

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting 21.4 held on Tuesday 17 May 2022, held in College in room A203
Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge**

Present: Tony Humphrey (Chair), Paul Andrew, Gerry Bolton, Yolanda Botham (Principal), Karen Everitt, Abby Futter, Sophie Harrison, Gemma Long, Hugo Macey, Jenny O'Hare, Olivia Palo, Alex Pryce, Sebastian Rasinger, Ian Wilson and Alex Wong

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

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

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21.4.1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from John Godwood, Vickie Grenville, Rob Howes, Maryum Jadoon, Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas and Owen Shield.

21.4.2 Declarations of Interest

None

21.4.3 Request for any other business

None. The Corporation Chair commented how good it was to have everyone in the same room for the first time since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

21.4.4 Minutes of the last meeting 21.3 held on Tuesday 15 March 2022

Agreed

21.4.5 Matters arising

None.

Jenny O'Hare joined the meeting at 5.05pm.

21.4.6 Reflections from the strategy/training event held on Wednesday 11 May 2022

The Corporation reflected on a Governors' training event held in May. The first part of the morning had focussed on Sustainability and Climate Change. During the second part of the morning, the SFWG had set out a detailed report on its work to date and on which Governors voted on recommendations set out.

Governors agreed that the Sustainability/Climate Change guest speaker had been impressive and inspirational. Governors agreed that the student input had been particularly interesting and valuable, and that input from students should be encouraged at future training events, where possible. Governors had learned about the work already being undertaken by the College including training staff and students on

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climate literacy, establishing a climate committee, and taking the road map approach.

The Chair proposed that the Corporation formally note occurrence of the training event, and note with approval the work undertaken by College on the topic to date, the intention being to embed Sustainability/Climate Change outcomes into the new College strategic plan. The Corporation approved that proposal.

Gemma Long joined the meeting at 5.13pm.

The SFWG had made a full report and set out proposed recommendations to Board members at the strategy/training morning held on Wednesday 11 May 2022. Board members present at the 11 May event were content that the proposals set out in the slides/papers go forward for Board consideration.

After discussion, the Corporation approved the 3 SFWG recommendations and confirmed that the College should retain its independent incorporated status as the basis of its next strategic plan.

The Chair wished to convey a note of thanks, on behalf of the Corporation, to Ian Wilson and John Godwood, and to other members of the SFWG for all the work culminating in the recommendations communicated at the 11 May training event and set out in the paper included for this agenda item.

The current College strategic plan (SP) was nearing the end of its life. Despite Covid and other key strategic challenges, the Principal had already announced to College staff that it was time to refresh the SP. Whilst the College mission and values were sound, it had been agreed that the language used in the SP could be updated, particularly pertaining to climate action, and focus groups were planned to look at this in more detail. The senior leaders would also be obtaining the views of key stakeholders including Governors. In terms of setting strategy, the Corporation agreed to invite the senior leaders to return to the matter at the July Board, setting out proposals for producing the SP, including specific steps and a timetable for the College to adopt and implement, the climate change road map, and including establishing a baseline for carbon reduction and other key targets.

Work would continue over the summer on the SP with a draft to be taken to the October 2022 Board, and for full SP sign off intended in December 2022. The Chairs' Working Group (CWG) agreed to stand by as a

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sounding board if needed. Other Governors were invited to become involved should they so wish.

21.4.7

Report from the Audit committee (AC21.2 held on 23 March 2022)

The AC Chair presented the report from the most recent AC meeting drawing Corporation members' attention to the full minutes on the portal. There was one matter to be recommended by the AC for Board approval.

Counter Fraud Strategy. At the last AC meeting the committee had reviewed a second draft of the Counter Fraud Strategy. The strategy had been drafted with longevity in mind, focussing on external factors, and including awareness raising.

On AC recommendation, the Board approved the Counter Fraud Strategy.

On other matters for information, detailed in the minutes, the AC Chair referred to cyber security training that staff and Governors had already completed, and the internal (specialist) audit report that had been completed on the subject.

A Governor asked about Freedom of Information requests, particular around the numbers received and the pattern of such requests. The Principal explained the different types of FOI and subject access requests and the College method of responding to these. Another Governor asked about the training for staff handling those responses, which the Principal confirmed along with support from the wider team and access to specialist legal advice where needed.

21.4.8

Report from the Governance & Search committee (GSC21.3 held on 29 March 2022)

The GSC Chair designate presented the report from the most recent GSC meeting drawing Corporation members' attention to the full minutes on the portal. She advised that there were two matters of GSC business for Corporation approval.

She touched on Corporation vacancies and succession planning, training for Corporation members (including the 11 May event), Governor visits, the Governor R&D scheme, and 'other roles' also covered in greater detail in the GSC minutes. Whilst no role focussing on topics such as health & safety, EDI, sustainability or any other area of interest was currently a statutory role, the GSC would come back to that during the next academic year. Careers/employability was something that the Principal was keen to raise as a priority for Governor interest so to find

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someone to support College with a 'careers' lens. Governors discussed this and a couple of Governors voiced an interest in getting involved. It was agreed this would be taken forward outside the meeting.

Governor recruitment policy/procedure. The GSC had considered minor amendments to the Governor recruitment policy/procedure.

On GSC recommendation, the Board noted no material changes, and approved the updated Governor recruitment policy /procedure.

She handed back to the Corporation Chair at this point in the meeting.

GSC Chair appointment. The Corporation Chair reminded the Board that Alison Miles had stepped down from her role as an Independent Governor, and Chair of the GSC, at Easter time. Presently she remained on the Corporation as a co-opted member. Gemma Long who had joined the Corporation as an Independent Governor and had become a member of the GSC on appointment had relevant expertise and an interest in governance, and she had stood in as GSC Chair designate at the March meeting. The committee wished to recommend her appointment as GSC Chair.

The Corporation agreed the appointment of Independent Governor Gemma Long as Governance & Search committee (GSC) Chair.

21.4.9 **Report from Finance & Resources committee (FRC21.3 held on 27 April 2022)**

The FRC Chair's report covered in brief the matters discussed at the most recent FRC meeting. He advised there was one item for FRC recommendation for Board approval.

Discretions policy. The FRC has considered the revised version of the Discretions policy, the purpose for which he explained. The policy had received no material amendments.

On FRC recommendation, with no discussion, the Board approved the Discretions policy.

He covered other notable items, including planning permission for the new build, the application for which had now been submitted. He referred to original terms of the grant application and feedback from the Department for Education. The Principal asked the Finance Director to update the Board on developments that had occurred since the FRC had met.

A Governor asked what the timeline was for any possible objections to the planning application; she advised 12-13 weeks. The FD reminded the

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Governor that no neighbours overlooked the piece of land intended for development.

Another Governor asked whether the price of the building and other works was likely to change due to cost pressures on building materials. The FD advised that the price would be locked in at the point that the order was placed with the supplier.

A short update was provided on the piece of land on which a sale had recently completed, and the FRC had reviewed the early draft budget for 2022/23 noting the significant increase in energy prices.

Governors commented it was excellent for the College to have achieved an outstanding financial position, which had been no small achievement considering the cost pressures due to Covid etc.

21.4.10 Report from Standards committee (STC21.4 held on 5 May 2022)

The STC Chair reported from the most recent meeting. She commented that there were no items for Corporation approval, but she wished to pick up on a range of matters of interest.

The STC had approved two College policies, and the committee had discussed key data on student progress. It was difficult to predict possible outcomes this year due to Covid. College was cautiously optimistic however the data indicated a possible wider range of outcomes. The committee noted that patterns may be related to attendance and there were gender specific issues. Value added was harder to predict due to centre assessed grades and the committee was interested in which targets based on ALPS scores would be harder to achieve. STC Governors had discussed the ongoing work to address issues identified, and the support available to students. The committee had received reports on safeguarding and progress against the QIP.

A Governor asked if the STC Chair and committee members could give more details on the effects of Covid seen in the student body now going through their first set of examinations since the start of the pandemic. The STC Governors, including the student Governor, described a range of impacts such as motivation, mindset, request for special access arrangements etc.

A Governor asked about the approach for tackling male vs female attainment. The VP gave an overview but commented that it was critical to note that all students joining next year will have taken exams. College would be looking at all data and determine what are appropriate

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strategies. There was a brief discussion about VESPA, about supporting students, safeguarding (also touched on earlier), and peer on peer abuse.

21.4.11 Principal's update

The Principal, presenting her report, wished to reflect on the VP's earlier comments. The examination period had started and College staff were working particularly hard. All teachers had been trained and were acting as invigilators.

She drew the Board's attention to a range of matters in her written report. She described the government's intended defunding of the level 3 applied qualifications, the work led by the AoC and the SFCA, and the outcome and its overall resulting impact on the College from 2024; the number of courses and how many students affected. She reminded the Board that this would come back to the Standards committee for further discussion under 'curriculum'.

Her report covered the new Skills and Post 16 Act and the new duty placed on Colleges to meet the needs of the local area (employer and economy related) more details on which would become apparent later; and new duties and powers for Ofsted.

The Principal's report also discussed staffing issues, the property strategy, and possible student numbers for 2022/23, for which there were welcome days scheduled, along with 2 open days, to take place in July.

21.4.12 Governance Improvement Plan (GIP) 2021/22

The Clerk briefly touched on the various updates in the GIP that would be familiar to all Corporation members through the work of committees. It was noted that the meeting had already touched on many of the deliverables earlier in the meeting. There was no further discussion.

21.4.13 Any other business

The Corporation Chair asked the Clerk to quickly update the meeting on the Governors exciting summer celebration scheduled to take place in the evening on Thursday 30 June 2022. The event was being organised to say farewell and thank you to those Governors who had recently left or were leaving, and to enable the newly appointed Governors to get to know more about the Corporation and the College.

21.4.14 Date of next meeting

21.5 Tuesday 12 July 2022. The meeting closed at 7.04pm.