

## Minutes of a Meeting of the CORPORATION held on

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025, 2.00-4.00pm

at the College Business Centre

### **1/25 WELCOME AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. Mr Dmyrto Buyanov-Taylor and Mrs Teresa Gaudion were welcomed as observers. Consideration of their appointment as Governors was on the agenda of this meeting. Members introduced themselves.

The Chair reminded Members of the questions for self-reflection at the end of the meeting regarding strategic effectiveness, assurance, and support and challenge provided to the senior leadership team (SLT)

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2/25 APPROVAL OF THE NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD 11 DECEMBER 2024**

The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held 11 December 2024 were approved as a true record.

### **3/25 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Director of Governance reported on Matters Arising. It was agreed that items 1 and 3 had been progressed and could now be removed from the Actions Log.

The Corporation NOTED the report for information and ASSURANCE.

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

### **4/25 CHAIR'S BUSINESS/RATIFICATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION/GOVERNOR APPROVALS**

The Chair reported on the Apprenticeship Awards held at the Royal Yacht Squadron, the opening of the new Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) centre in Newport, and the forthcoming Isle of Wight Radio Awards. She outlined recent and current student activities including international trips. A student presentation on this had been part of Governor Contact Day with a Thai lunch.

She also reported that the College's catering department had provided food at the Isle of Wight Sports Awards, and that there had been recent success with three teams from the Isle of Wight College awarded at the MEI (Mathematics Education Innovation) Maths Regional Final. The Chair expressed her delight at progress in this area.

Finally, the Chair reported on a letter from the College to the Secretary of State for Education expressing concern at the ongoing delay of the FE (Further Education) Transformation Fund Capital Project.

The agenda returned to order following a planned lockdown drill. The Chair emphasised the importance of awareness in this area and specifically of the College's lockdown procedure for the safety of all on the College site.

## **5/25 GOVERNOR APOINTMENTS**

The observers, Mr Dmytro Buyanov-Taylor and Mrs Teresa Gaudion, being considered for appointment left the meeting for this item.

The Director of Governance reported on Governor appointments, outlining in particular candidate declarations for Mrs Gaudion regarding her employment and relationships. A pre-appointment disclosure had been followed up with in-depth conversation to explore potential conflicts. The Principal reported on the conversation and was satisfied with the candidate's responses and that potential conflicts had been fully explored and addressed appropriately. The Director of Governance drew Members' attention to good governance practice to ensure that declarations of interest are given necessary scrutiny and handled appropriately as per Section 10 of the Instrument and Articles of Government, and Section 16 of the Standing Orders. The Director of Governance also reported that governor recruitment processes had been reviewed to ensure that potential conflicts were identified and interrogated at an early stage.

The Chair invited any questions.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The appointment of Mr Dmytro Buyanov-Taylor as Teaching Staff Governor for a term of 2 years from 26 March 2025 – 25 March 2027 and appointed to Curriculum & Quality Committee; and
- The appointment of Mrs Teresa Gaudion as an external Governor for a term of 4 years from 26 March 2025 – 25 March 2029 and appointed to Curriculum & Quality Committee;

Mr Buyanov-Taylor and Mrs Gaudion re-joined the meeting and were congratulated on their appointments.

## **6/25 BALANCED SCORECARD**

The Principal reported on the Balanced Scorecard and in particular addressing any gaps in information and new measures to address.

A Member enquired regarding progress on underrepresented groups. The Principal responded that she was working with the Quality Department on capturing this data. She also reported on changes in measures which meant that measuring was not like for like.

The Member also enquired regarding any expectations regarding progress in adult recruitment and attendance. The Principal responded that there was nothing further to report at this stage but that more detailed reporting would be provided to the Curriculum & Quality Committee.

Another Member commented that data regarding underrepresented groups was binary at this point in the year and argued that it might be more beneficial to look at lead indicators a year out and target an increase in applications from underrepresented groups.

A Student Governor raised a query regarding determining the number of applications and the limit of the College to affect this. The Principal responded that marketing was key in this respect, and in particular whether the marketing was appropriately targeted. She added that a new Marketing Coordinator would be in post soon. The Student Governor enquired regarding how marketing information was gathered. The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) outlined tools in this respect including Google analytics.

A Member enquired whether data was segmented for different groups regarding attendance. The Principal confirmed that data was segmented to course level.

A Member enquired regarding engagement with groups who may not consider that the College's offer is relevant to them. The Principal reported on the College's information, advice and guidance (IAG) function and its work in visiting schools and careers fairs speaking to potential students at an early stage regarding career pathways. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) reported on the number of female staff in teaching areas such as at CECAMM (Centre of Excellence for Composites, Advanced Manufacturing and Marine) and for Motor Vehicle, and on the increasing number of males in Hair and Beauty.

The Teaching Staff Governor enquired regarding targets, referring to the example of Scandinavian countries research into access and choice. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) responded that the target for engineering had been increased from 4 to 8% and achieved.

The Chair enquired regarding the low level of staff appraisals and queried whether this was related to timing. The Principal responded that some targets might be more appropriately reported on a quarterly basis rather than monthly due to phasing. However, she had raised staff appraisals at SLT to ensure that there was regular review and that all appraisals were up-to-date. She concluded that this was an ongoing issue. A Member enquired whether the frequency for appraisals was annual, and the Principal confirmed that this was correct and she had also requested SLT follow-up on one-to-ones. There would be a review and audit of the quality of appraisals. She gave the example of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) objectives as an area that had been focused on in this past with the quality of feedback reviewed to ensure informed development.

The Chair enquired regarding staff leavers noting that the level was low but that staff had left within a year. She asked if this was a trend. The Principal responded that this had been recognised and the induction process had changed significantly. She also added that teaching staff joining from trade had sometimes decided that teaching was not for them.

A Student Governor enquired regarding December 2023 data. The Principal responded that this had been provided as a comparison.

The Chair acknowledged progress in the Balanced Scorecard reporting and welcomed the traffic light information. She added that it was important that Committees were familiar with the data in their respective focus areas.

The Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee reported that the Committee had requested more context and narrative and this had been provided and was very helpful.

The Chair expressed thanks on behalf of Corporation to the Quality Team for their work on the data for the Balanced Scorecard.

The Corporation NOTED and was ASSURED on:

- The progress made to date; and
- That measures are reviewed at Committee in more detail at Committee level.

## **7/25 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal presented her report providing an update since the paper had been submitted. She reported that along with the Director of Governance she had met with the Association of Colleges (AoC) regarding devolution and agreed next steps to link up with Principals and CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) who had been through the devolution process, the impact of this and any learnings. An AoC report was due in this area. It was noted that Dr Judith Abbott was already working in a devolved area. She added that SLT had attended a webinar on devolution in the Hampshire Solent region. Key findings regarding this were set out in her report.

The Principal also reported on the current Ofsted consultation and that the College had agreed to take part in a review related to Looked After Children.

Her report also included an update on the Department for Education (DfE) Transformation Project and drew attention to the letter sent from the College to the Secretary of State for Education regarding delays in the project and lack of communication. She had also liaised with the local MP on this.

She also reported that the College had been asked to respond to the Education Select Committee Call for Evidence. The Chair praised the letter to the Secretary of State for Education, and the Call for Evidence response.

The Member working in a devolved area drew attention to Adult Education Budget funding practice in devolved areas where funding was split according to the postcode of learners one year prior. She added that if there was not a normal profile the case could be made for more funding in an area. The Principal thanked the Member for this insight.

The Member also reported on a recent regional AoC meeting in which it had been reported that £900 million had been set aside, £300 million allocated, and the remaining £600 million for projects started related to the DfE Transformation Fund. She therefore advised that the College should continue to raise the issue regarding its own DfE Transformation Fund project.

A Member enquired regarding the devolution consultation and the Principal confirmed that further information was included in her report including a link to the consultation.

A Member enquired regarding the Ofsted consultation. The Director of Governance responded that there was a webinar taking place on this immediately after the meeting and Governors had been invited to join this.

The Principal also reported on meeting with the Isle of Wight Council regarding the building of residential accommodation for key workers and students. She had been asked to lead a group focusing on student need in this area and would be consulting with other education providers on this to agree collective numbers. It was likely that this number would be c10 to begin with. The reported timescale was two years but the Principal did not consider this realistic. There was nothing further to report at this

stage but the Chair emphasised that it was important that Members were aware of the conversation taking place.

The Corporation NOTED and was ALERTED to updates in the following areas:

- Devolution consultation;
- Education Select Committee Call for Evidence;
- Ofsted consultation;
- Interview and visit by FE Week; and
- DfE Transformation Fund Capital Project ongoing delays and correspondence raising concerns to the Secretary of State for Education.

### **8/25 3AS REPORT CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE**

The Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee presented the Committee's 3As report. She drew attention to the unannounced catering inspection and that a reinspection had already been requested by the College. She reported on scrutiny of the Maths and English GCSE resits and grading boundary changes and the potential consideration of a new awarding body.

The Chair enquired of any particular areas of concern to be monitored or raised by the Curriculum & Quality Committee. Attention was drawn to attendance and timely achievement of apprenticeships. The Principal outlined measures to optimise attendance and achievement particularly around challenging attendance in the summer. A Member enquired regarding timetabling for the Island context and the Principal confirmed that this approach had been actioned.

The Corporation NOTED and was ALERTED to:

- The draft non-confidential minutes of the meeting held 5 February 2025; and
- The outcome of an unannounced inspection of the Catering kitchens with a hygiene rating of one star awarded and was ASSURED on progress in addressing required actions.

The Corporation NOTED and was ASSURED on:

- The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held 6 November 2024 and that they were APPROVED as a true record by the Committee;
- Monitoring of actions and Matters Arising to January 2025;
- The Performance Improvement Progress Report with Balanced Scorecard and ALERTED to the data gaps and progress variances still being addressed;
- The Curriculum Update Report including:
  - an increase of 15.9% in GCSE Maths pass at resit;
  - steady numbers for students studying T Levels including the introduction of two new T Levels in 2024/25;
  - progress in developing and implementing a Student Executive Committee; and ALERTED to:
  - a decline of 13.8% in GCSE English pass at resit;
  - achievement and retention for apprenticeships during 2023/24 and predictions for 2024/25;
  - the number (16.8%) of apprentices that are past planned end date (PPED);
  - the current forecast for delivery of the Adult Skills Fund (93% currently below the minimum of 97% delivery);
  - headline student survey results; and
  - criteria changes for Gatsby benchmarks (information, advice and guidance).

- The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report including the number of observations (118) and progress regarding staff identified as requiring further support (7) and actions implemented in the following areas: embedding wider skills, work scrutiny, and assessment methods;
- The Governor Learning Walks report and ALERTED to issues raised regarding supporting participation;
- The Termly Safeguarding Report including action taken in the following areas:
  - student wellbeing;
  - inappropriate behaviour;
  - support for vulnerable students;
  - staff training;
  - Single Central Record (SCR) audit; and ALERTED to:
  - the number of concerns raised on MyConcern (311) with potential safeguarding concerns involving 191 students and 31 cases referred to children's services, the police, or the vulnerable adult team;
  - Prevent Duty objectives and Martyn's Law updates;
  - the change in arrangements for the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) from Hampshire to the Isle of Wight; and
  - extension of security measures on the College site; and
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report and current progress on the 2024-2028 EDI Objectives

The Corporation NOTED:

- That a briefing on Information, Advice and Guidance and the Gatsby Benchmarks has been requested by the Curriculum & Quality Committee.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The EDI Policy; and
- The Public Sector Equality Duty Report;

## **9/25 3AS REPORT AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

A Member of the Audit & Risk Committee presented the Committee's 3As report. She had Chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair and drew attention to scrutiny of the Password Policy and internal audit reports expressing confidence in the new internal auditors. The Chair added that she had observed the meeting and also paid tribute to the new internal auditors.

The Corporation NOTED and was ALERTED to:

- The draft non-confidential and confidential minutes of the meeting held 12 February 2025;
- A report has been requested following the survey of catering at CECAMM;
- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) data breaches during the reporting period (two minor and one concern level) and ASSURED by action taken to resolve;
- Discussion in the draft minutes regarding the role of Data Protection Officer and issues raised regarding this being fulfilled by a member of staff in the IT department and the College's action and response to this;
- FOI (Freedom of Information) requests during the reporting period (four) and SAR (Subject Access Requests) during the period (one);
- Internal Audit Reports visit 1: Maths and English given Significant assurance and Student Recruitment given Significant assurance; and ASSURED on the Risk and Assurance Progress Report;

- Risk Register update January 2025 and ASSURED on mitigations in place; and
- The Annual Review of Contracts and ASSURED on the College's procurement approach.

The Corporation NOTED and was ASSURED on:

- The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held 27 November 2024 and that they were APPROVED as a true record by the Committee;
- Monitoring of actions and Matters Arising to February 2025;
- Monitoring of the Audit Issues Log to February 2025; and
- Managing Public Money Compliance.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The Data Protection: Password Policy;
- The Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement;
- The Financial Regulations and Procedures; and
- The Review of Performance of the Internal and External Auditors.

### **10/25 3AS REPORT FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee presented the Committee's 3As report. She drew attention to the report on debtors and that no write offs were being requested at the present time. A detailed report had been received from the Head of HR (Human Resources, People & Culture), and the Health and Safety Policy had been reviewed in detail with amendments requested regarding cross-referencing with the international travel and outdoor activity policies which have been actioned.

The Corporation NOTED and was ALERTED to:

- The draft non-confidential and confidential minutes of the meeting held 12 February 2025;
- Monthly Finance Report and Management Accounts to December 2024 and ASSURED on the College's financial position to December 2024; and
- The Debtors Report Debt Write Offs and that there is no request to write off any of the College's debtors as at February 2025.

The Corporation NOTED and was ASSURED on:

- The non-confidential and confidential minutes of the meeting held 16 October 2024 and that they were APPROVED as a true record by the Committee;
- Monitoring of actions and Matters Arising to January 2025;
- Progress on Estates including progress against Condition survey and ALERTED to key risks and to note that it has been requested that further legal advice is sought regarding the drainage issue;
- Progress on Capital Projects and ALERTED to key risks and to note that it is recommended that a request is made to the Department for Education for an updated survey of the A and E block buildings to assess potential risks;
- The Termly Human Resources Report and progress to date and alerted to new or updated legislation concerning employment rights; flexible working; protection from sexual harassment; Gender Pay Gap reporting; and zero hours workers; and
- Progress against the Financial Strategy 2024-2030.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The Health and Safety Policy; and
- The Gender Pay Gap Statutory Report 2023/24.

## **11/25 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT, MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND LATEST ESTIMATE**

The Interim Director of Finance presented the Management Accounts to February 2025 including the Latest Estimate. The key points were as follows:

- 1) The forecast surplus for 2024-25 has increased by £241k from the initial budget, although this is due to the write-off of old provisions for funding clawbacks/repayments. The surplus position excluding these items is similar to the initial budget.
- 2) The February forecast has been updated to reflect:
  - a. The ESFA has announced that it will fund in-year growth but only at 2/3rds of its normal approach; and
  - b. Higher education recruitment is £90k lower than budget. All other items remaining in-line with the January forecast. The ESFA has also announced a 3.78% increase in the unit rate for 2025-26.
- 3) Cash held at 28 February 2025 was £5,801k with £687k committed to capital projects (including £500k of Invest to Save funds) and £3,104k of debt. Uncommitted cash after the payment of wages early in the following month and timing of income vs expenditure in the current year is approximately £3.4 million.
- 4) All banking covenants are currently forecast to be achieved.
- 5) Performance against the Financial Strategy KPIs is provided in Appendix 8.

The Interim Director of Finance also provided a briefing on the Chancellor's Budget report which had been announced earlier that day.

A Member enquired whether there were any indices for inflation rates affecting the College business. The Interim Director of Finance responded that there was pressure. The Member commented that it would be useful to have reports on how the College's costs were changing rather than on global measures.

The Chair noted drew attention to the announcements regarding construction and the College's ability to respond to this.

A Member referring to the employer projects announced queried whether the College could be a part of this. The Interim Director of Finance responded that the announcement stated that details were still to follow.

The Chair thanked the Interim Director of Finance for the Finance report and Budget briefing.

The Corporation NOTED and was ASSURED on the Management Accounts to February 2025 and Latest Estimate.

## **12/25 GDPR POLICY**

The Head of IT and LRC (Information Technology and Library and Resources Centre, and Data Protection Officer) joined the meeting for the Corporations consideration of the revised General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy. The Chair invited any points of clarification or questions by Members.

A Member referring to facial recognition software asked whether this needed to be considered and included in the Policy going forward. The Head of IT and LRC (Data Protection Officer) responded that reference to this was required in a separate CCTV (closed circuit television) statement and that this was used for safeguarding purposes.



The Chair noted that as technology developed policy changes may be required.

The Head of IT and LRC (Data Protection Officer) reported that the AoC had commissioned Irwin Mitchell to create model policies for the FE sector and that at this review it was recommended that the College adopt the Irwin Mitchell model policies. Following this there would be further work undertaken to align the procedures sitting under the policies.

The Chair commented on the assurance provided by national model policies commissioned and tailored to the sector.

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The General Data Protection Regulation Policy;
- The Data Protection: Data Retention Policy and
- The Data Protection: Rights of Individuals Policy.

### **13/25 FOI POLICY**

The Corporation APPROVED:

- The Freedom of Information Policy;

### **14/25 SAFEGUARDING EXCEPTION REPORT**

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support Services) presented an update on security measures implemented following an incident regarding an imitation weapon on the College site. She also reported on lockdown drills and evacuation practices noting that there had been instances where students needed to get into a building during a drill.

A Member enquired whether there were speakers outside of buildings to sound the alarm and the Assistant Principal responded that there weren't and that this required consideration. The Member also noted that there may be students with hearing impairment who do not hear or may struggle to hear the drill if it was not loud enough.

A Member enquired regarding ANPR (automatic number plate recognition). The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO confirmed that this was in place.

A Member asked a Student Governor who was a wheelchair user whether he was happy with the lockdown drills. The Student Governor responded that lockdown drills were regularly undertaken in Pathways and he did not have any concerns.

Another Student Governor commented that today's drill was the first lockdown drill he had taken part in and commented that before today he would not have known what to do. The Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO responded that she would look into why the Student Governor had not experienced a lockdown drill before adding that it was important to make sure that all students had experienced a lockdown drill.

A Student Governor raised the instance of a lockdown drill occurring whilst students were on a break or in the canteen for example. The Support Staff Governor reported that there was a procedure in place for the LRC.

A Member suggested posters regarding lockdown procedures.

The Corporation NOTED the report for ASSURANCE and ALERT.

#### **15/25 STUDENT GOVERNOR REPORT**

A Student Governor asked what happened with leftover food at the College. The Principal responded that she had raised enquiries with Aramark regarding whether leftover could be distributed at the end of the day and this would be followed up. Dr David Ndzi left the meeting at this point.

#### **16/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

#### **17/25 SELF-ASSESSMENT OF MEETING**

The Chair led Members in a self-assessment of the meeting reminding Members to consider whether the meeting had been strategic, provided assurance, and been of assistance to SLT.

A Member commended the input on assurance. A Member commended the contribution of the Student Governors. The newly appointed Governors reported that they had found the meeting very interesting and offering the opportunity to understand how governance works and decisions are made.

The Student Governor raised a question regarding the College Annual Awards Day on 4 July 2025. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) reported that awards were prescribed by curriculum area but that in the past there had been some awards by level and some by curriculum area and acknowledged that this approach could have appeared disproportional.

The Chair encouraged as many Governors to attend College Annual Awards Day as possible and would herself be giving a speech via video.

#### **18/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 21 May 2025