



MINUTES OF THE ESHER COLLEGE CORPORATION

Held At Esher College
Tuesday, 15th December 2015, at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Terry Price (Chair)	Jane Grenander
Jo Canessa	David Irving
Emma Cheney	Ian Leigh
Paul Collyer	Linda McGarry
Elizabeth Cooper	Damian O'Malley
Simon D'Arcy	Karin Rowsell
Dan Dean	Fran Stewart
Chris Heffernan	Clarissa Wilks

Emma Young, Deputy Principal (Advising Officer)
Stephanie Wiles, Director of Finance and Estates (Advising Officer)
Rebecca De'Ath, Clerk

1. WELCOME AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS IN AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair welcomed Chris Heffernan (Student Governor), and Jane Grenander (Parent Governor) to their first Corporation meeting.

There were no declarations of interest to record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Robin John, David Lavarack and Laila Hazara.

3. CONSTITUTION

- Changes to Corporation meetings schedule – the forthcoming Area Based Review (ABR) has necessitated additional meetings, as well as changes to dates for some committees. The revised schedule had been circulated to all. The Chair emphasised that meetings would only go ahead if there were decisions that had to be made. The new schedule of dates was approved.
- Student Governors – the meeting noted that Laila Hazara was now the President of the Student Union, and Chris Heffernan was the Vice President. The period for the term of office of the Student Governors would in future be based on the academic year, as is the case with other Surrey Colleges.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (22 September 2015)

These were approved as a true record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

C1-001: The Vice Principal *had* reported his findings on student retention and progression to the Policy Committee.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (including Student Union and Finance reports)

Since the Report had been written, the meeting was informed of the following updates:

- The Principal had been interviewed about the quality of exam board marking for BBC Breakfast and Radio 5 Live.
- The CIF bid had been submitted to seek a long-term solution to weather-proof the roofs; should this bid be unsuccessful, a short-term solution only could be funded by the College.

Governors felt that the Student Union (SU) report showed that a lot of activity was taking place, and they thanked the SU Vice President for the hard work that he and his colleagues had put into it.

The Finance Reports covered the 12 month period to the year-end 31 July 2015, and the first three months of the new year to 31 October. The former revealed a better-than-expected surplus, which had led to EFA awarding the College an Outstanding grading for 2014/15. This year's budget is expected to deliver an operating surplus.

Q: Why have exam costs risen? A more accurate analysis has been made this year using MIS, as opposed to the usual methodology of taking the previous year's cost and adding 2% for inflation.

Governors thanked the Director of Finance and Estates for the clarity of her report and her useful explanations. The meeting approved both financial reports.

7. SURREY AREA BASED REVIEW BRIEFING PAPER

The meeting discussed the ABR briefing paper. They noted the schedule of meetings for the Steering Group and for Governors, and agreed that a strategic position would need to be established next term.

Governors were concerned about the amount of work that the senior management team would need to undertake in order to prepare for the ABR, which could adversely impact on normal college business. They asked the Principal how Governors could support this process; he would consider this and respond in the new year after he and the Chair had met to discuss this issue. Governors acknowledged that the ABR would lead to additional costs being incurred, both in monetary terms for external advice, and in staff time.

The Chair informed the meeting that information documents about the ABR process would be lodged on the Governors Portal as soon as they were received, and this would be brought to Governors attention via email (there were two recent SFCA and AoC notes about Governor liability which the Clerk will upload). The Student Governor raised the fact that he could not access this portal, as it was for Staff and Governors only. There was no reason why Student Governors could not view these documents, and the Principal agreed to look into the matter.

ACTIONS: **the Principal** to determine how Student Governors can access the Governors' Portal.
The Clerk to lodge Governor liability documents on the Governors' Portal.

An additional Corporation and Policy Committee meeting was scheduled for February 2016 to consider

the options for the College under the ABR process. Non-members were welcome to attend the Policy meeting; (it was pointed out that decisions are not made at committee level, but are recommended to the Corporation).

Finally, Governors discussed the timing of communication about the ABR to parents (staff had already been briefed.) Governors suggested that this take place in January, and should include a timeline of the process. The Principal will establish whether a co-ordinated S7 approach might be possible. Should Governors have any questions or comments in the future, they should be sent to the Principal, who would also send them a monthly update.

8. COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)

The Deputy Principal explained that this year's SAR has been improved; it is now aligned to the OFSTED common inspection framework that was introduced in September 2015, and key strengths have been added to each section. Strategic objectives have been captured for the first time, which will form the framework for the Strategic Plan. If the SAR is approved by the meeting, it will be uplifted to the Provider Gateway for OFSTED to analyse any risk to the College.

The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was also reviewed by the meeting.

Governors thanked the Deputy Principal for her efforts in producing an excellent document. The SAR was approved by the Corporation.

9. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND LINK GOVERNORS

- **Audit Committee Minutes (18.11.15)**

In the absence of the Committee Chair, Ian Leigh summarised the items discussed. It was noted that the item about the authorisation of senior management expense claims contained an error – "Vice-Principal" should read "Deputy" Principal.

The Audit Committee Annual Report to the Corporation had been previously circulated.

Q: Is this the usual format for the Report? It is based on one of the S7 College's templates, but it is open to alternative suggestions.

The Corporation approved the Audit Annual Report.

- **Estates Committee Minutes (06.10.15)**

The Minutes were duly noted.

- **Finance Committee Minutes (24.11.15)**

In addition to the two financial reports at item 6, above, the Committee had discussed the cash flow forecast, the EFA financial health review, and had received feedback from the Financial Strategy Group.

The Corporation noted these Minutes.

- **Policy Committee Minutes (30.11.15)**

The Minutes were summarised: the ABR and SAR items have been covered, above; the Vice Principal had presented the Retention and Progression report to the Committee.

The Minutes were noted by the Corporation.

- **Review & Search Committee Minutes** (13.10.15)

This Committee had focussed on succession planning, as eight Governors' terms of office were due to end in 2016. Succession planning for the next Chair will be discussed in more detail at their next meeting. The current Chair is a member of that Committee, and will leave that part of the next meeting when this item is taken.

Q: In terms of the ethnic make-up of Governors – have you explored the possibility of College parents being a source of new Governors? Yes; we also actively approached two Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) recruitment providers.

The Corporation noted the Minutes.

Link Governors' Reports

(It was previously agreed that each Link Governor would present a report to the Corporation in December, and thereafter by exception.)

- The **Equality and Diversity** Link Governor reported that excellent work had been carried out by the College in the SAR in terms of Curriculum and Learning. The Link Governor had passed on to her own College employer an excellent example of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work by Esher College. She commended the outstanding work of the Vice-Principal and Becky Voller in promoting equality and diversity across the College.
- The **Safeguarding** Link Governor had met with the new Safeguarding Lead earlier this term and was involved in the Joint Review process. The College had rolled out safeguarding training for all staff in the summer term, and those that would be involved in recruitment were undertaking the Safer Recruitment course. The meeting noted that the Chair and Damian O'Malley had completed the online Safer Recruitment training.
- **The Environment Sustainability** Link Governor had been unable to attend the Sustainability Group meeting earlier this term. The Director of Finance and Estates had attended, however, and reported that forthcoming objectives and targets for the Group had been agreed; Green Week would feature bike marking; a recent Save Energy campaign had focussed on encouraging teachers to turn off the lights when rooms are not in use; next term's campaign would focus on saving paper.

Q: Have you asked your energy provider to provide you with half-hourly usage reports over a set period of time? No – The Director of Finance and Estates will look into that.

[Clarissa Wilks left the meeting at 7.15pm]

10. REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31 JULY 2015, AND LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

These documents had been reviewed by the Audit and Finance Committees, and had been recommended to the Corporation for approval, to be signed off by the Chair.

The Corporation approved the Financial Statements and Letter of Representation.

11. MATTERS ARISING FROM STAFF/STUDENTS

No matters were raised.

12. GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE AT COLLEGE

The following visits to the College have been made by Governors:

8 th September	Terry Price meeting with Dan Dean
17 th September	Terry Price meeting with Dan Dean
1 st October	Lin McGarry safeguarding update with Dan Hards
6 th October	Terry Price meeting with Dan Dean
12 th October	Robin John – Joint Reviews
13 th October	Terry Price and Nick Johnston-Jones – Joint Reviews
14 th October	David Lavarack – Joint Reviews
15 th October	David Irving and Damian O'Malley – Joint Reviews
3 rd November	Ian Leigh – Joint Reviews
4 th November	Clarissa Wilks – Joint Reviews
6 th November	Terry Price – Joint Reviews and meeting with Dan Dean
12 th November	Lin McGarry – Joint Reviews
13 th November	Jane Grenander and Terry Price meeting with Dan Dean
23 rd November	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean
27 th November	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean and Dominic Raab MP
9 th December	Paul Collyer – College Production
10 th December	Ian Leigh – College Production
11 th December	Jane Grenander, Fran Stewart, Elizabeth Cooper – College Production
14 th December	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean, Rowan Cookson and Jacqui Gerrard (Strodes College)

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, 23rd February 2016

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm.

Attendance was 80% (16 out of 20 members)

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

C2-001	Item 7: The Principal to determine how Student Governors can access the Governors' Portal on the College website. The Clerk to upload Governor liability notes to the same Portal.
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SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Item	Topic
S	6	Governors' appreciation of the hard work and high standard of reports produced by the Student Union and Director of Finance and Estates.
C	6	Why have exam costs risen this year?
S	7	Governors' recognition of additional finance costs and staff workload generated by the ABR, and Governors' offer of help to the SMT.
C	7	Governors' suggestion that parents be informed about the ABR process sooner than originally planned.
S	8	Governors thanked the Deputy Principal for her excellent SAR.
C	9	Questions from Governors about Audit Committee Annual Report format; ethnicity make-up of the Corporation; future energy reports.