

## Minutes of a Meeting of the CORPORATION held on Wednesday 9 October 2024 at College Business Centre

### **110/24 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME**

Apologies were received from Mrs Sandie Paice and Mrs Christine Palmer. Dr Judith Abbott and Mrs Rebecca Taylor were welcomed to their first meeting as were the proposed Student Governors for 2024/25.

### **111/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **112/24 APPROVAL OF THE NON-CONFIDENTIAL AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD 10 JULY 2024**

The non-confidential and confidential minutes of the meeting held 10 July 2024 were approved as a true record.

### **113/24 APPROVAL OF THE CONFIDENTIAL CAPITAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2024**

The confidential minutes of the Capital Committee meeting held 10 July 2024 were approved as a true record.

The Committee were thanked for their work which would now be taken forward by the new Finance and Resources Committee.

### **114/24 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Director of Governance reported on Matters Arising.

The Chair noted that there were a number of actions outstanding or in progress. It was agreed that some of the actions would now be the focus of the new Committees. The Principal reported that whilst it was too early for achievement data to come to Corporation it would be tabled for the proposed Curriculum & Quality Committee.

The Corporation NOTED the report for Information and ASSURANCE.

### **115/24 APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNORS**

The proposed Student Governors departed the meeting for this item.

The Chair of the Search & Governance Committee outlined the process for recruitment and appointment. The reappointment of one of the Student Governors who had served in 2023/24 was recommended to draw on the Student Governor's experience.

The Corporation APPROVED the appointment of Student Governors for 2024/25 as follows:

- Re-appointed Raquel Morisini for one academic year until 31 July 2025; and
- Appointed Matthew Bateman and Jack Jones for one academic year until 31 July 2025 with the option of re-appointment for one further year subject to eligibility, attendance and contribution.

The appointed Student Governors re-joined the meeting and were welcomed to Corporation and congratulated on their appointment.

The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO joined the meeting at this point.

### **116/24 CORPORATION STRUCTURE**

The Director of Governance reported on the proposed governance structure.

The Chair expressed a desire to recruit Co-opted Members in order to widen expertise and encourage those who may not have sufficient time to serve as a Governor. She asked for suggestions for potential Co-optees to be made to the Director of Governance.

The Chair asked that a further review of the Curriculum & Quality terms of reference be undertaken to provide better consistency with the other Committee terms of reference and in particular in including its purpose as providing assurance to the Corporation. The Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee considered the terms of reference to be a useful starting point and suggested that the Committee consider a review at a future meeting.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the Corporation size and composition and APPROVED:

- The Corporation Membership as a total of 18 Members;
- The Committee Membership and Chairs for 2024/25;
- The Designated Lead Governors;
- The renewal of term of Mr Chris Goddard as co-opted Member to the Finance & Resources Committee from 12 October 2024 to 11 October 2026; and
- The Committee Terms of Reference for the Audit & Risk; Curriculum & Quality; Finance & Resources; and Search, Governance & Remuneration Committees.

### **117/24 GOVERNOR ANNUAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 23/24**

The Director of Governance presented the Governor Annual Attendance report for 2023/24. The Search & Governance Committee had recommended a target attendance of 90%. After some discussion it was agreed that the target would be across all events rather than for each individual Committee.

A query was raised as to why the target was different for Governor Updating Sessions. The Director of Governance responded that this appeared to be an historic target. In response to a further query she confirmed that Governor Updating Sessions would take place via online briefings that could be viewed at a time convenient to Governors.

The Corporation NOTED the report for Information and ASSURANCE.

### **118/24 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The Corporation APPROVED the recommendation that all confidential minutes from 2023/24 are designated as non-confidential and published on the College website with the exception of those that meet specific criteria.

### **119/24 USE OF THE CORPORATION SEAL 2023/24**

The Corporation NOTED that the Corporation seal was not used during 2023/24.

### **120/24 CORPORATION SELF-ASSESSMENT REVIEW (SAR)**

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report and:

- NOTED that a governance self-assessment is due every year except in the year of an external review and therefore a separate governance self-assessment is not due for 2023/24; and
- APPROVED the recommendation that the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee are tasked with making recommendations for a governance self-assessment for 2024/25 against the adopted revised Further Education Code of Good Governance.

### **121/24 CHAIR'S BUSINESS/RATIFICATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION/GOVERNOR APPROVALS**

The Chair reported that the Vice Chair had represented the College at the Lord-Lieutenant's Awards Evening. She was meeting the external auditors as part of the annual audit process. She was also hosting a lunch at College and invited guests included the Chief Executive of the Isle of Wight Youth Trust, members of the Youth Council, and Ms Raquel Morisini, Student Governor.

### **122/24 BANK SIGNATORIES**

The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO proposed amendments to the bank signatories (bank mandates) and administrators.

There was some discussion regarding whether the Principal should have access but it was confirmed that this had not historically been done and was not normal practice.

A Member suggested that future proofing was built in to include the Director of Finance when appointed. He also suggested a review of payment limits.

The Corporation APPROVED the corrections to bank signatories (bank mandates) and bank administrators held centrally by Barclays Bank as stated in the report.

The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO left the meeting.

With the permission of the Chair the agenda was taken out of order.

### **123/24 SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Assistant Principal (SEND and Foundation Skills) joined the meeting and presented the Safeguarding Policy. She alerted the Corporation to recent changes in safeguarding legislation that impact the College's policies and procedures as per *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (published 01/09/2024); and to safeguarding data from the last academic year. She assured the Corporation on compliance with current safeguarding legislation and best practice; the effectiveness of safeguarding measures; and the robustness of reporting and monitoring systems to ensure timely and appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns. She confirmed that interim approval of the Safeguarding Policy had been given by the Designated Safeguarding Lead Governor who confirmed that she met with the Safeguarding team on a half-termly basis.

The Support Staff Governor queried the link to the safeguarding flowchart and the Assistant Principal confirmed that this was accessible on the staff platform.

A Member asked for more information on the statistics from the student survey. The Assistant Principal confirmed that further information would be provided in the Annual Safeguarding Report tabled for consideration by Curriculum & Quality Committee. A Member enquired whether Members should be alarmed at the increase in incidences. The Assistant Principal responded that there were new methods for picking up concerns, such as FastVue monitoring online safety, and therefore the figures were not comparative. The Principal confirmed that reporting had improved and therefore there was an increase.

The Corporation NOTED the report and APPROVED the Safeguarding Policy.

The Assistant Principal (SEND and Foundation Skills) left the meeting.

The agenda returned to order.

### **124/24 BALANCED SCORECARD**

The Principal presented the Balanced Scorecard. This was a new report and she welcomed feedback.

Members welcomed the style of the report and particularly praised its ability to indicate progress. It was also welcomed that it was not heavy on narrative and key performance indicators (KPIs).

A Member suggested that there should be a distinction between the economic growth of the Island and the College's contribution to this.

A Member asked for reporting to be included on EHCP (Early Health and Care Plans) or high-needs learners, and for comparison on retention and pass rates. The Principal said that this was tabled for Curriculum & Quality Committee.

A Member enquired regarding the development of KPIs. The Principal outlined this and concluded that it would be useful for Committees to interrogate these. She said there was a shift in resources in learning that had moved a long way but there was still an issue with students accessing digital resources. The Student Governors were asked for their experience and one confirmed that she brought her own laptop and another Student Governor said that there were College iPads but that they were quite old. Another Student Governor said that there weren't many iPads but he could probably find one if he needed to.

A Member enquired regarding measures monitoring Cyber Essentials and marketing indicators. The Principals confirmed that Cyber Essentials had been achieved. She added that there was data on when systems needed to be renewed and updated and agreed that it would be useful for Governors to see and be aware of this. She added that the Marketing department were currently working on a dashboard.

A Member queried whether where targets were met these should be indicated in green rather than amber. The Principal explained that the rationale was that if the indicator data stayed the same it was amber but that where there was an improvement it was green. She concluded that she could have another look at the rationale.

A Member enquired of the work involved in producing the scorecard and asked if this would supersede the KPIs. The Principal confirming that this would supersede the KPIs and said that a lot of the data would be automated from systems. She added that monthly reporting was required for funders and that the information from that would be layered into the scorecard.

A Member suggested adding a data sort facility.

The Chair said it was important that the monitoring of KPIs was not lost whilst the scorecard was being developed. The Principal responded that this was being compared with KPIs and items not needed were being removed with measures being linked to the strategic priorities.

The Principal thanked Members for their feedback as she developed the scorecard.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the Balanced Scorecard.

## **125/24 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal assured Members regarding current enrolment trends for 2024/25 (R04); progress on capital projects within T Levels, Institute of Technology (IoT), and the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF); the financial outturn for 2023/24; and adult funding achievement 2023/24 (R14). She alerted Members to achievement rates for 2023/24 (R14); financial projections for 2024/25; the Transformation Fund Capital Project; and the government changes regarding the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) whose functions are being transferred to the Department for Education, and the emerging concept of Skills England.

She provided a verbal update on growing the higher level qualifications offer and building international relationships with Thailand and China. She reported on liaison with the Isle of Wight Council regarding student accommodation and on a visit to a college in the Outer Hebrides.

A Member asked if this would be a subcontract to a university and if so which one and who would be responsible for managing visas. The Principal confirmed that visas would be managed by the university the student was enrolled with. She added that the Isle of Wight College was a University Centre and that qualifications were delivered through contracts with the Universities of Chichester, Portsmouth, and Solent respectively. There was some further discussion regarding the benefit of bringing international learners in terms of inclusion and diversity, and economic benefit for the Island. It was anticipated that this would create a more viable cohort of learners and build up higher level of qualifications as a whole on the Island.

A Member enquired whether the numbers for apprenticeship rates were at normal levels. The Principal responded that they were lower than normal but that there were a further 70 apprentices in train and being onboarded. She added that there were some areas for improvement in apprenticeships.

In response to a query from a Member the Principal confirmed that functional skills in English and maths were not being delivered for 16-18 year olds this year. The poor performance in schools was driving the higher number of students joining College without GCSEs and therefore there was a need to focus on this. In response to a further query she confirmed that the College is the only general further education (FE) college on the Island providing the majority of 16-18 provision apart from a small number of independent and private providers, and schools offering A Levels.

The Corporation NOTED the report and APPROVED the approach for an informal gathering for a soft launch of CECAMM with an official opening at a later date.

#### **126/24 STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2030 AND LAUNCH COMMUNICATION PLAN**

The Principal presented a slightly revised Strategic Plan which had incorporated further feedback. She outlined the approach on communicating this with staff and wider rollout. It was noted that there were some typos and that this would be finessed. There was positive feedback from Governors on the direction of travel and communications approach.

The Corporation APPROVED amendments to the Strategic Plan 2024-2030.

#### **127/24 ACHIEVEMENT – EXCEPTION REPORT**

The Principal presented an exception report on achievement. She alerted the Corporation to issues of low and late achievement outlined in the report and the potential impact on student success and on College results and recommended that this be monitored by the Curriculum & Quality Committee. The Principal reported on ongoing monitoring meetings that were seeing numbers improve, and the Chair confirmed that she had attended a monitoring meeting that day.

The Chair expressed concern for students first and foremost. She thanked the Principal for alerting Governors but said that it was necessary for systems to be in place to ensure issues are alerted earlier. The Principal outlined improvement work that was being undertaken.

A Member asked whether predictions were accurate. The Principal responded that predictions had been ambitious overall and there were particular areas of concern, for example in functional skills.

The Chair concluded that this was a fundamental role for Governors and that it was important that the Corporation and the College was on top of this. She thanked the Principal for her openness and transparency.

The Corporation NOTED the report and were ALERTED to the issues of low and late achievement.

#### **128/24 STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT**

The Student Governors stated that they did not wish to give a report at this time as they had only just started in role for the year.

The Chair asked whether there was anything further that could be done to assist them in their role. They responded that they were being supported as any issues arose, for example with understanding acronyms.

#### **129/24 DRAFT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Corporation NOTED the draft minutes of the following meetings:

- The non-confidential minutes of the Audit Committee 12 June 2024;

- The confidential minutes of the Audit Committee 12 June 2024; and

- The non-confidential minutes of the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee 26 June 2024.

#### **130/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

#### **131/24**

##### **SELF-ASSESSMENT OF MEETING**

The Chair led Members in a self-assessment of the meeting. It was noted that the new governance structure enabled more strategic focus at Corporation. A Member commented that she appreciated the length of papers. There was also positive feedback on the new report templates and it was agreed that these would be rolled out to Committees.

#### **132/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 4 December (online, subsequently cancelled); Wednesday 11 December (in person).