



**CORPORATION MEETING**

**4.30pm Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019**

Room BT3, 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, Robbie Nicolle (Academic Staff Governor), John Evans, Helen Atkinson, Doug Jackson, and Helen Key (Co-opted Member)
- In attendance:** James Hibbert (Deputy Principal), David Stokes (Vice Principal), Alison Kent (Vice Principal), Chris Knell (Director of Finance), Laura Holt (Clerk to the Corporation)
- Apologies:** Ruby Franklin-Goddard (Student Governor), Tim Laker, Sally Kinsey, Sarah Blake (Support Staff Governor) Stephen Waite, Bill Pepper and John Moore-Bick

Minute no.		Action by whom	Action by when
GOV/19 20/023	<p><b>Governor Training – Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework</b></p> <p>The Governance Self-Assessment identified the need for more training from external sources. In response it was agreed that governors would view the the AoC Webinar by Richard Beynon HMI, Specialist Advisor, FE and Skills, Ofsted and David Corke, Director of Policy, AoC together in the governor training session and then ask question to SMT.</p> <p>Key points from the AoC and Ofsted EIF 2019: changing inspection practice a briefing for governors included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to the inspection framework CIF (Common Inspection Framework) to EIF (Education inspection Framework): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ‘Teaching, Learning and Assessment’ and ‘Outcomes’ from the CIF have merged into ‘Quality of Education’ in the EIF. Elements of ‘Leadership and Management’ from the CIF are also included in Quality of Education</li> <li>○ ‘Personal Development, Behaviour and welfare’ in the CIF has been split into ‘Behaviour and attitudes’ and ‘Personal development’ in the EIF.</li> <li>○ Under the EIF there is a slimmed down Leadership and Management section.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Judgments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quality of education judgement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intent – Curriculum design, coverage and appropriateness (formerly a leadership and management area)</li> <li>▪ Implementation – Curriculum delivery, teaching (pedagogy), assessment (formative and summative).</li> <li>▪ Impact – Attainment (qualifications and assessments), progress, knowledge and skill development, destinations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Behaviour and attitudes – Attitudes to learning, behaviour, employability, attendance &amp; punctuality, respect</li> <li>○ Personal development – Enrichment, Fundamental British Values, Careers guidance, healthy living, citizenship, equality and diversity, preparation for next stage.</li> <li>○ Leadership and Management – Vision, ethos, provision for SEND, staff development, staff workload and wellbeing, student experience, governance/oversight, safeguarding</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Focused curriculum review / deep dive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lead inspectors select subjects/vocational areas for case-study and agree these with providers (likely to include the biggest area, best area and worst area).</li> <li>○ Inspectors spend most of their time in the learning environment. Three or four Leadership and management meetings will be retained: safeguarding, governance, top-level outcomes and high level strategy.</li> <li>○ The role of the nominee is reduced.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Subcontracting under the EIF</li> </ul> <p><i>Q: Does the college currently subcontract?</i> No and there are no plans to subcontract. The college currently has a subcontract from East Sussex College Group for non-levy paying apprentices, however action is being take to secure a direct contract.</p> <p><i>Q: Given the reduced role of the nominee and increased role of middle managers, how are you training your middle managers?</i> A: The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 18/19, has been mapped to the EIF, the Curriculum Managers make judgements against the intent. Managers will be used to answering questions that they are likely to be asked by inspectors through the Academic Quality Review meetings. The Strategic Planning process has been modified so that all managers will understand the strategic intent. Curriculum Managers will take into account labour market information, employment patterns, and future skills needs of employers when planning the curriculum. Curriculum Advisory Panel (CAP) meetings will form part of the strategic planning process. The CAP meetings will be centralised and take place alongside the Annual Review. Governors will have the opportunity to engage with employers through the CAP meetings and Annual Review. Discussion took place regarding cross college areas e.g. English and Maths and Foundation Learning. English and Maths will be covered in the CAP's for curriculum areas.</p>		

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	<p>The first strategic planning meeting in November will set the scene. Alison Kent will outline the current market share. A lot of resource has been put into Careers information at the college.</p> <p><i>Q: In the deep dive, inspectors will look at the biggest, best and worst areas, which areas would they look at if they came today?</i> Biggest: Animal Management (Study Programmes), Vet Nursing/Horticulture (Apprenticeships) Best: Floristry / Vet Nursing Worst: Foundation Learning or MMM (Machinery, Metalsmithing and Motor Vehicle) Intelligence suggests that that the best areas will be covered quite quickly and then inspectors will deploy resource to the worst area.</p> <p><i>Q: If the inspectors were to arrive tomorrow, what would be their judgement and what do we need to do in the next three months?</i> The college has self-assessed as good. Each Curriculum area has completed a Self-Assessment Report (SAR), these fed in to the whole college SAR. The validation panel, which includes governors, will take place on 26<sup>th</sup> November and will be presented to Corporation for approval on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019. It is expected that Animal Management and MMM will re-self-assess as good by Christmas. In the next three months there will be a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Assessment practice</li> <li>• Student Voice</li> <li>• Tutorials</li> </ul> <p><i>Q: When is the college due the next inspection?</i> 3 years, unless there is a swing in the data.</p> <p><i>Q: Will the data outturn for 2018/19 trigger an inspection?</i> No overall achievement is 5% up on the previous year.</p> <p><b>Action: Paper to Corporation regarding what the college is doing to respond to the new Ofsted framework and what further work is needed.</b></p>	JK	Jan 20
GOV/19 20/024	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Ruby Franklin-Goddard (Student Governor), Tim Laker, Sally Kinsey, Sarah Blake (Support Staff Governor) Stephen Waite, Bill Pepper and John Moore-Bick.</p>		
GOV/19 20/025	<p><b>Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising</b> Members considered and approved the minutes of the Corporation meeting</p>		

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	<p>held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair. Members noted the matters arising report and discussion took place regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer review of Health and Safety</b> Governors asked what the timeline is for arranging the peer review. The Principal advised that there was no immediate risk, but this has been outstanding for some time and would be progressed as quickly as possible. The Principal has contacted Reaseheath College to see if there is appetite for a peer review. The Principal and FD are meeting with NESCOL in three weeks' time and will see if they would be interested in peer review. Audit Committee will monitor progress.</li> <li>• <b>Letter from ESFA regarding subcontracting arrangements.</b> Members noted the above letter and noted that the college does not subcontract.</li> <li>• <b>Letter from Lord Agnew and Richard Atkins</b> Members noted the above letter and highlighted the importance of the work of the Search and Governance Committee in relation to succession planning.</li> <li>• <b>Student Governor</b> The Clerk advised that Ruby Frankin Goddard had been re-elected as Student Governor by the students in the Student Union Elections. Governors congratulated Ruby on her reappointment and were delighted that she was continuing as student governor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Approved:</b> <b>Corporation approved the appointment of Ruby Frankin-Goddard as Student Governor for a one year term of office.</b></p>		
GOV/19 20/026	<p><b>Recommendations from Committee meetings</b></p> <p>Members considered the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group: KPI Data Dashboard and Search and Governance Committee.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the recommendations from TAFG: Subsidiaries in relation to the pension arrangements for staff employed by One Garden Brighton Ltd. The recommendations were based on the minimum amounts that an employer must contribute. In the future this may be reviewed to retain longer serving members of staff.</p> <p><i>Q: Are the terms and conditions comparable to staff at Plumpton?</i> A: The FD advised that staff employed at Plumpton College are entitled to join the TPS (Teachers Pension Scheme) or LGPS (Local Government Pension Scheme). The terms and conditions of staff employed by the subsidiary will be different, as this is a separate commercial operation with different benchmarks for employment conditions.</p> <p><i>Q: Are there comparable roles at Plumpton?</i> A: There are similar roles however there are distinct differences between the roles at One Garden and Plumpton College. The roles pass the HR test as different roles.</p>		

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	<p>Discussion took place regarding the recommendation to not implement the FEC recommendation to make the FD as Senior Post Holder (SPH). The Chair highlighted that this is an explicit rejection of an FE Commissioner recommendation and governors will be challenged on this when the FEC visit takes place on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019.</p> <p><i>Q: What is the downside/disadvantage of making the FD a Senior Post Holder (SPH)?</i></p> <p>It would disrupt the existing parity of SMT, which is operating as a cohesive and effective team. There is nothing to gain rather than a disadvantage by adopting the recommendation. The Search and Governance committee felt confident that the current arrangements were effective, and that was best evidenced by the college's improved financial performance in the past year. There is robust challenge by two Link Governors. Finance is the only area scrutinised by two governors. The FD meets with the Link Governors independently as well as with the Principal and Chair half termly. Regular Link Governor meetings are reported to the Audit Committee. The college has a whistleblowing policy in the event that the Principal puts undue pressure on the Finance Director.</p> <p><b>Approved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Corporation approved the following with regard to the pensions of staff employed by One Garden Brighton limited:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Auto-enrolment will begin on completion of 3 months service</b></li> <li>○ <b>NEST will be the pension provider for One Garden</b></li> <li>○ <b>8% minimum contribution rate be adopted; 3% employer and 5% employee</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Appoint Mike Atkinson for a one year term of office at the end of his current term of office ending 5th December 2019.</b></li> <li>• <b>Appoint John Evans for one final, one year term of office at the end of his current term of office ending 15th December 2019.</b></li> <li>• <b>Appoint John Moore-Bick for one term of office of four years when his term of office ends on 14th December 2019.</b></li> <li>• <b>Link Governor Allocation for 2019/20.</b></li> <li>• <b>To <u>not</u> implement the FE Commissioner recommendation 'As a matter of urgency the College Governors should make the director of finance post a senior post holder position' accountable to the Board' but continue to use all of the existing mechanisms by which to seek assurance and triangulate information in order to maintain confidence in the college's financial management.</b></li> </ul>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Principals report</b></p> <p>The Principal highlighted key items in his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The college has over the past month successfully recruited high calibre candidates to both the Head of Estates and Head of Account Management roles. The college was unsuccessful in appointing a new Head of Finance, and have engaged an agency to lead on a targeted</li> </ul>		

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	<p>recruitment campaign. The agency have sent the college an impressive CV, who will be interviewed later in the week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMT have recently reviewed the post staff survey action plan, and agreed for it to be shared with staff across the college as part of a consultation exercise after half term. A range of new staff recognition proposals will also be shared. Governors have been invited to these breakfast meetings.</li> <li>• The college has chosen to end its association with East Sussex Proficiency Test Council, who are based at Plumpton and provide the assessment service to internal and external customers for their competency qualifications. The college currently provides the training element of these programmes and having an external and separate organisation arrange the assessment has led to an unnecessary level of bureaucracy whilst not meeting employer and student needs. The college will undertake the co-ordination of assessment itself as of April 2020.</li> <li>• 2019/20 Student Recruitment – Apprenticeships and Part Time is a risk. Alison Kent has targeted specific actions via the new Business Planning process to address this.</li> <li>• Strategic Planning is a key action in the next reporting period. The Governors and CMT Strategic Planning process begins with the first workshop setting the context for our annual review of our strategy. This will be followed by our AGM in January, which will combine with Curriculum Advisory Panels for every subject area (to which members of Corporation are invited to attend to meet respective employers). Subsequent to this, Corporation and CMT will meet separately to identify key strategic and operational development priorities for the rest of the year, and headlines from each will be shared with Corporation in March.</li> </ul> <p><i>Q: In the report you have identified, in conjunction with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), two new areas for development. What information do you have to justify the demand?</i></p> <p>A: RAU have more expertise than us and they believe there is an untapped market in the South East. Both programmes will commence in September 2021, so there is time to test the market through seminars and events.</p> <p><i>Observation; Care is needed to not dilute the brand.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Is the college overtrading? Is this too much on top of everything else?</i></p> <p>A: The programmes are due to start in 2021 rather than 2020 to allow the college to resource and develop the programmes.</p> <p><i>Q: The period 2 management accounts have been RAG rated green, how can you justify this when the figure for PO' use is so disappointing?</i></p> <p>A: The PO usage is as at the end of September, staff briefing and training took place throughout September so there will be a lag. PO usage has increased from 47% in August to 59% in September. Work has been completed with</p>		

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	<p>procurement partners for catering and the farm. The Principal clarified that the green rating related to the financial position, not the PO usage.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the Booker Annual Graduation will be held at Plumpton College, which is a signal of a good partnership.</p>		
<p>GOV/19 20/</p>	<p><b>Curriculum and Quality</b> Alison Kent highlighted key points from her report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The attendance rate was 84% at the time of reporting, this is currently 87%. This behind the college target of 90%, and is primarily linked to administrative changes to registers through changes to student groups and students choosing to transfer to another course and will be resolved by half term. At risk students are being actively monitored with a number receiving tight targets linked to attendance. Newly appointed progress coaches are settling into their role and their key target at the start of this year has been to focus on daily attendance monitoring with Programme Managers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Q: Why do you have a target of 90%? This is equivalent to one day off every two weeks. Are there any national figures published?</i> Ofsted consider an attendance rate of 86-7% as good/very good. There is an expectation that students will attend all of the time. There is a strong correlation between attendance and achievement. If a student is not in a lesson for whatever reason they are marked as absent. There is no such thing as authorised absence. If a student is not in a lesson, they are not benefiting from the excellent teaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student recruitment: Part time programmes - areas of significant under recruitment: Horticulture – RHS and Practical Horticulture, Flourish; Floristry; Dog Grooming – L2; Welding and Blacksmithing. These areas are where significant adult education funding is earned. Curriculum Managers in all these areas, and Animal management, Equine/AES and Wine, have been asked to plan additional AEB funded provision for Q2, 3 and 4 for sign off at October Performance and Planning meetings.</li> <li>Apprentices – Following Summer Apprenticeship recruitment campaigns, and challenges to timely apprenticeship recruitment due to positive changes in the Account Management team through new staff appointments who started in September, the following areas will require recruitment targets revising upwards for January starts: Veterinary Nursing; Arboriculture; Greenkeeping; LBSE; Bakery; Butchery.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion took place regarding working with SME's to increase apprenticeship numbers, recent growth in apprenticeship numbers has</p>		

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	largely been due to national contracts with levy paying employers. The Account Management team will also cross sell full cost and AEB funded courses to employers.		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>DRAFT Annual Report and Accounts</b></p> <p>Chris Knell advised that the draft Annual Report shows a surplus of £239k, however through the Audit process this is expected to reduce down to £59k (before FRS 102 adjustments), which is in line with the forecast at the end of last year.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding provision for the Environment Agency fine. This has been treated as a contingent liability in the Accounts since 2016, due to the uncertainty around the timing and amount of any fine. A date has been set for the court case early in 2020 and the college legal advisors have now provided an expert opinion on the value of the fine. Provision will therefore be made in the 2018/19 accounts. The year-end position will remain a surplus.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the £688k pension adjustment. The FD reminded governors that this is not a financial transaction, it relates to the future liability. The bank and the ESFA both add this amount back when assessing the financial health of the college.</p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Management Accounts P2</b></p> <p>Members noted the period two management accounts. The FD advised that the first round of Performance Planning meetings (PPM) took place in September looking at enrolments, class sizes and staffing. The second round of PPM meetings are now taking place.</p> <p>The surplus remains unchanged at £300k, this includes a £400k contingency, which has increased from £330k due to over achievement of procurement. Governors expressed concern at the number of variances to budget at the end of period two. A governor referred to page two of the accounts where all variances were marked as red and asked whether this was normal for this time of year.</p> <p>The FD advised that income was aligned to the curriculum plan, at the end of the 42 day window this will be amended to actual enrolment numbers rather than curriculum planning.</p> <p>Interim Managers have been appointed to ensure that no middle manager positions are vacant. This is at a higher cost, actions have been taken to manage and mitigate pressures.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding budget profiling. Over the summer the college moved to a new contract with a new supplier for buses. This changed how tickets were sold which will alter the profile of payments. The FD does not want to alter the budget due to the variance. The profile for the 2020/21 budget will be amended accordingly.</p> <p>The FD reported that he, and the Principal, had met with the ESFA as part of the early intervention. The college expects ESFA monitoring to be transferred back to the Relationship Manager in the new year.</p> <p>Governors expressed concern that the ESFA do not involve governors in the</p>		



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	<p>early intervention. There is no direct contact. Governors meet with Ofsted and the FE Commissioner, but not the ESFA. Governors would encourage ESFA to engage with the Audit Committee to ensure that there is a proper grip on controls.</p> <p><b>Action: Minutes of the meeting with ESFA to be circulated to Corporation.</b></p> <p>Discussion took place regarding improving consistency of reporting risk to Corporation. It was agreed that the KPI data dashboard will allow easy observation and focus on key areas of risk. The SMT front sheet with SMT judgements will highlight risks to governors.</p> <p><i>Q: What has been done to anticipate the implications of Brexit on the college?</i>  A: SMT have considered the implications of Brexit, in particular a no deal brexit at SMT meetings. The Farm executive committee have discussed the impact of Brexit.</p> <p><b>Action: Principal to include implications of Brexit in the Principals summary report for November.</b></p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Working Capital for subsidiary</b></p> <p>The Finance Director provided a summary of the paper circulated regarding the college providing working capital for the subsidiary One Garden Brighton Ltd. Along with the incorporation of the One Garden subsidiary, a facilities agreement and loan agreement have been put in place. This is to ensure the ownership assets utilised by One Garden remain with the College, including the initial loan of working capital for cashflow purposes.</p> <p>A key objective of the One Garden subsidiary is to generate revenues that make the Stanmer campus cost neutral to the College. On this basis the working capital has been calculated on a cautious basis, using the independently verified business plan, and excluding any income generation related to education and training activity.</p> <p>Working capital has been calculated based upon cash payments estimate and excludes non-cash items such as Depreciation and transfers between the College and Subsidiary such as professional service overheads.</p> <p>The subsidiary has a requirement for working capital from November 2019 to September 2021, peaking at £250k in May 2020.</p> <p><b>Approved:</b>  <b>Corporation approved £250k working capital to be provided to One Garden Brighton Ltd.</b></p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Loan Facility</b></p> <p>The college has the following loan requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £4m (existing £2.2m loan, £800k for Stanmer and £1m working capital)</li> <li>• £3.6m for the AgriFood project</li> </ul> <p>The college received a proposal from Lloyds for the £4m loan in May 19. The Finance Link Governors (Mike Atkinson and Helen Atkinson) and the FD are reviewing the detail of the £4m loan. Lloyds are due to produce the final</p>		

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	<p>credit terms within the next week. It is anticipated that agreement will be sought from Corporation via correspondence for the loan prior to the next Corporation meeting.</p> <p>The college also has a £1m facility with Sancus. None of this facility is drawn down at the moment. The college is also exploring alternative options for this facility.</p>		
<p>GOV/19 20/</p>	<p><b>Progress against FEC Action Plan</b></p> <p>Members noted the good progress made on the action plan. Discussion took place regarding the RAG rating on the plan, which is subjective.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding actions arising from recommendation 12 in relation to the inconsistency of group and personal tutorials and monitoring of student progress and poor progress measures for English and mathematics. The actions are marked green as they are completed, governors were keen to understand what impact these actions have had. A report on the impact of progress coaches will be presented to SMT two weeks after half term. The compliance and impact of many of the actions will be reported through the ODP.</p> <p><b>Action: Final update of the Action Plan and impact statement to be presented to the November Corporation meeting.</b></p>	<p>JK</p>	<p>Nov 19</p>
<p>GOV/19 20/</p>	<p><b>Operational Development Plan 2019/20 (ODP) – Strategic Aim 1</b></p> <p>Alison Kent highlighted key points from Sam Coles Teaching and Learning – Operational Development Plan Implementation report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching Learning and Assessment: There has been good progress towards training of Curriculum Managers to complete observations using the new observation model. Clear planning towards the college INSET day in November where all teaching facing staff will take part in lesson study activity. Alison Kent and Jeremy Kerswell will take part in the INSET day on 6<sup>th</sup> November.</li> <li>• Group Tutorials: A Differentiated Group Tutorial Programme has been planned for the whole academic year with associated resources available. Learning Walks to assess the quality of Group Tutorials taking place with a report due in Nov 2019</li> <li>• 1:1 Tutorials: Training on how to conduct 1:1 tutorials has been completed with all Progress coaches and Personal Tutors. First 42 day 1:1 tutorials are taking place, with reporting on progress at 42 Day Academic Boards week commenting 14 October 2019.</li> </ul>		
<p>GOV/19 20/</p>	<p><b>NSS Student Survey and Action Plan</b></p> <p>Alison Kent referred members to the above report. The National Student Survey (NSS) is a key performance indicator to measure student experience and satisfaction in HE institutions. The overall satisfaction rate is the only figure that is published. The college were disappointed with an overall satisfaction of 64% (down from 68% the previous year). Of the other 27 questions, 24 showed a significant improvement. There was a 38%</p>		

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	<p>improvement in satisfaction regarding the timeliness of feedback, alongside the 25% improvement in regards to the helpfulness of feedback. Student Voice satisfaction has also improved by almost 20%, demonstrating that the collaborative approach to quality enhancement employed by HE staff is valued by students.</p> <p>Governors felt that the overall satisfaction figure did not correlate with the responses from the rest of the questions. If the overall satisfaction had been calculated from the response to the other questions it would have been higher.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding actions as a result of the survey including increasing the response rate as only 45 students responded to the survey and student engagement to understand the dissatisfaction.</p> <p>A governor asked how many responses were 'sitting on the fence' with the response. Work with another organisation to encourage people to leave a positive or negative response, had increased scores.</p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Strategic Project Updates</b></p> <p>Members noted the Stanmer Park Project Update and GDPR update. The Principal advised that planting days were being scheduled further details will be circulated to governors in due course.</p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Environmental Policy Annual Report</b></p> <p>The college is still waiting for the data on solar energy generation needed to complete the environmental policy report. This item was deferred to the November Corporation meeting.</p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>Impact of Governance in month</b></p> <p>Stan Stanier and Jeremy Kerswell spent a day with game keeping students. They joined a shoot, with paying customers, which had been organised by the students. It was a privilege see the students in action and to interact directly with the students who were a credit to the college.</p> <p>Leeni Lear joined the MMM students to learn about different types of engines as part of her 'follow a cohort' pilot. Whilst Leeni did not feel qualified to comment on the quality of the teaching, she said the lesson was fine.</p> <p>Doug Jackson and Helen Atkinson had met with members of the Senior Management Team as part of their new governor induction which included a tour of the campus.</p> <p>Doug Jackson and John Evans attended the NFU Farm walk at the college. The Farm looked clean, animals well looked after and staff gave a good explanation of what is happening on the farm and the plans for the future with the Agri-Food Centre.</p>		
GOV/19 20/	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that he had received a letter from the Office for Students (OfS) regarding compliance with regulatory deadlines. A copy of the letter had been added to the governor's portal for all governors to read. The letter reminds governing bodies that they are responsible for ensuring that all on-</p>		

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	<p>going conditions of registration are met.  Plumpton College has failed to complete the following annual regulatory requirement on time:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Payment of fees to the Designated Quality Body (DQB).  250 providers failed to pay the above by the deadline.  The OfS consider a breach of a requirement to submit regulatory information to be particularly serious. On this occasion the OfS has decided that it will not take enforcement action, as the OfS recognises that this is the first time that most HE providers have been faced with this type of regulatory requirement underpinned by statute. The OfS also recognises that the culture of previous regulatory regimes was different. In the future the OfS would expect to take enforcement action. The maximum penalty for each breach is either 2% of a providers qualifying income, or £500,000 which ever is greater.  The Chair asked the Senior Management Team to explain the reason the deadline was missed, and the steps that will be taken to prevent a recurrence. The Finance Director explained that the payment of fees to the Designated Quality Body related to an invoice from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for £1,950. This invoice was paid on the 45<sup>th</sup> day rather than 30<sup>th</sup> day. The invoice was not paid within 30 days as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The invoice was sent to an individual member of staff in the HE department on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. The college has written to all suppliers requesting that all invoices are sent to a central accounts department e-mail address. This inbox is monitored by a number of staff to ensure prompt processing of invoices and ensure that there are no delays when a member of staff takes annual leave. This is particularly important over the summer when many staff take leave and may be away from the office for two or three weeks, or more.</li> <li>• There was no purchase order on the invoice, causing delays to processing.</li> <li>• There was no reference of the importance of the invoice being paid on time on the invoice.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>The FD assured governors that late payment had not been due to managing cash flow.  The FD outlined steps that have been taken to prevent a reoccurrence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Accounts department contacted QAA to set up a Direct Debit to ensure payments are made on time (this has been set up for payments to OfS to ensure compliance). Unfortunately the QAA do not accept Direct Debits.</li> <li>• The college has repeated the request to QAA for invoices to be sent to the central accounts department e-mail address.</li> <li>• The payment terms for QAA on the system have been changed from '30 days' to 'immediate payment'.</li> </ul> </p>		

Meeting closed at 7.40pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_