

**EXTRA  
CORPORATION MEETING  
Tuesday 26 January 2021 – 5.30pm  
MINUTES**

***Meeting conducted remotely via Teams***

Chaired by: Steve Oldridge

Members present: Ian Brabbs            Mick Paxton            Andy Gregory            Gareth Bullen  
Ros Jones            Hilary Ascott            Darren Mundy            Andy Bailey  
Phil Rumsey            Karina Jarmany

In attendance: Lesley Clemmet, Director of Finance & Resources

Minutes taken by: Heather Campbell – Clerk to the Corporation

**1. Apologies for Absence**

- a. Apologies were received from Jason Saunby, Kieren Moore, Michael McCluskie and Neil Hughes.
- b. The meeting was quorate with 11 members present remotely via Teams.

**2. Declaration of any personal conflicts of interest**

None raised.

**3. Reports and recommendations from committees**

- a **Extra Audit Committee 13 January 2021 see *confidential minutes***
- b **Extra Finance & Estates Committee 19 January 2021 see *confidential minutes***

**4. Approve Updated Standing Orders**

The Chair referred to the highlighted amendments in the Standing Orders (SOs) and asked Ian to comment on the proposed amendments.

Ian reminded the Members that until the SOs and the Instrument and Articles of Government (I&As) (as to which see item 5 below) had been amended to facilitate the Corporation holding its meetings remotely it would not be possible for the Corporation to approve the proposed amendments and that the purpose of the meeting was to obtain the views of the Members on the wording of the proposed amendments with a view to bringing the amended SOs (and I&As) back to the Corporation for formal approval at the next face to face meeting of the Corporation.

Ian observed that at the December Corporation meeting he had picked up an action to consider the wording of the proposed amendment to the Parent Governor Recruitment process in both the SOs and the I&As and also look at enabling the Corporation and its Committees to conduct business remotely . He referred Members to the proposed new wording to the amendment to the Standing Orders:

### *2.6 Filling Vacancies*

*ii) All applicants for a Parent Governor post will be asked to complete a standard pro-forma outlining the reasons for their application and will be asked to attend an informal interview with the Principal and the Chair of the Corporation before a recommendation on the appointment is made to the Corporation by the Search Committee.*

The new wording removes the need for an election as previously agreed by Members but ensures that the views of the Principal and the Chair on the suitability of a Parent Applicant are subject to the scrutiny of the Search Committee.

Hilary asked why if more than two parents wanted to apply to be Parent Governors, they should not be elected by other parents and whether Parent Governors were on the Board to represent the interests of parents.

Ian advised that Staff, Student and Parent Governors were not on the Board to represent the interests of staff, students or parents. Although they were always entitled to put forward the staff, student or parent point of view their duty was always to act in the best interests of the Corporation.

The Chair observed that the Corporation had never had more than two parents apply to be Parent Governors. He further observed that it had been extremely difficult over the past couple of years to recruit Parent Governors and suspected that the election process put parents off. The Search committee had previously proposed that the Corporation adopt the practice used across the college sector where the Chair and Principal hold an informal interview with interested parents and make a report to the Search Committee who would then recommend the Corporation approve the appointment(s) which proposal had been previously accepted in principle by the Members.

Ian advised that the wording of the proposed amendments to the SOs (and I&As) to authorise the holding of 'remote meetings' was based on a number of different precedents he had looked at. The proposed amendment to the SOs was as follows:

## 3 Conduct of Meetings

### 3.1 Meetings

*Subject to the provisions of paragraph 12(7) of the Instrument and Articles of Government any meeting of the Corporation or its Committees may take place with one or more members in attendance by means of video conferencing or otherwise provided that all the members in attendance at the meeting whether in person or virtually are able both to see and to hear each other.*

The intention is to insert this amendment as a new third sub-paragraph in paragraph 3.

Ian believed that it was important that whatever arrangements were made for non-face to face meetings the members in attendance should all be able to see and hear each other.

The proposed additional amendments to both the SOs were to provide for the remote attendance of a member to count towards the quoracy of a meeting.

Phil raised a point in respect of the previously amended provisions in the SOs (and I&As) with regard to the appointment of Student Governors. It was his understanding that the Members had previously agreed to dispense with elections for Student Governors which turned into a popularity contest and were off putting to potential Student Governors Phil noted that there was still reference to Student Governor elections in both the SOs (and I&As). Phil proposed that potential Student Governors should be interviewed by him alone and that his recommendation would then be considered by the Search Committee before a recommendation was made to the Corporation similar to intended procedure for the appointment of Parent Governors.

Ian noted he had previously removed the election requirement for Student Governors but believed that he had been asked to re-instate the election provision for where there was more than 3 applicants. He agreed to remove the election procedure for Student Governors and incorporate Phil's preferred appointment process.

The Chair asked members if they were in agreement with the proposed amendments to the SOs subject to the changes to the wording of the amendments as discussed during the meeting with the intention that the amended SOs would be brought back for the formal approval of the Members at the next face to face meeting of the Corporation.

#### **AGREEMENT**

The Corporation agreed to the proposed amendments to the SOs with regard to the appointment process for Parent and Student Governors and the holding of remote meetings subject to formal approval of the final wording of the amendments at a future meeting of the Corporation.

### **5. Approve Updated Instrument & Articles of Government**

The Chair having reminded Members of the comments made by Ian when considering the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders (SOs) referred to the proposed amendments to the Instrument and Articles of Government (I&As) in paragraphs 2(1)(f) and 12(7) in respect of the appointment of Parent Governors and the holding of remote meetings which mirror the amendments made to the SOs and asked for comments.

Hilary advised that when recent meetings were held on site and she attended remotely she could not hear what was being said.

Ian referred to the wording of the proposed amendment which made it a requirement of any meeting held remotely that all members should be able to see and hear each other which provision dealt with Hilary's understandable concern. The practical problems experienced by Hilary would need to be addressed for any future meeting held remotely so that the meeting complied with the provisions of the I&As.

Andy Bailey questioned the expectation in the proposed amendment that Members would attend meetings in person unless it was not practicable. His belief was that with the increasing advancement in technology remote meetings may become the norm.

Phil observed that if remote votes did not count then the votes in the current meeting would not count.

Ian confirmed that until the I&As were amended to facilitate remote meetings remote attendance did not count for the purposes of the quoracy requirements. .

The Chair interjected at this point and suggested delegating the change of wording to facilitate remote meetings to the Search Committee to give further consideration in the light of the comments made by Members.

Members agreed this would be appropriate.

The Chair asked members if they were in agreement with the proposed amendments to the Instrument & Articles of Government in respect of the appointment of Parent Governors and the holding of remote meetings subject to wording in respect of remote meetings to be referred to the Search Committee.

#### **AGREEMENT**

The Corporation agreed to the proposed amendments to the I&As with regard to the appointment process for Parent Governors and the holding of remote meetings subject to formal approval of the final wording of the amendments at a future meeting of the Corporation.

#### **6. Approve the College's Self-Assessment Report 2019-20**

The Chair referred to the Report which had been forwarded to Members before the meeting and advised that Member feedback on the SAR to Tania, Assistant Principal had enabled her to finalise the Report. The Chair observed that previously a Principal from another college would have been asked to come in and ratify the SAR.

Phil advised that while this used to be the practice this was no longer the position as the majority of the colleges felt that this was a self-assessment and did not need ratifying externally. Phil also observed that he was aware that the majority of the colleges have not done a SAR for 2019-20 due to the Covid pandemic but that Senior Management felt the College should do the SAR. He further observed that the SAR had followed the Ofsted grades for the College. Although the centrally assessed grades in the summer were higher nationally the College had kept its grades in line with previous years.

Chair observed that he felt that the SAR clarifies what the Members want to know about the College performance.

Darren noted that in the SAR some subjects were at the same stage as they were 18 months ago and asked how management tracked these.

Phil replied that the College was making progress on quality with the stringent quality processes that Assistant Principal had implemented across all departments and reflected in what management saw in lesson walks. To help monitor the quality of remote learning the AP was putting in place an electronic questionnaire to students and parents to find out how remote learning was going from their perspective. The Heads of Department are asked to monitor their departments and teachers are being asked to teach 2 live lessons remotely and set work for the 3<sup>rd</sup> lesson, although there are some practical subjects where setting work is not possible. Management will resume lesson walks when students are back in College to monitor how much the students have learnt in lockdown.

The Chair highlighted that the acid test is results but once again that is not going to apply for this year. He asked Members if they were any further matters or questions and none were raised. He asked Members if they were prepared to approve the Report.

Members agreed to approve the College SAR Report 2019-20.

### **APPROVED**

The Corporation approved the College Self-Assessment Report 2019-20.

## **7. Considerer any items discussed to be classified as “Confidential / Restricted”**

Members considered the items discussed during the meeting and agreed that Item 3 a and b be classified as confidential.

## **8. Any Other Business**

The Chair asked Phil to give members an update on the impact of Covid on the College and the position in respect of the current lockdown.

Phil advised that there is a weekly standing item on the CMT Agenda to discuss and monitor the impact of Covid / lockdown and noted the following:

- As mentioned above an electronic questionnaire has been set up for parents and student to give feedback on how remote learning is going for them
- HoDs will be asked to discuss remote learning and how it is going for their staff and then feedback to the AP which she will share with CMT
- No issues have been raised with management from staff who are teaching their students as well as having to home-school their children but management are well aware of the stress lockdown is having on staff and students
- There is a good level of engagement by students as it is regularly emphasised that the work they put in in lockdown would be taking into account at the end of their course
- Re-opening after February half term is looking highly unlikely – Government have said they will give 2 weeks’ notice but the College would be able to start on a day’s notice
- Mass testing – original guidance was students / staff who had close contact with someone who tested positive for Covid did not have to isolate and instead could be tested daily in the College -, the guidance has now reverted back and they now have to isolate and not come on site

- Approximately 6 - 10 students are using the LRC IT facilities on a daily basis
- Tutors have been asked to let Senior Management know of students that are not engaging or struggling to work from home and the Vice Principal is inviting them to come into the College to study, which some having taken up on the offer
- The College is holding a Virtual Open Event tonight for Yr11s and the message so far is it is going well

The Chair asked about CAGs and assessment for end of year courses and what was happening with these.

Phil advised the government have cancelled end of course exams this year although he was not sure why but suspects that it is because a lot of learning has been lost and the belief that disadvantaged students are behind in their learning which is not the case for the College students. Assessments in schools and colleges are likely to be small exams marked by the teachers. There are a lot of consultations going on at the moment by the DfE and Ofqual which will close on 29 January, but suspect in reality the decisions have been made. Grades will be set by teachers and not centrally assessed grades but that grades will be moderated meaning results likely to be high again this year. How moderation will take place is not clear but possibly colleges may assess each other. The exam results process will be the same as last year and students will not be able to appeal their grades unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The Chair asked what the university reactions would be if lots of students achieve high grades again.

Phil was aware that Oxbridge had made fewer offers although the College had 5 students who had received offers from them so far which was good.

Darren observed that it is difficult for universities to make the right recruitment decisions when schools and colleges inflate grades. There is a UCAS consultation at the moment on whether students should apply after or before they get their results which is a concern for universities. Also UCAS have published a report that makes interesting reading to the effect that the inequality gaps have reduced but only when we are at the other side of the Covid pandemic will we be able to tell what level students will achieve.

The Chair noted that the government had published its White Paper on Further Education and asked Phil to comment.

Phil observed that the SFCA had advised that there was very little in the White Paper relating to sixth form colleges and the SFCA had gone back to the government on their proposals for sixth form academies.

The Chair asked if there were any other business.

*No further matters were raised and the meeting closed at 6.40pm*