evans met with the Curriculum Manager for Wine. There was a feeling of excitement in the department and a more holistic business approach is being taken. <p>Action: James Hibbert/Ali Kent to provide an update on Rock Lodge in the Spring term.</p>		
GOV/19 20/72	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no other business. The meeting concluded at 7.15pm.</p>		

Signed _____ Date _____