

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting 21.5 held on Tuesday 12 July 2022, held in College in room A203
Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge**

Present: Tony Humphrey (Chair), Gerry Bolton, Yolanda Botham (Principal, by video), Abby Futter, John Godwood, Rob Howes, Hugo Macey, Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas, Jenny O'Hare, Sebastian Rasinger, and Ian Wilson

In attendance: Steve Dann (Vice Principal), and Charlotte Hemmins (Finance Director)

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

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Parminder Singh Garcha, from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority gave an interactive presentation on the employment and skills agenda

21.5.1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Paul Andrew, Karen Everitt, Sophie Harrison, Maryum Jadoon, Gemma Long, Olivia Palo, Alex Pryce and Alex Wong.

21.5.2 Declarations of Interest

The support Staff Governor Abby Futter declared an interest in agenda item 6.

21.5.3 Minutes of the last meeting 21.4 held on Tuesday 17 May 2022

With no amendments, the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

21.5.4 Matters arising

The Corporation Chair wished to mark the Governor celebratory dinner that had occurred on 30 June. This was the first opportunity in two years that the Corporation had been able to meet as a collective, and it was felt that the event had helped to build team spirit and the cultural continuity of the Corporation. It had been a unique opportunity for all old and new Corporation members to meet and share knowledge and experience, ultimately benefitting the College and students. He wished to thank the Clerk on behalf of the Corporation for organising an excellent event.

21.5.5 Report from the Governance & Search committee GSC21.4 7 June 2022

The Corporation Chair reported from the recent meeting on behalf of the GSC Chair, who was unable to be present. The draft minutes were provided as a formal record. There was one item for Corporation approval.

He gave an overview of what the committee had discussed, including external reviews, Governor induction to occur next term, the committee

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had reviewed the I&As and the Board composition/committee membership, including vacancies. The Governor advised the Board that one candidate was scheduled for interview in mid-September.

GSC21.3.5 Governor appointment. A panel of GSC Governors had interviewed a candidate on 15 June 2022. Carole Moss, a head teacher at a local senior school, had applied to become an Independent Governor at LRSFC. She had governor experience and some experience at sixth form level. The usual questions around conflicts of interest had occurred and the Corporation would need to be mindful, as with any Corporation member, to manage any conflicts as they arise. The panel without reservation wished to recommend appointment.

The Corporation appointed Carole Moss as Independent Governor for a 4-year term of office, with effect from 30 August 2022, ie. to 29 August 2026. She would initially become a member of the Standards committee.

21.5.6 Report from Finance and Resources committee FRC21.4 15 June 2022

The FRC Chair reported from the FRC21.4 meeting. A written report had been included with the paperwork. There was one matter for information only that had been discussed as a confidential matter at the last FRC meeting, and 4 items for Corporation approval.

Support Staff pay (information only). The Board was being briefed on this operational matter for College due to the cost impact. He reported that the committee had received a report setting out a proposal to move all support staff to the next level on the pay spine, to support recruitment and retention, and this was one measure through which College wished to demonstrate staff being valued. This matter was affecting other Colleges and there had been national discussions about it (at SFCA). It was hoped that work would occur with the support staff unions to review the support staff salary scale.

A Governor commented that it seemed hard to be competitive for support roles in the local area and he asked how close this would make the College to other similar local roles. The FD commented that it was entirely dependent upon the role, but greater movement would be unaffordable for some roles.

Annual budget for 2022/23 including capital allocation. The FRC Chair gave a detailed overview of the proposed budget for 2022/23 and the three year financial forecast referring to factors affecting finances, including student numbers and funding rates for next year (including a requirement to deliver an additional 40 hours leading to additional

costs), and an increase in utility costs of up to 52%. Costs included assumed pay increase (of 3%) for next year, and further national news was expected on that.

A Governor asked about the impact of costs rising on the rate of pay next year as a percentage of income as the plan had been to reduce this. The FD commented that increases in income were not as large as costs but the College was still planning on an assumption of growth. As the timeframe was 2024/25, there would be time to react and respond if numbers were to change. She commented that due to prudent budgeting there was not anything related to non-pay that could not be delivered due to pay costs.

The Corporation approved the annual budget for 2022/23 including capital allocation as presented

Three year financial forecast. This had been covered in some detail in the discussion about budgets but the FRC Chair commented that the proposed budget showed a strong position currently to 2023/24 with a plan to continue to manage challenges into 2024/25.

With a small point made by a Governor about loans and a reduction of costs in the forecast, the Corporation approved the three year financial forecast

Health & Safety policy. This new policy reflected the reorganisation of duties following the restructuring of the Estates management, and to reflect updates in best practice across the sector. There had been no changes in relevant regulations or legislation. The FRC had recommended a couple of amendments and the version presented included those changes.

With no further discussion, the Corporation approved the Health & Safety policy as presented

Financial Support policy. The FRC Chair described the purpose of the policy as presented, outlined the changes and the reasons for those; College was widely supporting students whose families were facing financial hardship. The policy introduced a second tier for those families on a household income of £20-£25k. Because of the increased cost to College the policy included a 'right to withdraw' clause, and FRC reviewed the spend of the financial support fund. There was a formal application process and claims were properly evidenced. Trips outside of the UK were not considered essential so the policy did not include a provision for those foreign trips.

Governors were confident that the Financial Support policy was consistent with the values of the College and approved it

21.5.7

Report from the Audit committee AC21.3 22 June 2022

The AC Chair presented his report from the recent meeting. The draft minutes were provided as a formal record.

The AC Chair started by saying that the committee was low in numbers and was only just reaching quoracy, but he hoped that recruitment/elections to take place during the early part of next term might boost committee numbers. There would be opportunities for Corporation members to join more than one committee. Other than this, he reminded the Corporation that there would be the usual financial statements audit in the early autumn.

He referred to a couple of matters on the minutes for information only, and commented that there were a couple of items for Board approval.

Data Protection Policy. The AC Chair advised there had been no changes in the legal landscape and only minor, not material, changes to the policy.

With no further discussion, the Board approved the Data Protection policy

Freedom of Information policy. The committee had discussed this. At point 3.3 the policy referred to an 'exam entry policy and procedure' which was being withdrawn from use.

Subject to that one amendment, the Board approved the Freedom of Information policy

21.5.8

Report from Standards committee STC21.5 7 July 2022

The STC Chair had provided a written report setting out in detail the discussion from the most recent meeting. She commented that there were 3 items for Board approval.

Student entry criteria for 2023/24. She explained that the committee had discussed in detail the College's proposal to change the entry criteria for the 2023/24 intake, from 7 average passes to 5 strong passes. The VP's detailed paper was available on the portal for all Governors to read. The College culture was inclusivity, and comparison to other colleges showed that the proposed new entry criteria would allow this ethos to be sustained. There was not a great deal of recent data available to support

the proposal due to Covid however, the new criteria aimed to give students the best chance of success on the course, not to manage supply and demand.

Governors asked a couple of questions around inclusivity, and around the entry criteria of individual courses which the VP explained would vary somewhat dependent upon the course.

Governors were content to change the student entry criteria as proposed from 2023/24 and approved the proposal.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. The STC Chair explained that the new EDI policy included some updates to the previous iteration but included a greater emphasis on inclusion, with clearer definitions, and linked more clearly to other relevant College policies (such as disciplinary etc). The committee had also reviewed a first draft set of EDI objectives which would come for approval at a later date. Governors were pleased to see what seemed to be an open and inclusive policy but they were interested to know how the policy would be tested to be effective. The Principal explained that objectives/impact measures may come to the Board as part of the overall 'quality improvement plan' and to be monitored in a range of ways such as through the new strategic plan, through HR reports through FRC, and through the governance improvement plan etc.

The Board were content and approved the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Student Disciplinary policy. The committee had reviewed this policy and other than a query about the student code of conduct, which the Clerk/Principal/committee would need to return to, the committee was content to recommend it for Board approval.

The Corporation approved the Student Disciplinary policy

The STC Chair went on to report on other matters the committee had discussed in detail – examinations (attendance had been good), an increase in requests for access arrangements, the Staff Development Strategy, the Quality Cycle, safeguarding update etc.

A Governor asked a question about retention figures, wondering if Colleges might now deal with knock on effects of pandemic.

Another Governor asked how confident was the College that students may achieve what they need through the summer exams? The VP said it

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was hard to predict outcomes, but College was quietly confident. The regulator was following a process to look at grade boundaries etc.

21.5.9 Strategic update and Principal's report

The Principal spoke to key highlights in Principal's report and some matters that would feature further in strategic discussions. She also highlighted that the Board is asked to approve the draft climate change targets to be included in the strategic plan.

The paper drew the Board's attention to information on the new build, the ONS review of Colleges, and Turing funding awarded, and new free schools, and the Corporation members discussed some of these issues relating to strategy.

The Board had had chance to review the papers, and the Principal pointed out that Corporation members were being asked to review progress with the draft strategic plan, and consider/approve the overall approach, and the broad measures shown on Page 3 'a' to 'e'. She wanted to test out now how Governors felt the plan was shaping up.

Governors commented on the revised mission and values and what they thought was excellent and where they wondered if more testing on the wording might be required.

In terms of climate change/environment the Principal reminded the meeting that the plan uses the AoC roadmap as the vehicle to deliver actions set out, but the net zero target for 2050 was way ahead of the period of the strategic plan proposed. The Principal advised it was about measuring and setting a baseline and then a trajectory for carbon reduction to include offsetting.

A Governor advised caution about the use of the term 'Sustainability', since this is more a development goal when referring to mission and values, and not just about environmental issues.

The Corporation confirmed it was content to approve the broad brush approach in the draft strategic plan presented, along with the draft targets on Page 3 sections 'a' to 'e'.

21.5.10 Board annual activities

Instrument & Articles of Government. The Clerk advised that some minor amendments were proposed shown by track changes on page 6, these had been reviewed by the GSC.

With no questions, the Corporation approved the Instrument & Articles of Government for 2022/23.

Standing Orders. The annual review of the Standing Orders (SOs), including committees' Terms of Reference had taken place and the SOs were presented showing tracked changes.

With no questions, the Corporation approved the Standing Orders for 2022/23.

Meeting schedule for 2022/23. The schedule had been updated following the committees' summer meetings and the amendments made since the last iteration were clearly marked. Committees had been consulted on the format of meetings for 2022/23 and whilst some flexibility was key, the Corporation was clear that Board meetings would be *in person* with committees being able to remain flexible, however, with effective online meetings dominating.

The Corporation approved its meeting schedule for 2022/23.

Corporation Cycle of Business 2022/23. For information only. Pre-meetings would continue to plan/drive the work plan for individual committees and the Board and the business plan would need to remain dynamic to national and local conditions throughout the year.

21.5.11 **Corporation governance improvement plan**

The Clerk had drawn together an updated Corporation-wide governance improvement plan (GIP). Committees would be carrying out a simple SAR exercise during the summer and early autumn, and it was noted that the some deliverables/actions from the current GIP may be carried forward to the next academic year.

21.5.12 **Any other business**

The Corporation Chair reminded the meeting that this would be Independent Governor, John Godwood's last meeting, as he had dedicated much of his time over the last 9 years to supporting the College.

Ian Wilson, who had served as Corporation Chair during John's time as STC Chair and Independent Governor led the dedication, and the Corporation acknowledged and thanked John for his substantial contribution.

John commented how much he had enjoyed his time as Governor and wished to thank the College for the lovely gift.

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21.5.13 **Date of next meeting (2022/23)**
Tuesday 11 October 2022, at 5pm