



**MINUTES OF THE ESHER COLLEGE CORPORATION  
MEETING**

Held At Esher College  
Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017, at 6.00 pm.

**PART I**

**Present:**

Terry Price (Chair)	Robin John
Darrell Bate	David Lavarack
Paul Collyer	Ian Leigh
Dan Dean	Daniel Loughlin
Jo Gardner	Tim Oliver
Peter Hickman	Damian O'Malley
David Irving	Fran Stewart

Helen Odhams, Deputy Principal (Advising Officer)  
Rebecca De'Ath, Clerk  
Jo Heasman, Marketing and Liaison Manager (for item 1)

**1. PRESENTATION ON MARKETING**

The Chair welcomed Jo Heasman, Marketing and Liaison Manager, who was going to present the College's marketing strategy to the meeting.

The marketing effort had focussed on Open Evening, which was advertised on phone boxes, on trains, and was accompanied by a social media campaign (Instagram and Facebook). The outcome of this effort had been determined by research at the Open Evening where students asked attendees how they had heard about the event.

The Marketing Plan for 2017 aimed at publicising the College's Open Evening date and the application process for the College. The College was working with a new local agency to publicise this (in particular to year 10 students).

Governors asked the Marketing and Liaison Manager the following questions:

Q: Why do students choose to apply to Esher College? Students join us from over 100 schools for reasons such as they feel that they are treated like adults in that they have to take responsibility for themselves and the fact that it is seen as a stepping stone in preparation for student life. The College offers a wider choice of courses. Free Wi-Fi is the biggest selling point! We seek this feedback via focus groups.

Q: Is there a tracking mechanism to determine what it was that prompted applicants to choose Esher College? We have an enrolment survey which asks them why they applied here.

Q: How do you keep potential applicants engaged with the College before they commit? We send them a hard copy of the Newsletter.

Q: Is the Adult Education offering outside your remit? Not totally – I have worked on the Adult Education prospectus with that Manager and it will be sent to prospective students.

The Chair of the Corporation thanked Jo for her interesting presentation.

*Darrell Bate arrived at 6.20pm*

## 2. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest in items on tonight's agenda.

## 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received (and accepted) from Jane Grenander, Karin Rowsell, Clarissa Wilks and Emily Jeans.

## 4. CONSTITUTION

There had been no volunteers to fill the role of Environmental Link Governor; the Corporation Chair had been attending the Environmental Sustainability Group meetings in the interim. The Environmental Sustainability Group reported to the Estates Committee via the Director of Finance and Estates who chaired the Group. The Review and Search Committee felt that she would be able to convey environmental matters to the Corporation via this mechanism, and they therefore recommended to the Corporation that this role be removed from the constitution. The Corporation agreed to this proposal, noting that the key roles were that of Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity Link Governors, which were currently filled.

## 5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (13<sup>th</sup> December 2016)

The minutes were approved as a true record.

## 6. MATTERS ARISING

**C2-001** Action completed: The Clerk had uploaded the External Quality Review reports to the Governors' Portal.

**Governors' Training Morning** - the meeting was reminded that this event was now scheduled for Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

**Working Group on Academy Application** – it was noted that the Terms of Reference of this Group had not yet been presented to the Corporation for approval. The Corporation Chair apologised for this; the TORs had been drafted and had been agreed by the Group at their meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017 with the recommendation that they be approved by the Corporation. Governors also asked for sight of the proposed academy application timeframe.

**ACTION: Principal** to circulate Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Academy Application and the timeframe for conversion. *[Clerk's note: emailed to Corporation members on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017.]*

## 7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal drew the meeting's attention to the following main points in his Report:

- The College had been visited by two DfE officials who were on their Department's School Immersion Programme. They were grateful to the College for hosting them.
- A tree and bench will be erected tomorrow as a memorial for Emily Lyon, in a location agreed by the Student Union. The College had been co-operating with the police since the tragedy, and the

Principal updated the Corporation on their investigation into her death. Governors sought assurance that there were no related issues that might adversely affect current students and asked about the reporting of confidential matters that could potentially be disclosed by students suffering from mental health issues. This assurance was given by the Principal.

- Applications 2017 - there had been 100 places offered to reserve list students in February to mitigate some of the risk factors that might affect enrolment numbers.
- The Vice-Principal had successfully applied for a job at the College of Richard Collyer in Horsham. He will leave Esher College at the end of the summer term. The College is about to shortlist for a replacement.
- Funding and Finance – the EFA intervention “flag” over the College’s financial position has been removed following the submission of the College’s latest set of management accounts.
- External Quality Reviews – although these had been very positive, governors felt that the college should not become complacent.
- Quality of Teaching and Learning – asked if there was an update on the Departments requiring additional support, the Principal explained that some of them had already shown definite signs of improvement, and all would be reviewed again after the exams.
- Accommodation and Estates – the outcome of the Condition Improvement Funding bids for roof and electrical works was still awaited.

### **Student Union Report**

The meeting noted the change in President and Vice-President and the contents of the SU Report.

### **Finance Reports**

These reports had been reviewed by the Finance Committee – see feedback at item 10, below.

The Corporation, having no further queries, approved the Reports.

### **Review of Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**

The Deputy Principal updated the meeting on progress towards targets:

- Target 6 (British Values) – target put back a few months to ensure that the impact is evidenced in Departmental SARs.
- Target 8 (Linear “A” levels) – is taking up much of the leadership’s time, but is making good progress.
- Target 15 (sharing EQR practice) – deadline put back to ensure the impact of the measures are evidenced in the SARs.
- Target 16 (improve attendance of certain groups of students) – despite enhanced reporting and monitoring, target unlikely to be met as these cohorts are so small that data can easily be skewed. The target next year would focus on global attendance. She assured governors that there was evidence that the attendance of the minority groups was good.
- Targets 19 – 28 (“A” level exam outcomes) – too early to report on these targets now, although the College records in-year progress against grades. Asked to capture information relating to the in-year tracking and predictions of exam outcomes, the Deputy Principal agreed to consider this for the next meeting.

**ACTION: Deputy Principal** to explore the possibility of reporting on predicted exam outcomes.

## **8. ACADEMY APPLICATION UPDATE**

The first consultation on academy conversion had closed. There were 5 responses; comments were shared with the meeting. The College’s academy application had been approved by the Transaction Unit and signed off by Peter Mucklow. The Head Teachers’ Board would give final approval.

In the meanwhile, the College had been monitoring developments, both nationally and locally, in terms of the academisation climate (see Academy Conversion Update 15/03/17, circulated with the agenda). The

Policy Committee had discussed these developments at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March and the Corporation considered the implications. There was a consensus that any decision to convert should be in the best interests of Esher College and that, at this early point in the conversion process, the implications for the College were not yet clear

The Corporation agreed the following:

- that the College should complete the application process, but to enable the necessary committee and Corporation meetings to take place first, the data that the Head Teacher Board required would not be ready until a later date. Thereafter the College would pause to review the situation (with a delay of the dissolution date of no more than a year beyond 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018); [**ACTION: Principal** to draft e-mail to the EFA for Chair and Chair designate to review];
- that an extraordinary Corporation meeting be established in May/June to discuss a proposed governance structure for the academy; [**ACTION: Chair** to arrange meeting].
- that the Director of Finance and Estates would produce projections of the financial benefits for, and against, conversion - which the Finance Committee would discuss at their meeting in June 2017. [**Action: Director of Finance and Estates**].

## 9. ADMISSIONS POLICY 2018

The meeting noted that there was no substantive change to the policy, and that Twickenham Academy had been added to the list of schools without sixth forms which qualify for guaranteed status. Reviewing the wording in the Policy, Governors agreed that the footnote be removed from the first page and that the new GCSE grading needed to be incorporated into the policy.

## 10. REPORT BACK FROM COMMITTEES

### AUDIT

This committee had reviewed the Strategic Risk Register; it had agreed that the extended audit work focus on Safeguarding policies and procedures; the committee's Terms of Reference had been reviewed.

### ESTATES

The catering and cleaning contracts had been the subject of a tendering process.

The committee had discussed the Property Strategy: it was clear that 2,000 students was the natural ceiling for the foreseeable future in view of accommodation available. The Senior Management Team was looking at how best to enhance the campus to support this number.

### FINANCE

The Management Accounts to 31 January 2017 had been reviewed and actual spend was on budget.

The committee had noted that if the College became an academy, the employer's covenant would become stronger since the government would guarantee the LGPS pension liability. This would lead to lower employer's contributions.

### POLICY

Discussion at this meeting had focussed on the academy application and the Admissions Policy for 2018 (see items 8 and 9, above).

### REVIEW & SEARCH

Two main issues had been discussed: the requirement for an Environmental Link Governor and the fact that succession planning for members of the Corporation would continue as normal while the academy application was carried out in parallel.

## WORKING GROUP ON ACADEMY APPLICATION

The Group's minutes of its' first two meetings had been presented to the Policy committee and issues brought to the Corporation under item 8, above.

The Corporation noted the minutes of these Committees.

### 11. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committees had reviewed their Terms of Reference, and the suggested changes had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Corporation approved the revised TORs of the Audit, Finance and Review & Search Committees.

Policy TORs – it was suggested that, along with the removal of paragraph 18, these TORs should mention the fact that the Working Group on Academy Application makes recommendations to the Corporation through the Policy Committee.

Estates TORs – amendments were due to be reviewed at the next Estates meeting, but in the light of the academy application, the Corporation agreed that this be put on hold for the time being.

**ACTION: Clerk** to remove "Terms of Reference" from the agenda for the next Estates Committee meeting and to add it to the agenda for the next Policy Committee meeting.

### 12. LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS

#### Safeguarding Link

Damian O' Malley had met with the College's Designated Safeguarding Officers as part of his induction, and with the Vice-Principal on March 17<sup>th</sup>. He intends to meet with the relevant leaders each term before Corporation meetings. He is copied in to the Safeguarding Working Group communications.

#### Equality and Diversity Link

In the absence of the Link Governor, there was nothing to report.

### 13. GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE AT COLLEGE

Fran Stewart, Jane Grenander and Tim Oliver attended a morning in College to 'shadow' students and had thoroughly enjoyed it.

A list of Governors who attended College (and reasons for their visit) is captured below.

8 <sup>th</sup> February	Terry Price – Environmental Sustainability Group
23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean
2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Tim Oliver, Jane Grenander and Fran Stewart – shadowing students
17 <sup>th</sup> March	Damian O'Malley – Safeguarding meeting with Dan Hards
23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Terry Price – meeting with Dan Dean

### 14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Jo Gardner had participated in the AoC webinar on preparing for Ofsted inspections, which she said was good.

- Governors enquired as to why all students accepted by Oxbridge this year were female. They were informed that some male students had applied and got to the interview stage – the all-female result was an anomaly.
- The rationale for closing the back gate of the campus this week and over Easter was explained.
- After 12 years as a governor, Peter Hickman had resigned from the Corporation – he was standing down as a Councillor in May and his third term as Governor was coming to an end shortly. The Chair thanked him for his contribution to the Corporation and his support of the College over this period. Governors gave their good wishes for the future.

15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – end May/June tbc.** Thereafter - Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017

*The meeting closed at 7.47 pm.*

*Attendance was 79% (15 out of 19 members)*

Signed.....

Date.....

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

<b>C3-001</b>	Item 6: Matters Arising - <b>Principal</b> to circulate Terms of Reference of the Academy Application Working Group and the timeframe for conversion. <i>[Clerk's note: emailed to Corporation members on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017.]</i>
<b>C3-002</b>	Item 7: Principal's Report (QIP) - <b>Deputy Principal</b> to explore the possibility of reporting on predicted exam outcomes.
<b>C3-003</b>	Item 8: Academy conversion- actions on <b>Principal, Chair, and Director of Finance and Estates</b> – see above.
<b>C3-004</b>	Item 11: Committee TORs - <b>Clerk</b> to remove "Terms of Reference" from the agenda for the next Estates Committee meeting and add it to the agenda for the next Policy Committee meeting.

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

<b>C/S</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>
C	1	Marketing Presentation – Governors enquired if processes were in place to determine whether campaigns were successful and that students' reasons for choosing Esher were captured; that a process was in place to retain applicants' interest in Esher before they enrolled.
C	7	Principal's Report – Governors sought assurance that the teaching quality of some Departments was being addressed and was improving; that the QIP might contain additional data to give the Corporation assurance about good exam outcomes.

C/S	8	Academy Application – challenge from some Governors who had not seen the Working Group TORs or the timeline for conversion; support for the College by agreeing to take time out to review the academy application process in the light of a changing political landscape, and by asking for financial scenarios to be prepared showing the advantages and disadvantages of conversion.
C/S	9	Admissions Policy – Governors’ suggestions to ensure that the Policy is clear and robust.
S/C	11	Committees’ Terms of Reference – Governors ensuring that wording was robust.
S	12	Safeguarding Link Governor – establishing communications and meetings with the College’s key Safeguarding stakeholders on a regular basis.
S	13	Governors’ visits to College to better understand issues and College life.
C S	14	AOB – query about the gender statistics of the Oxbridge applicants. Governor undertaking training about the Ofsted process to be able to support the College.