



MINUTES OF THE ESHER COLLEGE CORPORATION MEETING

Held At Esher College
Wednesday, 23rd March 2016, at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Terry Price (Chair)	Robin John
Jo Canessa	David Irving
Elizabeth Cooper	David Lavarack
Simon D’Arcy	Ian Leigh
Dan Dean	Linda Mc Garry
Jane Grenander	Damian O’Malley
Laila Hazara	Clarissa Wilks
Peter Hickman	

Emma Young, Deputy Principal

Dan Lodge, Vice-Principal (Students and Staff Development)

Rebecca De’Ath (Clerk)

PART I

1. PRESENTATION ON STUDENT SUPPORT

The Vice-Principal (Students and Staff Development) informed the meeting of the College’s disciplinary procedures, sanctions and interventions available to address concerns with student progress.

Governors discussed the five levels of warning and asked the following questions:

Q: How many students are subject to the non-entry process at any one time? There are seven students this year; there were twelve last year – a very small number.

Q: What is the highest level of warning students reached? A very small minority reached the point at which non-entry is confirmed.

Q: What is the main reason that students are on this warning process? Poor attendance, poor work effort, not turning in their work, or poor attitude to their assessments.

Q: Is there any correlation between the type of course and students on warnings? No – the problems follow the student, not the particular course.

Q: Do you give students study skills when they arrive at the College for the first time? Yes, this is covered in the induction phase by their Tutor and in their subject induction.

Q: How successful is this process? Subject leaders are taking responsibility for addressing behaviour in their class before passing the student up to the next level of warning. If students reach the non-entry for exam stage, the College can ask them to leave, but usually students improve.

Q: Is this warning process being kept under review? Yes, the process will be enhanced and reviewed as part of the Quality Improvement Plan and Away Day processes.

The Vice-Principal explained that it was important for the College to spot early non-compliance by students and he detailed the indicators that teachers looked out for. Additionally, students returning to 6:2 after their first year, are reminded at the Principal's talk of the importance of coming back to College after the summer break with a good attitude and parents are actively invited to attend these talks.

The Corporation thanked the Vice-Principal for his presentation and he left the meeting.

2. BUSINESS INTERESTS IN AGENDA ITEMS

Interests were declared as follows:

Part I, Item 4: Clarissa Wilks, David Irving, Terry Price.

Part II, Item 1: Dan Dean, Emma Young, Rebecca De'Ath.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Emma Cheney, Paul Collyer, Chris Heffernan, Karin Rowsell, and Fran Stewart.

4. CONSTITUTION

The Chair of the Corporation left the meeting at this point.

- **Chair of Corporation**

The Chair of the Review and Search Committee explained that, given the amount of change that the College was facing under the Area Review process, the Committee felt that it would be very beneficial if Terry Price stayed on as Chair of the Corporation after his role ceased at the end of the academic year. This proposal was now being recommended to the Corporation, with the suggestion that a successor be identified to shadow him and to take over in September 2017 when the Chair's term as Governor expires.

Q: Does this fall within the terms of our Instrument and Articles of Government? Clerk: Yes – the Instrument of Government states that at the end of their term of office, the Chair "shall be eligible for *re-appointment*" (subject to any rule made in the Standing Orders concerning the number of terms of office which a person may serve). The meeting discussed the fact that while normally this would not exceed three consecutive terms of office, in this instance there were clear reasons why it was fundamental to the best interests of the College that the Chair continue for another year to see through this unique set of circumstances.

The Corporation agreed unanimously that the Chair be re-appointed in September 2016, and that the Review and Search Committee determine a successor to recommend to the Corporation.

Proposer: Robin John **Seconder:** Clarissa Wilks

The Chair returned to the meeting, and Clarissa Wilks and David Irving left prior to the next item.

- **Terms of Office** (David Irving & Clarissa Wilks)

David Irving and Clarissa Wilks were coming to the end of their terms of office (April and October 2016 respectively) and for similar reasons mentioned above, it was proposed that they be re-appointed to serve a third and fourth term respectively.

The meeting agreed unanimously to the proposal that they be re-appointed for another term.

Proposer: Damian O'Malley **Seconder:** Elizabeth Cooper

David Irving and Clarissa Wilks re-joined the meeting.

As the Chair of the Review and Search Committee had to leave the meeting early, the meeting reviewed and noted the Committee's minutes at this stage in the proceedings.

Linda McGarry left the meeting at 7.00pm

- **Nominations for External Governor Vacancy**

Elmbridge Borough Council had forwarded details of their nomination of Tim Oliver to fill the external governor position that would become vacant in April 2016. Governors discussed the amount of time required of member of the Corporation. They noted Tim Oliver's experience of finance committees and estates matters and felt that he would be an enthusiastic supporter of the College.

The meeting agreed that he be invited to sit on the Corporation.

- **Special Committee Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference had been reviewed, benchmarked against those held by other S7 colleges and subsequently slightly amended. The meeting agreed the final version.

5. PREVIOUS SETS OF MINUTES

- 15th December 2015
- 23rd February 2016 (Extra-ordinary meeting)
- 3rd March 2016 (Extra-ordinary meeting)

The meeting noted that actions in the above minutes had been completed. The minutes were approved.

6. MATTERS ARISING

There was nothing to discuss.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

It was reported that the BTEC quality assurance team had recently visited the College and were very satisfied with what they reviewed. In addition, the College now had access to Ofsted's 16 to 19 Study Programmes Inspection Dashboard. The Principal reported that value-added was significantly above average for A level and vocational courses. No weaknesses were identified in the dataset. Governors agreed that this was an excellent result.

- **Student Union Report**

The Student Union President stated that the SU had had a great year and had been very busy (as detailed in the Report). The Corporation thanked her and asked that their thanks be conveyed to other Student Union members. She and Chris Heffernan were also thanked for their part in the recruitment process for a Deputy Principal and hoped that it had been a useful learning experience.

- **Finance Reports**

The Director of Finance and Estates summarised the main points of these Reports, which had been discussed at the Finance Committee and reported in their minutes. Asked what was being done to improve the income from the Adult Education service, she replied that more meetings will be taking place after Easter to focus on this.

The meeting approved the Finance Reports.

- **Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**

The Deputy Principal gave a summary of progress with the 2015/16 QIP under each of the key themes. The focus included ABRs and financial planning.

The meeting noted the progress made.

8. UPDATE ON SURREY AREA-BASED REVIEW

The Principal reported that the ABR site visit on 1 March was very positive and the ABR team would be reporting to the Education Funding Authority that the College was financially viable. There was nothing of note to report from the Principals' and Governors' meetings on 9th March, or the 1st Steering Group meeting the day after. The 4th Steering Group meeting in June would be where proposals for change would be tabled by the Review team.

The Corporation agreed to the Policy Committee's recommendation that the College express an interest in academy status by the deadline of 10th May, but emphasised that this was not a sign of commitment to convert.

9. REPORT BACK FROM COMMITTEES

- **Audit**

The Committee had agreed that an assurance audit take place of key financial controls in the near future.

The Corporation noted the minutes.

- **Estates**

The 2015/16 Condition Improvement Fund's final out-turn was almost within the original bid. Thanks were given to the Estates team for this successful outcome. The College was due to hear soon whether its new bid for funding for roof work would be granted. Finally, the

bid for the Community Infrastructure Levy was unsuccessful and would next be revisited in the Autumn.

The meeting noted the minutes.

- **Finance**

The Budget had been covered in the Principal's report, above. A new financial objective was being produced to cover policy on cash reserves.

The meeting noted the minutes.

- **Policy**

The Committee had discussed the ABR process and the Chair thanked the SLT for its informed analytical work around this issue which had been of great help to the Committee. Governors had then reviewed the Admissions Policy for 2017 entry and suggested some re-wording to ensure that it was clear and unambiguous. The amended policy was commended to the Corporation where it was approved.

The meeting noted the minutes.

- **Review/Search**

Minutes were noted under item 4, above.

10. LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

Equality and Diversity – Governors involved in the cross-college Joint Self-Assessment Review process were thanked for their input. There was otherwise nothing to add since the last Link Report.

Safeguarding – there was nothing to report.

Environment – the Link Governor was unable to attend this meeting.

11. MATTERS ARISING FROM STAFF/STUDENTS

The Corporation's attention was drawn to the fact that, in line with the national pay awards, Teachers were due to receive a 1% pay rise, whereas that for Support Staff was 0.9%. This was negatively impacting on morale. The Principal replied that he supported this view and had expressed his embarrassment at this outcome to staff as a whole. He made assurances that next year he would make a case for a proper balance between what Teachers and Support Staff receive.

There were no student matters raised.

12. GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE AT COLLEGE

Visits made to College to date are listed below.

15 th January	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean
25 th January	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean

3 rd February	Terry Price – meeting of the Environmental Sustainability Group
10 th February	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean
22 nd February	Terry Price – shortlisting for Deputy Principal
2 nd March	Terry Price, Dan Dean, Fran Stewart, Ian Leigh, Damian O’Malley, Terry Price, Emma Cheney, Laila Hazara, Jane Grenander and Paul Collyer – Deputy Principal interviews
3 rd March	Terry Price, Dan Dean, Jo Canessa, Chris Heffernan and Clarissa Wilks - Deputy Principal interviews
7 th March	Terry price – meeting with Dan Lodge
16 th March	Ian Leigh – Higher Education Evening

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- The Chair informed the Corporation that this was the last meeting for Elizabeth Cooper. Her term of office was expiring and she was going on to be a Governor elsewhere. He thanked her for her contribution to the team and wished her well for the future.
- There were two matters to discuss under Part II of the minutes.
- The next extraordinary Corporation meeting was scheduled for 25 May 2016, but might not be necessary if the ABR process has not sufficiently developed by then. Noting that the 4th Steering group meeting would take place after this date, it was agreed to cancel this meeting and set a new date. The 5th July will stand as the next normal Corporation meeting.
ACTION: Deputy Clerk to inform Governors of new date for extraordinary meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS: Extraordinary meeting: tbc; usual meeting: Tuesday 5th July 2016.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

Attendance was 75% (15 out of 20 members)

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

C3-001	Item 13: Deputy Clerk to circulate new date for ABR-focussed extraordinary Corporation meeting in June 2016.
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SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] /SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Item	Topic
C	1	Behaviour warnings process – probing questions about the robustness of the procedures and the number of students involved.
C S	4	Corporation Chair – Governors ensuring that the proposal to re-appoint the Corporation Chair followed I&A rules. Corporation desire to retain Governors with experience and skills to support the College through the ABR process.
S	7	Corporation praise for the College's excellent BTEC inspection and VA results.
S	8	ABR - Corporation willingness to explore other options for change without committing the College to anything until more information is known.
S	12	Visits to College - Governors' willingness to actively support the College by visiting its productions, exhibitions and other events. Meeting with staff and SLT to assist in reviews and inform themselves about aspects of College governance.