

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2015
IN ROOM L8 AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT COLLEGE**

			ATTENDED	ATTENDANCE 2014/15
GOVERNORS:	Mr Peter Conway	Chair	✓	5 of 6
	Dr Nick England	Vice Chair	✓	5 of 6
	Mrs Debbie Lavin	Principal	✓	6 of 6
	Miss Yasmin Bahyan	Student Governor	✓	6 of 6
	Ms Michelle Campbell	Support Staff Governor	✓	5 of 6
	Mr Steve Corbett		✓	2 of 2
	Mrs Jan Gavin		0	4 of 6
	Mr Mateusz Grzegorzewski	Student Governor	✓	6 of 6
	Mrs Jessica Garbett		✓	6 of 6
	Prof. Nigel Hastings		✓	5 of 6
	Mr Mike Hosking		✓	6 of 6
	Ms Ginnie Orrey		✓	4 of 6
	Mrs Sheila Paul		0	4 of 6
	Dr Nick Sinnamon		✓	6 of 6
	Mr Phil Truckel	Teaching Staff Governor	0	5 of 6
	Dr David Wake		✓	6 of 6
Attendance % this meeting:		81.25%	Present at this meeting:	
Attendance % year to date:		86.60%	Total attendance year to date:	
			13 of 16	
			84 of 97	

IN ATTENDANCE:	Ms Lynne Christopher	Deputy Principal	0
	Mr Peter Thompson	Assistant Principal – Resources & Finance	✓
	Miss Fidelma Washington	Assistant Principal – Curriculum & Quality Improvement	✓
	Mr Roland White	Assistant Principal – Teaching, Learning & Students	✓
	Mrs Tracy Bull	College Accountant	✓
	Mr David Richardson	Prospective Student Governor 2015/2016	✓
	Mr Brian Bowker	Clerk to the Corporation	✓
APOLOGIES:	Mrs Jan Gavin (personal), Mrs Sheila Paul (holiday), Mr Phil Truckel (college work), Lynne Christopher (college work)		

The Chair of Corporation commenced the meeting by thanking members for their attendance and contribution to the Governor Contact Day. He informed them that Mr Roy Bromley had been unable to attend for lunch as planned, due to ill health. He then read a note of thanks from Mr Bromley to Governors for their support during his time on the Corporation. The Chair informed the meeting that he would personally deliver a signed card and gift to Mr Bromley.

ACTION

46/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Dr David Wake as a member of the UKSA advisory board and Mr Stephen Corbett as an employee of Portsmouth University.

47/15 APPROVAL OF THE NON-CONFIDENTIAL AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2015

Following discussion and suggested amendments to the non-confidential minutes they were approved as a true record.

The confidential minutes were also approved as a true record of the meeting.

48/15 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 25 MARCH 2015

It was noted that the matters arising had been addressed or were on the agenda for the meeting.

49/15 COMMITTEE MINUTES

DRAFT CONFIDENTIAL CAPITAL COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2015

The Corporation NOTED the minutes but the Clerk was asked to check the resolution in minute 05/15.

Clerk

50/15 CORPORATION CALENDAR 2015/2016

The Clerk asked members to consider the calendar and let him have any comments as soon as possible. He suggested that a formal review of the current committee structure and meeting arrangements should take place in September 2015, as part of the Governance SAR process.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the draft 2015/2016 calendar of meetings.

51/15 COLLEGE AND GOVERNOR EVENTS

The Corporation NOTED the Governor Events Report.

52/15 CHAIR'S BUSINESS/RATIFICATION OF CHAIR'S ACTIONS

The Chair informed members that the College was pursuing the development of paperless meetings but suggested that some specific action could be taken with immediate effect. He suggested that items "for note" and College policies requiring Corporation approval should be emailed rather than presented in hard copy format. Following discussion and with the proviso that updated policies should show tracked changes and that comments be forwarded to the policy author, the Chair's proposal was agreed.

53/15 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

(Confidential Minute)

The Chair asked for this item, along with discussion on the Sixth Form and E Block, be deferred until the Principal joined the meeting.

54/15 HIGH LEVEL PI'S AND TARGETS 2014/2015: MONITORING REPORT

In the absence of the Deputy Principal, the Assistant Principal – Teaching, Learning and Students took Members through the report. He informed them that the majority of the PIs for 2014/2015 are performing well against agreed targets, where it is possible to measure progress at this stage. Most retention rates are high, targets relating to E&D and Safeguarding are positive, delivery against funding allocations is on track and progress is positive for financial health and bank covenants. However, the report identifies 6 medium risk indicators (highlighted in amber) and 2 high-risk indicators (highlighted in red). Member noted the risk areas, the assessment provided and the action being taken to mitigate the risks. The Assistant Principal informed members that

the action is proving effective and that there are currently no significant areas of concern.

Members focused on attendance rates, which are currently 88%, 1% below the target of 89%. The Assistant Principal stated that significant effort is being made to address this, with SMT focusing on areas where attendance is below target and working with individual Heads of Department to improve attendance. There is also a specific focus on maths and English where attendance is below target. He was asked if there is still significant student resistance to studying maths and English and members were informed that the nature of the students' main subject and the perceived relevance of maths and English to that subject was a key factor.

A question was asked regarding the value for money PI and why there was no specific target or benchmark. The Assistant Principal – Resources and Finance stated that it is not possible to produce a PI with relevant data or a national benchmark. Members targeted the areas where costs are higher than budgeted and asked for a detailed explanation. They were informed that agency costs have increased this year due to a shortage of salaried staff in some subject areas. This is requiring temporary agency staff to be appointed, at a higher cost, and could not have been anticipated. The Assistant Principal – Resources and Finance was asked why 'agency staff pay' is classed as "non-pay" and were informed that although this seems illogical it is standard accounting practice.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

Mr Chris Harpum joined the meeting at this point.

55/15 HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: SIXTH FORM REPORT

The Head of Department introduced his report by informing Members that its purpose was to update Governors on the performance of Sixth Form in 2014 and highlight the current position. He drew attention to the key areas of his report; improvement in predicted high grades for facilitating and non-facilitating subjects; predicted improvement in progression from A2 to HE; highly effective Aspire and Achieve initiative; successful restructuring of the English department and greatly improved student and parent communication. A further positive note was that Sixth Form applications for 2016 are up by 70% on the corresponding stage last year.

Members asked the Head of Department to identify the key risks for the Sixth Form and these were noted as AS progression; AS maths grades; impact of linearization of A-Level; future viability of some AS/A2 choices and below average attendance. He then took members through a detailed action plan developed to mitigate these risks.

The Chair stated that he was pleased about the projected increase in the 2016 student intake and asked what has generated this increase. The Head of Department identified a range of factors including personalised promotional material, a more professional Sixth Form open evening and most significantly, word of mouth.

He was asked what percentage of high grades would be achieved this year and Members were informed that realistically this would be 30%. Whilst recognising that this was below the national average it would represent progress. Further questions were asked regarding the factors for determining whether students undertake a 3 or 4 subject A

Level programme and Members were informed that a decision was based on GCSE results, the overall ability of students and future career requirements but ultimately a programme was agreed based on the individual student's capability.

The Head of Department was asked a question regarding students taking linear A Levels from 2016 and why they would be taking AS exams at the end of their first year, even though they were following a linear programme. The HOD provided a detailed rationale for this decision which was challenged on the basis that preparing for, and sitting, AS exams at the end of the first year of study could be a distraction from teaching and learning on the linear syllabus. Also, the AS examination will not count towards the ultimate, summative grade on the linear, A level course. Members noted the number of encouraging developments and need to celebrate these. However, the current year retention rates are worrying and asked the Head of Department if this was a surprise and what procedures are in place to address and reduce this level of attrition. The Head of Department indicated that it was a surprise and specific action is being taken to reduce this next year including the introduction of new post to provide leadership within the sixth form on pastoral matters and a newly convened health and well-being group designed to support students in developing their ability to cope with the pressures of A level studies and live a healthy and fulfilling life.

Further questions were asked; on A2 student numbers and the impact on class sizes for next year, clarification on the nature of facilitated subjects and the risks presented by the linearization of A Levels. The Head of Department responded to Members satisfaction and added that a proposed restructure of the Sixth Form, prior to September 2015, will provide a firm foundation for the future and help address some deep seated social and cultural issues around student resilience and attendance. In particular, academic and pastoral deputies were being appointed and a new post to lead on STEM developments was being introduced. In addition, the maths and English teams will be fully staffed for the 2015/2016 academic year. The staff are fully aware of the challenges and associated risks and are adapting and responding well.

Post-Meeting reflection from Dr Nick England

I thought about the meeting and came to the conclusion that the people who were more likely to be right were the people who had made the decision not a bystander-governor. I have looked into what other colleges and schools are doing, and there seems to be an even split between those taking AS and those leaving it alone. Therefore each college needs to make a decision which suits their students – not one which suits students elsewhere.

- *You have considered what is best for your students - and I imagine there are some who may not wish to progress beyond AS level. So they need to take their exams after 1 year. You can also argue that AS provides a stepping-stone to the next year, and a focus for hard work; without a target students might not work so hard.*
- *The goal posts have shifted twice, so some new exams will not start until 2016 or 2017. So someone doing maths, physics and chemistry might be disadvantaged if they did not take maths modules after one year. So, given the muddle allowing all to take AS levels makes sense.*
- *My original advice works for those people doing for example, biology, physics and chemistry, who are sure of getting high grades and are certain to continue to the second year. Under those circumstances cracking on, without stopping, makes sense, because they cannot bank AS marks.*

- *Your caution before the election was wise – a labour government might well have reversed the A level reform. But now I expect it to go ahead as planned, especially since Nicky Morgan is still in office.*

Therefore I support the college's decision to sit AS levels next summer. But I urge an open mind and flexibility. I think this decision needs to be kept under regular review. We have to balance these tensions.

- *Taking an AS allows people to cash a qualification. Given our fallout at the end of Year 12, this seems very important.*
- *But the AS does not count towards A level – so doing it wastes time. And it is not clear that universities want it; yes Cambridge said they did and there was loud protests from schools.*

In an ideal world, we would work in a large college, which could cater for both. It would be nice to support those who want to take AS, and to have a continual path for A level.

I propose these actions.

- *Come back to this decision at the end of the Autumn Term, having discussed the pros and cons, with the students, so they understand the issues.*
- *Find out more about how much notice the universities are going to take of AS levels.*
- *Find out from the exam boards what they expect in terms of teaching time. The issue is that AS has been down graded to be worth 40% of the A level UCAS points; the UCAS website describes the A grade at AS being aligned with a B grade at A level (but worth half an A level B grade in terms of points.) I have written to AQA to ask them what they expect: if AS is worth only 40%, when do we start teaching the year 2 work, which is harder and counts for more? If we start the second year teaching half way through June, we will be behind those colleges who will have started in May. Can we alleviate the problem, by giving more teaching time in year 13 to each subject?*

In summary: I am happy to support the decision, which was made. But, we need to keep it under review, for the reasons given above.

And as a further thought, we need to keep under review the number of AS levels studied. If AS levels are not going to be valued by universities, we need to ask whether we are better served by 3 A levels, without the distraction of AS. In the end each college will find the right path for their students.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

Mr Chris Harpum left the meeting at this point and Mrs Debbie Lavin joined the meeting.

56/15 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT REPORT (2)

The Assistant Principal – Teaching, Learning and Students took members through his report that confirmed that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment at the College and the overall learning experience of students remains very good. Members noted the positive developments but asked what the key areas for improvement were. The Assistant Principal stated that the development of maths and English in vocational

lessons is not yet consistently good, equality and diversity is not always well promoted in lessons and teachers do not always use information from initial assessment for lesson plans. Members asked what action was being taken to ensure these improvements and were informed that new teaching and learning review meetings with Curriculum Managers/Heads of Department have been introduced and these are attended by the Principal, Assistant Principal and Head of Quality and the 3 meetings to date have proved very productive. With regard to improving English and maths teaching 2 staff development sessions took place in January 2015, focusing on the effective embedding of maths and English in non-specialist lessons. 45 teaching staff attended with very good feedback from participants and following these sessions all delivery areas have been tasked with completing an area specific scheme of work by the end of March. This will ensure that, where appropriate, the planned delivery of lessons includes strategies to integrate maths and English. Members asked how the impact of this action will be measured and were informed that this would be done by a series of walk through observations in April and May.

The Assistant Principal was asked to explain the specific action being taken to address the 6 other areas identified for improvement and this was done to Members' satisfaction. A specific question was asked regarding Black History month and how this operated in practice. The Assistant Principal stated that the College tries to adopt topical national themes for the promotion of equality and diversity through teaching and learning and staff are supported with central resources, to facilitate the introduction of the theme into their teaching sessions. The Assistant Principal was asked how much dedicated time was devoted to this and he informed Members that the expectation is that staff introduce E&D themes in a naturally occurring way and not as a separate activity.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report

57/15 ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS

Members considered the report, noted the number of complaints over the 12-month period, and felt that the overall number (50) remains low considering the number of students enrolled at the College and other users of its services. Members commended the College on its work through personal tutors to combat bullying, and this was reflected by the fact that no formal complaints about bullying were received.

The corporation CONSIDERED the report.

58/15 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT AND LATEST ESTIMATE

The Assistant Principal informed Members that the March report forecasted an end of year loss of £760,000. The current report, due to additional variances in income and forecasting and reporting of costs (pay and non-pay), is indicating an end of year figure of £492,000, a significant improvement in the forecast position. A summary of the reasons for the improvement was given but the Assistant Principal stressed that ongoing action was taking place in a number of critical areas to reduce the forecast deficit. These include, full deployment of teaching staff; critical review of assessor workloads to identify excess capacity; full non-pay budget reconciliation and forecasting to identify further in year savings; examination costs; non-replacement of staffing and increasing income. The latter remains the highest priority and the College is currently agreeing new course offers across

the curriculum to support additional income generation. In particular, these include traineeships and apprenticeships with over 120 new vacancies for apprenticeships being established to March.

Members asked if other areas were being investigated. They were informed that the College is seeking to further extend online learning courses through a joint venture with the Virtual College; eroding some provision where ASB funding is focused, given that income targets are close to being achieved and introducing new traineeships, with June 2015 starts, to support school leavers transition to employment or apprenticeships.

The Assistant Principal was reminded that in April last year the forecast was indicating a significant deficit but a positive outturn was achieved. He was asked whether this was likely this year and Members were informed that the College forecasting is now more refined and the current estimate reflects the current position.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

59/15 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT

It was noted that discussion and questions relating to the Latest Estimate had addressed matters identified in the monthly management accounts.

The Corporation NOTED the report.

60/15 DEBT WRITE OFFS

Members considered the debt write off report and asked that future reports should not include names of individual debtors and a summary of debts would suffice. **PT**

The Corporation APPROVED the write off of debts totalling £37,400 (previously provided for).

61/15 REAPPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

(Confidential Minute)

62/15 COLLEGE SERVICE CONTRACTS ANNUAL REVIEW

The Corporation NOTED the report

63/15 SALIX BID OPPORTUNITY

The Corporation NOTED the report.

44/15 ANY OTHER NON CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

45/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Corporation meeting 20th May 2015 at 4.00pm in room L10.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____

MISSION STATEMENT
Putting Students First
Working for Employers
Supporting Our Community