



MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 2nd March 2022, at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Tim Oliver (Chair)

Paul Collyer

Dan Dean

Declan Mason

Ruth Seabrook

Pooja Singh

Dan Hards (Advising Officer)

Ken Kehoe (Clerk)

1. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests from Trustees.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cindy Dawes had sent her apologies. The committee accepted the apologies.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of 3rd November 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee reviewed the actions arising from previous meetings:

S&P1-001 Clerk to arrange subscription to the SFCA Webinar series and the NGA resource. Clerk to monitor usage. **Done. A Trustee noted that the EDI webinar had been useful.**

S&P1-002 The Principal to bring forward a draft 2023 Admissions Policy. **Done. This was covered later in the agenda.**

S&P1-003 Clerk to add a discussion of College size to the next meeting agenda and to circulate the earlier paper on the subject, updated as necessary, to the committee. **Done. This was covered later in the agenda.**

S&P1-004 Clerk to seek clarification on access to legal advice for the Chair and Vice-Chair under the

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for Senior Postholders. **Done.** **The Clerk had the details of the partner of the law firm that the College used should the Chair and Vice-Chair need to contact him.**

S&P1-005 Clerk to seek clarification of how the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for Senior Postholders would operate in the case of allegations of fraud and the need for a forensic accountant investigation. **Done.** **If the Board believes that there had been fraud of over £5000 in a single act or cumulatively in a year, or that there has been systematic fraud, the Board is required to the inform the ESFA. The ESFA may either conduct, or commission, an investigation and involve agencies such as the police.**

S&P1-006 Clerk to amend Procedure for Appointing Staff Trustees, as directed. **Done.**

S&P1-007 Clerk to put the draft Procedure for Appointing Parent Trustees on the agenda of the next meeting, following further work on how online voting by parents could be securely carried out. **Done.**

5. STUDENT NUMBERS 2023 AND BEYOND

The Principal introduced his paper on student numbers in the medium term. He highlighted the following points:

- The extra students in 6.1 will make the Summer 2023 examinations a key pinch point. The significant increase in the number of students requiring access arrangements will add to the pressure as they require extra space. BTEC online assessments were an additional pressure. Classroom space planning was already tricky and the College was looking at the use of temporary classrooms as a contingency.
- There was an adverse impact on staff workload from students requiring extra support from teachers.
- The funding allocation for next year was £1.3m higher than last year. The funding rate increase was secure but it had come with strings attached; Colleges now had to provide 580 hours of teaching per student per year, some 40 hours more than previously. This put pressure on capacity.
- To ensure that the College could respond to changes in student demand, it was necessary to retain some flexibility and that required some spare capacity.
- If the College expanded capacity and then the size of the cohort declined, this might lead to financial difficulties.
- If the Board decided to increase the size of the College beyond 2000, then additional classroom capacity would need to be built. There was no obvious location for further building without a major impact on the size of the College while any project was delivered.
- A College of about 2000 students was about the right balance between management, finance, student experience and the impact on the local community.

The committee agreed that the Director of Finance and Estates should be asked to produce scenarios on the financial and capital implications of different student numbers, for the summer term meeting of Finance and Estates committee, with the Board asked to take a final view at its Summer Board meeting.

Action: Clerk to add Student Numbers Scenario Planning to the Summer 2022 Finance and Estates Committee agenda.

Action: Clerk to add Student Numbers to the Summer Board meeting.

6. ADMISSIONS POLICY 2023

The Principal introduced the draft Admissions Policy 2023, advising the committee that the main changes were to make clear that enrolment interviews would be carried out in order of application number and that the use of the unforeseen and exceptional circumstances provision would usually be triggered by an approach from the applicant's current school.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Admissions Policy 2023 to the Board of Trustees for approval.

7. MISSION STATEMENT

The Principal introduced the draft Mission Statement. There were two minor changes: opportunity had been added to the 3rd bullet and the reference to Adult provision had been deleted to reflect the College's focus on specialist counselling courses. The committee considered the use of the term "tolerance" and agreed that it remained appropriate.

The committee agreed to recommend the Mission Statement to the Board of Trustees for approval.

8. POLICIES FOR REVIEW

The committee reviewed the following policies:

- Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Postholders
- Grievance Procedure for Senior Postholders

The committee considered the two draft policies and agreed that paragraph 4 of the Disciplinary Procedure policy should be amended to "an appropriate person", and to set out the requirement to refer suspected fraud to the ESFA. The reference to Public Interest Disclosure Act in paragraph 2 of the Gross Misconduct annex should also be updated. They also agreed that the policies for the senior postholders should be brought into line with those for all other staff.

Action: Clerk to draw up proposals to bring senior post holder policies into line with those for other staff.

9. CONSTITUTION

The committee approved:

The Procedure for Appointing Parent Trustees.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk advised that, under Article 57 of the Articles of Association, it was for Members to appoint the new Principal to the Board of Trustees, if he consented to act in that role. Dan Hards stated that he consented to becoming a Trustee on his appointment as Principal.

The Committee agreed to recommend that Members should appoint Dan Hards as a Trustee on his appointment as Principal of the College.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 15th June 2022.

*The meeting closed at 6.57 pm.
Attendance was 86%.*

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

S&P2-001	Clerk to add Student Numbers Scenario Planning to the Summer 2022 Finance and Estates Committee agenda.
S&P2-002	Clerk to add Student Numbers to the Summer Board meeting.
S&P-003	Clerk to draw up proposals to bring senior post holder policies into line with those for other staff.

SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Minute	Topic
C	5	<p>STUDENT NUMBERS</p> <p>Trustees asked that the scenarios for the impact of student numbers on finance and capital expenditure should be considered at the next Finance and Estates committee meeting.</p>