



MINUTES OF THE ESHER COLLEGE CORPORATION

Held At Esher College
Tuesday, 22nd September 2015, at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Terry Price (Chair)
Jo Canessa
Emma Cheney
Paul Collyer
Elizabeth Cooper
Dan Dean
Peter Hickman
David Irving

Robin John
Nick Johnston-Jones
David Lavarack
Ian Leigh
Damian O'Malley
Karin Rowsell
Clarissa Wilks

Emma Young, Deputy Principal (Advising Officer)
Dan Lodge, Vice Principal (Students and Staff Development) (Advising Officer)
Rebecca De'Ath, Clerk

1. PRESENTATION ON EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Deputy Principal gave a presentation on the 2014 – 2015 examination results (see report previously circulated with meeting papers.) In summary, the College was very pleased with the excellent results, which had on the whole improved upon last year, and had exceeded national averages at A and AS level. This was recognised as being the result of the hard work of the students and staff.

Governors asked questions as follows:

- Has the value-added score gone up? *It is essentially too early to know. Level 3 Value Added outcomes are expected in late October/early November.*
- Which departments will the College be working with to improve results? *Meetings have been set up with 8 departments to scrutinise their reports, and the Joint Review process will be the culmination of this exercise.*
- Has there been any dramatic re-grading? *There have been less exam issues compared to last year. There have been 456 re-marks to date, resulting in 60 grade increases thus far. There have been 117 UMS increases in marks.*
- How successful was the 10 Point Plan? *Overall, very successful. Improvements have been seen across most departments.*

Governors discussed the subjects that performed less well, while recognising that this differentiated picture of results across subjects may well be skewed due to a number of factors.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal for her presentation.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS IN AGENDA ITEMS

Clarissa Wilks declared that she was related to a student in 6.1.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Linda McGarry, Fran Stewart and Simon D’Arcy sent their apologies.

4. CONSTITUTION

Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Clerk explained that the current Chair and Vice Chair are entering their second year in these roles, which will end in September 2016. There were no objections to this arrangement.

This arrangement was approved. (Proposer: Paul Collyer Seconder: Karin Rowsell)

Confirmation of Committee Chairs and Membership

No Governors had sought to change the committees upon which they served. The Chair reported that he had established the membership of the new Finance Strategy Group by ensuring that there was a mix of members from different committees, and from different categories of Governor.

It was agreed that the Committee Chairs and membership would continue as it had last year.

(Proposer: Clarissa Wilks Seconder: Robin John)

Parent Governor Election

Nick Johnston-Jones’ term of office will end on 7th November. The process to fill this forthcoming vacancy had begun, and nominations from three parents had been received; an election was due to be held shortly. The Chair thanked Nick for his contribution over the last 2 years; his experience was much valued by the Corporation, and by the Committees on which he sat.

Schedule of Corporation Dates

There was a change to the Policy Committee date of 2nd December, which will now be held on the 30th November.

Members agreed to this change.

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 7th July were agreed as a true record.

(Proposer: Robin John Seconder: David Lavarack)

6. MATTERS ARISING

C4-001: Deputy Clerk to send out a revised schedule of meeting dates – action completed.

C4-002: Director of Finance and Estates to send out amended Finance Report – action completed.

C4-003: Clerk to assign the review of the Special Committee terms of reference to an appropriate committee – action completed (agreed with Chair that this would fall to the Review and Search Committee.)

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (verbal)

Enrolment 2015

The Corporation was informed by the Principal that the 6:1 enrolment had been a very smooth process. The College had enrolled 1003 new students, against a target of 1000. There were some surprises however with the 6:2 re-enrolment, as there was a higher drop-out rate of students moving from 6:1 to 6:2 than previously. Researching this issue, it was determined that this was partly due to the fluctuating data on which the assumptions were based, and which might also have been over-optimistic. However, the College will comfortably exceed its 1750 minimum target. Final student figures are expected to be around 1780 - 1790. Governors noted the final enrolment figures achieved [6:1 990; 6:2 817; Total 1807.]

Governors queried the reasons for a lower than expected 6.2 re-enrolment. The Vice Principal is investigating and his report to December Policy Committee will outline his findings.

Governors suggested that the College might pre-empt such an outcome in the future by discussing at an early stage with students the disadvantages of leaving after only one year of study.

ACTION: Vice Principal, Student Services to share the Retention and Progression report that he will produce following further research into this.

Applications 2016

The Guaranteed Application phase had closed, with 894 applications accepted. The biggest category of applicants was that of Siblings, where 227 applications were successful, against 187 last year. The Open application phase closes later this week; it was expected that similar levels of applications would be received as last year (2,700).

As full assessment of both enrolment 2015 and applications 2016 will be provided in the Admissions Analysis 2015.

The Corporation noted this position.

Review of Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2014/15

The Deputy Principal stated that the main changes to the QIP were updates to the first 8 targets. She explained that partly-achieved targets were reliant on other factors before they could be achieved - Target 9 would be updated once Level 3 VA outcomes were received; Targets 11 and 13 awaiting information from SARs, and were expected to be achieved, along with Targets 16 and 24. Targets 27 and 28 were now achieved.

The Corporation noted the current position, and will be presented with the final version at the next meeting.

New Staff Appointments

Governors had received a list of new staff, and asked how the staff teacher training programme was going. They were informed that it was going very well, and was linked to Canterbury Christ Church University. In response to further questions, Governors were told that the College was now fully-staffed; there had been difficulties recruiting teachers for certain subjects (such as Geography and Business Studies), which reflected the national situation.

8. AREA BASED REVIEWS (ABRs) and STRODE'S STRUCTURE & PROSPECTS APPRAISAL (SPA)

The Principal informed the Corporation about the Government's plans for reviewing post-16 education and training institutions via a process of area-based reviews (see briefing note previously sent out).

Governors discussed what might be on the national agenda, and expressed their concerns about any impact on the quality of provision. They were informed that the outcomes of these reviews would be recommendations only; there were no statutory implications, although there might be financial implications.

The Principal then explained that Strode's College had announced that it was to undergo a mini Structure and Prospects Appraisal. Esher College had been asked to participate in this process, which will explore future strategic options for Strode's College.

9. GOVERNORS' SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) 2014/15

Main Report

Governors had reviewed this year's Report and suggested the following revisions:

- Page 3, 1st sentence: "The Corporation ensures that it is aware of how ~~good~~ **well** the College is **performing** by...."
- Page 9, Equality & Diversity, 3rd para: the percentage of female governors is **40%** (not 66%)

Quality Improvement Plan 2015 - 16 (Appendix B to the SAR)

Governors decided upon the following additions:

- The Plan should mention keeping ABRs under review – amend target at bottom of page 22 to read "...monitor national...policy changes, including curriculum reforms **and area-based reviews....**"
- The equality and diversity target in the 2014 – 15 QIP (page 18) should be carried forward to this year, to enhance the target on page 23 ("To strengthen succession planning to address forthcoming changes in Governors membership **by encouraging applications from a more diverse audience by recruiting more widely.**")

The meeting was informed that this Report would be lodged on the College website.

Subject to the above amendments, the Corporation approved the Report.

(Proposer: Terry Price Secunder: Damian O'Malley)

10. MATTERS ARISING FROM STAFF/STUDENTS

A Governor asked whether College staff would receive a briefing about the Government's area-based reviews. The Principal replied that he would be updating all staff in due course.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reminded Governors to return any outstanding Prevent course certificates to the Clerk or the office, along with Equality and Diversity monitoring forms, Eligibility for Governor declarations, and Business Interest declarations.

The Deputy Principal thanked Governors for their commitment to the forthcoming Joint Review process.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, 15th December 2015

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Attendance was 75% (15 out of 20 members)

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

C1-001	Item 7: Vice Principal to report on Retention and Progression once his research is complete.
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SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Item	Topic
C/S	1	Governor questions about exam results.
C	7	Governors' concern about the drop-out rate of students moving from 6:1 to 6:2.
C/S	7	Governors ascertaining whether there were any staff recruitment difficulties, and whether the College was fully-staffed.
C	9	Governors challenged data in the Governance SAR, and enhanced several targets.