

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting 19.5 held on Tuesday 7 July 2020, by video conference
Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge**

Present: Ian Wilson (Chair), Anne Adamson, Paul Andrew, Gerry Bolton, Yolanda Botham (Principal), Charlie Brown, Steven Esdale, Karen Everitt, Maria Ferguson, John Godwood, Colin Greenhalgh, Vickie Grenville, Paula Heaney, Tony Humphrey, Chris Lang, Alison Miles, Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas, Jenny O'Hare and Owen Shield

In attendance: Steve Dann (VP) and Charlotte Hemmins (Finance Director)

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

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19.5.1 **Apologies for absence**

The Corporation Chair welcomed new Independent Governor Gerry Bolton to his first full Board meeting. The Chair advised that there was an additional approval item for the Standards committee not showing on the agenda.

19.5.2 **Declarations of Interest**

None

19.5.3 **Minutes of Corporation meeting 19.4**

With no amendments the minutes of the Board meeting 19.4 held on Tuesday 21 May 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

19.5.4 **Matters arising**

None

19.5.5 **Report from the Finance & Resources committee**

FRC19.4 Wednesday 10 June 2020

The FRC Chair referred to the minutes that were included with the papers for the items discussed by the committee on 10 June. He reminded the Board that there were 3 items for approval, including the budget for 2020/21.

Owen Shield joined the meeting at 5.06pm

Revenue. The current year was almost coming to an end, and the College was forecasting a financial surplus. The FRC Chair commented that College was presenting a modest surplus budget for next year with a small strategic development fund, despite a considerable sum being added for Covid-19 related revenue costs. He added it was not possible to know if sufficient Covid-19 related revenue costs had been factored in, and so the FRC would review a substantive reforecast of the College's

financial performance in the Autumn term when estates and other costs related to Covid-19 were known. The committee would be pencilling in a September date to meet for this purpose.

With no questions, the Corporation approved the I&E revenue budget for 2020/21 as per the written paper.

Capital. The FRC Chair commented that there were likely to be more immediate and direct capital cost implications arising from Covid-19. He advised there were some regular IT and estates capital items amounting to just under £300k; in addition 3 separate items related to the Covid-19 impact, the detail of which was conveyed during the meeting, totalling £638. The FRC Chair summed up that if all that sum was spent, and there remained a surplus, cash and net current assets would still increase slightly.

In relation to a question from a Governor about costs of £175k for IT capital, the Finance Director advised that apart from the rolling programme of upgrading hardware, the biggest cost was attributable to upgrading the wireless network across the site.

Another Governor commented on financial support to other sectors (the NHS) and questioned how large institutions could be expected to return to normality without additional money for supplementing facilities to support social distancing. Academies and schools were able to bid for exceptional funding for Covid-19, but not SFCs.

With no further questions, the Corporation approved the capital budget for 2020/21 as presented.

Financial Support policy. The FRC Chair talked through the changes to the financial support policy including on the method of applying for and accepting applications for financial support, continued payments for free school meals and additional flexibility for remote learning.

Maria Ferguson joined the meeting at 5.21pm

A Governor asked if the reduction in threshold applied to only new students or those already in scheme. The FD commented that more work would need to be done around that so as to not unfairly disadvantage any group of students, but the policy did have an 'exceptional circumstances' caveat that might apply in this case.

With no amendments suggested, the Corporation unanimously approved the Financial Support policy.

Health & Safety policy including the approved code of practice (ACoP) for infectious diseases. The policy had received minor updates and Covid-19 additions throughout, plus a separate ACoP appendix to the policy. There were no queries on this updated policy.

The Corporation approved the updated Health & Safety policy and the ACoP on infectious diseases.

19.5.6 **Report from Audit committee**

AC19.3 Wednesday 10 June 2020

The Corporation Chair reminded the meeting that the Audit committee had no items for approval. The draft minutes had been provided with the Board papers.

Tony Humphrey joined the meeting at 5.26pm

The AC Chair drew the Board's attention to one point. The College's financial statements auditors were coming to the end of their 5 year contract once the summer 2020 external audit was complete. The Finance Director commented that the CPC national framework for audit services tenders would allow the College access to a number of audit firms after Christmas/New Year 2021.

With no further comments from members that concluded the AC report.

19.5.7 **Report from Governance & Search committee**

GSRC19.4 Tuesday 23 June 2020

The GSRC Chair led on appointments and reappointments. The Corporation Chair commented that some of the changes to the Corporation at this time were affected in part by Covid-19. 3 Corporation members were asked to leave the meeting and re-join in 5 minutes time.

Paula Heaney, Charlie Brown and Tony Humphrey all left the meeting at 5.30pm

The GSRC Chair referred to the committee's robust discussion on succession planning, the details of which were clear from the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June.

On GSRC recommendation, Paula Heaney's term of office as Independent Governor was extended by one year ie. to 3 October 2021.

Independent Governor, Charlie Brown, would be coming to the end of his time as Governor at LRSFC on 20 September 2020. However, he was

providing key support in chairing the Covid-19 working group, the work of which was expected to continue past that date.

The Corporation wished to support the proposal from GSRC to co-opt Charlie Brown to the Corporation with effect from 21 September 2020. The period of co-option would come to a close at the end of the 2020/21 academic year.

Parent Governor, Tony Humphrey, would be coming to the end of his 2-year term of office in early 2020/21. He had expressed an interest in joining the Corporation as an Independent member.

The Corporation wished to support the appointment of Tony Humphrey as Independent Governor for a 4-year term of office with effect from 21 September 2020.

Paula Heaney re-joined the meeting at 5.35pm. Tony Humphrey and Charlie Brown re-joined the meeting at 5.36pm.

The committee had also discussed the changes in Standards committee membership expected to occur at the end of 2020/21. Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas had expressed interest in becoming a member of the Standards committee. The GSRC wished to recommend that for the period September 2020 to July 2021 she be co-opted; she would become a full Standards committee member from September 2021 when the next vacancy was expected. **This was agreed by the Corporation.**

Procedure for decision making in exceptional circumstances. The GSRC Chair commented that the procedure had been re-written to support the provision for written resolutions (taking into consideration recent developments in digital technology), broadened to support all emergency Corporation decisions, not only financial ones, and had been simplified somewhat.

With no comments or questions, the Corporation approved the updated procedure for decision making in exceptional circumstances.

Restructure of Governance, Search & Remuneration committee (GSRC).

The committee had discussed its own function during the year and proposed for 2020/21 the committee be split into two, with 'Governance & Search' being separated from 'Remuneration'. The required membership when considering matters of remuneration was distinct from the 'search' and 'governance' functions. The draft Standing Orders proposed separate Terms of Reference for the two committees that had been considered by the GSRC in the summer.

With no questions, the Corporation approved the establishment of a Governance and Search committee, and a separate Remuneration committee for 2020/21. The Corporation would return to the matter of membership of the Remuneration committee in the Autumn term. Board

19.5.8 **Report from Standards committee**

STC19.5 Thursday 2 July 2020

The Standards committee Chair drew members' attention to his written report. There were 3 items for Corporation approval. He wished to summarise important points relevant to College operations during lockdown. The committee had received a termly Safeguarding report from the DSL on safeguarding measures during lockdown. The committee was content that safeguarding processes were followed with a great deal of rigour. The committee had received a report on maintaining teaching and learning during lockdown, UCAS applications submitted, processes for students who would have been taking exams this summer but who will get centre assessed grades (CAGs), quality assured by the awarding bodies. Standards committee was happy with the process and communication between students and parents around fairness. Current year 12s, instead of end year exams had undergone on-line assessments, with the main aim of checking the level of engagement and learning, to be followed up with individual students if necessary.

The committee had received an analysis of application numbers/offers accepted for the September 2020 intake, in comparison to those in summer 2019, and the plans for return to College, including Covid-19 preparations.

Complaints policy. The committee had carefully reviewed the complaints policy during the summer and having recommended some amendments, shown by track changes, wished to recommend Board approval.

With no comments the Board approved the Complaints policy.

Admissions policy. The committee noted that the new policy represented an extensive re-write of the current policy. The new policy specified different categories of students. The committee had reviewed the policy carefully and wished to recommend Board approval.

With no amendments the Board approved the Admissions policy.

Appendix to the Safeguarding policy. The committee had reviewed a newly drafted Covid-19 appendix to the Safeguarding policy. The designated Safeguarding Governor advised that she had reviewed the

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materials beforehand and she was content on the depth of coverage, supporting students and staff.

With no comments the Board approval the Covid-19 appendix to the Safeguarding policy.

19.5.9 College local strategic update

The Principal presented her written paper. She drew the Board's attention to the good news that the College had secured its Tier 4 international recruitment student licence. Further work and preparation would now be undertaken in order to move forward with international recruitment.

The meeting went onto discuss other matters of strategic relevance, including:

- the merger of two local MATs towards the north of the city, and the current offer/curriculum in the context of the merger
- recent local Ofsted inspection outcomes
- local road closures (Luard Road)
- new sites for train stations (Soham, and Cambridge South)

19.5.10 College Covid-19 working group report/plan

The Governor Chair of the Covid-19 working group pointed out that although the Board may consider the Autumn term opening plans for approval, the working of the group was to support the College in this regard, not to make any recommendation to the Board.

The paper prepared for the meeting was in the context of some uncertainties and incomplete and inconsistent national advice/guidance, and set out a pragmatic approach in a rapidly changing environment. The Corporation was asked to consider the re-opening plan as it currently stands notwithstanding that the situation would need to remain fluid according to local circumstances.

The Principal commented that all the many documents presented, which were based on recent guidance, were to be read alongside each other. She drew the meeting's attention to a few key points on return to College in the Autumn:

- College was intending to maintain the current timetable.
- Under the new guidance half the number of students would be on site at one time.
- Year one would be on site one week, and then year two the next with each learning remotely for the other week.
- The blended learning approach was intended for the first month, and then to be kept under review accordingly.

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- Due to unique student timetables and staggered start times, not everyone will be travelling at the same time, but some travel would occur in peak times.
- Learning would take place on site (College) and off site (remotely) and this would need to be communicated clearly. Blended learning had been deemed a success, and was not considered an impoverished approach.
- Marquees were booked; each will take around 250 students which will allow social distancing.
- For classroom based activity teachers will be in a 2mtr bubble.
- Students will be seated in a particular arrangement, where possible with 1mtr distance. Activities will be risk assessed and students will be guided.
- Students and staff will be asked to wear masks as they move around the site; this will be “policed” by new ‘health and safety wellbeing marshalls’.
- More toilets, handwashing stations and hand sanitisers will be provided.
- Additional daytime cleaners would be working.
- Smaller classrooms would not be in use.

The College management were in discussions with other local institutions within which there was a range of approaches according to the type of institution, and whether urban/rural etc.

A Governor asked about the transport situation and the contradictory guidance given the advice that public transport should be used as an ‘absolute minimum’. College was in contact with Greater Anglia and a travel questionnaire would go to current students. Different methods of identifying vulnerable students and supporting them to learn were discussed. A Governor commented that the extensive risk assessments that had been carried out would be supplemented with an audit trail of activities to defend against any lack of preparation. An equality and diversity impact assessment would support the aim of not indirectly discriminating against anyone.

A Governor asked about new students unfamiliar with the site; the Principal commented that it was planned to carefully review timetables as soon as possible, to support a robust induction for new students.

Another Governor referred to Ofsted monitoring visits, and the need for institutions to be totally frank and honest as to what the limitations are. The Principal added that the plan included the usual teaching and pastoral care, progress coaches, and academic support and some

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enrichment onsite and some remote, tutorial groups, plus small groups and 1:1s on site. All activity had to be risk assessed.

The meeting touched upon the flexibilities available and this was reflected in difference in the guidance for schools and that given to Colleges which referred to 'blended' or 'remote' learning. A Governor prompted a discussion about approach, online learning, induction and training, and timetable. The College was creating 'bubbles' by separating out year groups and knowing which groups were in which rooms, with seating plans, and carefully laid out rooms where it will be clear tables will not be moved. Social distancing was to be reinforced and managed carefully, and students and staff would be expected to wear a face mask (with some provided by College – College 'kit') when moving around the site. Protocols and signs about PPE would remind people not to come into College if unwell and holding areas, should anyone become ill whilst on College site, would be sanitised when vacated. This would support the 'winter cold' season, and where people go home with cold/flu-like symptoms they will be expected to test for coronavirus and provide the results of the test. Appropriately robust records would need to be kept.

In response to a question from a Governor about attendance management, the Principal stated that normal rules would be in place, with students expected to attend physical or online lessons, reporting absences in the usual manner. The updated student code of conduct which would go to new and returning students already covered those matters.

The Chair drew the discussion to a conclusion, reminding the meeting that the Corporation should decide whether the plan is sensible/workable, with the appropriate level of risk assessment behind it.

The Corporation endorsed the plan as set out along with all the scenarios, and supporting information and risk assessments.

19.5.11

Board annual activities

Instrument & Articles of Government. Following amendments made at the March Board meeting, the Clerk pointed out that minor amendments to wording were proposed, shown by track changes.

With no questions, the Corporation approved the Instrument & Articles of Government for 2020/21.

Standing Orders. The Clerk drew the Corporation's attention to the minor amendments to the Standing Orders, including committees' Terms of Reference. Remuneration Committee membership would need to be

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agreed in the Autumn term. The Standing Orders also included an updated the Vice Chair role description.

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With no questions, the Corporation approved the Standing Orders for 2020/21.

Meeting schedule for 2020/21. With possible additional meetings for a couple of committees which would be communicated as appropriate, **the Corporation approved its meeting schedule for 2020/21.** It was noted that remote meetings would continue in the early Autumn term with a hope to be able to hold some physical meetings during 2020/21

Corporation Cycle of Business 2020/21. Pre-meetings would continue to ensure the work plan for individual committees and the Board, and for governance overall, to remain dynamic to the challenges associated with Covid-19. **The Corporation approved its cycle of business for 2020/21.**

19.5.12

Any other urgent business

The Corporation Chair reminded the meeting that a Vice Chair vacancy would arise in the Autumn, and Independent Corporation members were invited to express an interest and/or to seek further information about the role from the Clerk, the Chair or one of the current Vice Chairs.

**Independent
Governors**

The Chair thanked student Governor Cameron Mayes for his input to meetings, as he was coming to the end of his time at the College.

Led by the Corporation Chair, and seconded by the Audit committee Chair, the whole Board conveyed their sincere thanks to Charlie Brown for whom this was his last Board meeting as Independent Governor. Charlie had served as Finance and later Audit committee Chair, and had made a considerable contribution over many years to the development of governance at the College, and to supporting and mentoring other Governors. His ongoing support to the Covid-19 working group and to succession planning as co-opted member over the next few months was appreciated.

19.5.13

Date of next meeting 2020/21

20.1 Tuesday 13 October 2020

Signed

Date