

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2018
IN ROOM PG11 AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT COLLEGE

			ATTENDED	ATTENDANCE 2018/19
GOVERNORS:	Dr Nick England	Chair	0	1 of 2
	Prof. Nigel Hastings	Vice Chair	✓	1 of 2
	Mrs Debbie Lavin	Principal	✓	2 of 2
	Mrs Christina Conroy		✓	1 of 2
	Mr Graham Cooper		✓	2 of 2
	Mr Steve Corbett		✓	1 of 2
	Mr David Hodgkins		✓	2 of 2
	Mr Ryan Kimber	Student Governor	✓	2 of 2
	Mrs Sheila Paul		✓	2 of 2
	Mr Gordon Pownall		✓	2 of 2
	Mr Martyn Pearl		✓	2 of 2
	Mr Finn Ratsey-Woodroffe	Student Governor	✓	2 of 2
	Dr Nick Sinnamon		✓	2 of 2
	Mr Aaron Townsend	Student Governor	✓	2 of 2
	Dr David Wake		✓	2 of 2
Mr Steve Winfield-Hunt		✓	2 of 2	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Ms Lynne Christopher	Special Project Advisor	✓	
	Mr Peter Thompson	Assistant Principal – Finance & Resources	✓	
	Miss Fidelma Washington	Assistant Principal – Quality Improvement	0	
	Mr Roland White	Assistant Principal – Students, Teaching & Learning and HR	✓	
	Mrs Tracy Bull	College Accountant	✓	
	Mr Brian Bowker	Clerk to the Corporation	✓	
APOLOGIES:	Dr Nick England, Fidelma Washington			

The Chair welcomed Mrs Christina Conroy to the meeting.

ACTION

304/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Prof Nigel Hastings, whose wife is a governor of the Innovation Trust. Dr David Wake as a member of the UKSA Advisory Board. Mr Steve Corbett as an employee of Portsmouth University and a Governor at St Francis Primary School.

305/18 APPROVAL OF THE NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2018

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

306/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2018

It was noted that all the matters arising had been addressed.

307/18 CHAIR'S BUSINESS RATIFICATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION

The Chair informed Members that due to pressure of work, Mr Steve Corbett was standing down from the Audit Committee. Mr Gordon Pownall has agreed to join the Committee and Members approved his appointment and thanked Mr Corbett for his contribution to the Audit Committee.

308/18 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT

The College Accountant informed Members that the College's management accounts for the three months to October show an operating surplus of £237k (budget forecast of £456k surplus) excluding staff restructuring. This results in a £219k year to date adverse variance. She stated that the adverse variance was primarily due to targeted apprenticeship income not being achieved. Other variances related to funding body income showing a minor adverse variance, tuition fee income being lower than profiled and pay costs showing slightly higher costs than planned.

The College Accountant then drew attention to the amber rated bank covenants and informed Members that the cash flow covenant is an area receiving external auditor scrutiny. The Principal then expanded on this matter, stressing that the College is now in ESFA financial category "Good". She added that the College is pressing auditors to clearly explain their rationale for classifying the working capital as a loan, seeking further Sancus guidance, liaising with other sector colleges to identify precedents and trying to get Sancus auditors to liaise directly with the RSM Tenon audit team.

The Vice Chair of Corporation provided background information on the nature of the covenants, including reminding Members that they approved a contract with Sancus as a working capital facility.

In response to questions, the Principal stated that at the end of the 2017/18 financial year, even without the Sancus contract, the College was in a strong cash position (£1.7m) and has not required a bank overdraft for several years. She added that Sancus has provided funds to other sector Colleges which are being viewed more sympathetically by other audit firms.

Further questions were asked regarding maths and English student funding and whether this was guaranteed, to which the College Accountant

Principal

responded that there was a potential £50k shortfall but this has been factored into the current financial profiling. The potential impact of Brexit was questioned and the Principal responded that current AoC advice is to carry on as normal but at some stage the College may need to carry out a modelling exercise regarding EU and non-EU students. The Vice Chair noted that non-fee income is lower than profile and asked if this was due to an inaccurate profiling exercise. The College Accountant responded in detail and explained that it was not.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

The College Accountant left the meeting at this point.

309/18 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Assistant Principal (Finance & Resources) reminded Members that the Corporation is required to approve the Health & Safety Policy annually, prior to it being signed by the Chair of Corporation. He stated that amendments to the current Health & Safety Policy were limited to changes to job titles, with commensurate adjustments to responsibilities following adjusted job remits and change to subsidiary policy titles. The only other change has been to clarify management and staff responsibility in relation to personal emergency evacuation plans.

The Corporation APPROVED the Health & Safety Policy.

310/18 TUITION AND OTHER FEES POLICY (INCLUDING FEE REMISSION)

The Assistant Principal (Finance & Resources) informed Members that the current policy has been revised to reflect changes in the funding methodology and to offer additional precision and guidance for those involved in the administration and determination of fees. He added that fees will continue to be based upon the level of guided learning hours (GLH) delivered per qualification and the fees system remains consistent with previous years.

A question was asked regarding refund issues, in particular for apprenticeship students, and whether there is a financial risk to the College, given the significant costs in recruiting and enrolling students who may subsequently leave. The Principal responded that there is no significant financial risk because there is robust management and oversight of student fee collection by a designated individual in the finance office. A further question was asked regarding the price sensitivity of College markets and the Assistant Principal responded in detail.

It was noted that there was inaccurate lettering of some of the appendices and the Assistant Principal was asked to rectify this.

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The Corporation APPROVED the Tuition and Other Fees Policy.

311/18 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal commenced her report by informing Members that the ESFA has assessed the College's financial health as "Good" for 2017/18 and for 2018/19, subject to the finance record in December 2018. Her report then addressed the autumn budget; the AoC report on College finances, where the support of the HM Inspector (Ofsted) was welcomed and teacher pensions, where the significant funding issue had been deferred until April 2020. The Principal then addressed the College Strategic Improvement Fund (SCIF) and informed Members that the DfE has been notified that should they identify an applicant college that could be supported, the IoW College would be willing to do so. Members noted the response from the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills at Appendix 2 to the report. The Principal concluded her report by providing an update on technical level developments and stressed the importance of differentiating between work placement and work experience requirements. Members noted the very positive preliminary Ofsted feedback on FE initial teacher training at the College's partner, the University of Portsmouth.

A Member commented on the significant increase in the national minimum wage in April 2019, identifying this as a potential risk, as public sector organisations were not being compensated in their funding allocations.

The Vice Chair of Corporation referenced the recent visit by Mr David Hughes (AoC Chief Executive) which had provided an excellent summary of current and potential future issues facing FE sector Colleges.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

Gordon Pownall left the meeting and Rob Mew joined the meeting.

312/18 HEAD OF DEPARTMENT REPORT: CONSTRUCTION

The Head of Department took Members through the report and updated them on the performance of the Construction department. He detailed areas of strength and the areas for improvement identified in the 2016/17 SAR, aspects of the 2017/18 report, summarising progress made to-date.

The Vice Chair noted the decline in attendance and outcomes data but commented that the current targets are challenging and asked how these would be achieved. It was noted the in-year position on attendance and retention are looking more positive. Further questions were asked regarding the nature of the construction market on the Island; the challenging headline targets in the report and the process for deriving those targets; who the

immediate Island competitor providers were; and what employer views were of the range of courses and course content delivered by the College.

The Head of Department responded in detail to the questions and the Principal added that the College has a good reputation with the Employer Construction Forum but needs to focus on developing higher level provision. With regard to competitors, she stated that there were none for lower level provision but students have to leave the Island for higher level courses.

A Student Governor asked how mature students can access construction provision and the Principal informed the meeting that, unfortunately, introductory level provision in construction was now very poorly funded and unless adults met the criteria for free entry i.e. those without a full level 2 or 3, they would need to pay full cost.

The Chair thanked the Head of Department for the report and his on-going work in developing Construction provision within the College.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

Rob Mew left the meeting at this point and Arlene Cooper (Head of Department) and Phil Truckel (HE Manager) joined the meeting at this point.

313/18 HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY 2018/21

The HE Manager provided a brief update on the national and local HE context and informed Members that the views of key stakeholders, including partner universities, employers, staff and Governors had been taken into consideration when drafting the updated plan.

The Principal asked where HE growth for the College would come from and the HE Manager responded that Early Years and Computing were potential areas for development but this would depend on effective liaison with partner universities and the College's staffing profile. He noted that some organisations prefer to develop and deliver their own training but some organisations require externally validated degrees to enable staff to progress. A Member suggested that college-delivered "top-up" provision leading to the BEd degree from a number of pathways was a potential development area, potentially working closely with other Island education providers. The Principal supported this suggestion and also identified Engineering as another area for development.

The Chair stated that there was no funding for developing new universities but the College should be the focal point for part time and mature students who want, or have, to remain on the Island for HE. He then asked if there were areas in the College's current provision that will struggle to recruit in the

future. The HE Manager provided a detailed response and, in conclusion, Members supported the identification of a few focussed areas of provision for development, supported by the development of specific specialist staff expertise.

The Corporation APPROVED the Higher Education Strategy 2018/21.

Arlene Cooper and Phil Truckel left the meeting at this point.

314/18 DRAFT GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2017/18

The Vice Chair introduced this item reminding Members that, as previously agreed, a governance performance review would contribute to the College Leadership & Management grade. However, he queried the status of the report and suggested it would be more appropriate to consider the paperwork as a record of an annual review of governance meeting. Members supported this view and it was agreed that this item should be further considered at the December 2018 Corporation meeting.

Clerk

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

315/18 ANNUAL REPORT TO GOVERNORS – CREDIT CARD USAGE, GOVERNORS' EXPENSES AND ENTERTAINING, FOREIGN TRAVEL AND PAYMENTS OVER £50,000

A question was asked regarding the significant increase in international travel expenditure between 2016/17 and 2017/18 and the Assistant Principal (Finance & Resources) stated that this was due to an increase in overseas projects. The Principal reminded Members that all international travel is approved by Corporation.

The Corporation CONSIDERED the report.

316/18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were informed that at the Isle of Wight Education Awards event which took place on 1 November 2018, Keri Hughes, Senior Lecturer in Engineering, was received the Inspirational Teacher of the Year award for the Isle of Wight. Members congratulated Keri Hughes on receiving this prestigious award.

317/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 19 December 2018 at 16.00hrs – 18.30hrs in room PG11.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____

MISSION STATEMENT

Putting Students First | Working for Employers | Supporting Our Community