MEETING OF THE FULL CORPORATION

OF FAREHAM COLLEGE

5th April 2017

# M I N U T E S

**Present:** Mr K Briscoe

Miss E Champion

Mr S Christian

Mr N Duncan

Mr L Fitzjohn

Mr P Grimwood (Vice-Chair)

Mr M Hoban

Mrs J Lancaster

Mr M Mansergh

Mr A Ramsay

Mr S Riches

Mr A Spires

Dr C Thomas

Mrs P Tilt

Ms K Woods

**In attendance:** Mrs E Baxter (Director of Finance & Funding)

Mr S Dingsdale (AP/MD CEMAST)

Mrs J Eayrs (Clerk)

Mr A Kaye (Deputy Principal)

**01/17 Declaration of Interests**

Members were reminded of the need to declare any personal or financial interest in any items of business to be considered during the meeting. There were no interests declared.

**02/17 Annual Election of Chairman of the Corporation**

Nomination papers had been distributed to all members of the Corporation in advance of the meeting. Mr Russell Kew had been proposed, seconded and had agreed to stand as Chair. As there were no other nominations, the Corporation formally elected Mr Kew as Chair to serve from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, in accordance with the Corporation’s Standing Orders.

**03/17 Annual Election of Vice-Chair of the Corporation**

Nomination papers had been distributed to all members of the Corporation in advance of the meeting. Mr Peter Grimwood had been proposed, seconded and had agreed to stand as Vice-Chair. As there were no other nominations, the Corporation formally elected Mr Grimwood as Vice-Chair to serve from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, in accordance with the Corporation’s Standing Orders.

*In the absence of the Chair, Mr Kew, the Vice-Chair, Mr Grimwood, chaired the meeting.*

**04/17 Apologies for absence and welcome to new members**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Hart, Mr Kew and Miss Smith. .

**05/17 Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

**06/17 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016**

(i) **Minute 71/16: Apprenticeship Strategy** – The Deputy Principal provided an update on the Employers’ Forum. Members noted that, due to constrained diaries, it had not been possible to establish the group. Governors confirmed that they were happy to participate and it was agreed to make another attempt to convene a meeting. In addition, the Deputy Principal confirmed that the list of employers had been circulated to Governors to see whether introductions could be facilitated. Members highlighted the fact that there were no Fareham or Gosport employers on the list provided. The Deputy Principal confirmed that the source of the list had been Portsmouth, Southampton and IOW employers but there were other sets of data which could be circulated.

**07/17 Confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

**08/17 Matters arising from the confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016**

(i) **Minute 74/16: Pay and Remuneration** – The Executive Director HR provided an update on the position regarding alternative ways of rewarding staff as a non-consolidated gesture. She confirmed that this was ongoing and a number of benefit schemes were being explored.

**09/17 Strictly Confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2016**

*There were no points of clarification, therefore, no members were required to withdraw from the meeting for consideration of the strictly confidential minutes.*

The strictly confidential minutes (for Governors who are not Staff and Student only) of the meeting held on the 7th December 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising from them which had not already been addressed in item 08/17(i) above.

**10/17 Correspondence**

1. **SFA Letter dated 10th March 2017 on Fareham College Financial Statements (including financial dashboard)** – Members noted that the SFA had reviewed the College’s audited financial statements and finance record and had confirmed the financial assessment grade for 2015/2016 as ‘Good’;
2. **DfE Letter dated 16th March 2017 from the FE Commissioner of FE Colleges and Sixth Form College (Richard Atkins and Peter Mucklow) –** Members of the Board reviewed and noted the letter from the FE and Sixth Form Colleges Commissioners which provided an update on the work of the Commissioners, a progress review of area reviews, interventions and some key learning points related to quality improvement.

**11/17 Governor Engagement**

Members present provided feedback on development sessions and Cross-College events and activities they had attended during the Spring Term.

**12/17 Principal’s Spring Term Report 2017**

Members of the Board received the Principal’s Spring Term Report which was confidential to Governors and which summarised the key issues and developments in the work of the College during the Spring Term 2017.

The Principal spoke to the paper and drew members’ attention to the following:

* **2016/2017 Student Attendance** – Governors noted that College attendance was currently 88.6% which was a 1.5% improvement compared to the same time the previous year and against a whole year attendance target of 90%;
* **2016/2017 English and Maths Attendance** – Members noted that the attendance rate for both English and Maths continued to present a challenge. However, it was noted that both had improved since the last Principal’s Report in December 2016 and currently stood at 79.9% (English) and 79.1% (Maths). The Principal advised members that alternative ways to engage learners in English and Maths to improve attendance were being explored;
* **2016/2017 Retention Rate** – Members noted a College classroom based student retention rate of 94% compared to a College target of 95%;
* **Work Based Activities (Apprenticeships) Retention Rate** – Members were advised that retention on work based activities remained an area of focus as it currently stood at 83.5% compared to a target of 85%. Governors questioned whether the retention rate was at the expected level at this point in the year. The Principal responded by saying that the retention rate was ‘holding steady’ and it had improved on the previous year. He identified the areas of concern, all of which had fallen significantly below the College target as follows:  
  - Enterprise and Digital Industries;  
  - Health, Care and Early Years;  
  - Automotive Engineering  
  Members sought clarification on the actions in train to improve the position. The Principal advised the Board that, in order to prevent any further fall in retention, continuous monitoring would be undertaken and excellent student support services, appropriate additional learning support and inspirational teaching and learning provided throughout the remainder of the session to ensure that the strategic target of 85% was achieved;
* **Positive Value Added** – The Principal reported that value added was half a grade below where it should be and that further work needed to be done to secure the required improvement;
* **Forecast classroom based success rate 2016/2017** – Members reviewed and noted the forecast classroom based success rates for 2016/2017. The Principal highlighted the fact that the current retention rate was a clear indicator that the College was on track to achieve the strategic success rate target of 88%;
* **Full**-**Time Application Rates 2017/2018** – The Principal reported that full-time applications for 2017/2018 were approximately 24 below the same time the previous year. He also advised members that withdrawals were lower and conversion was stronger. He went on to say that the position was disappointing but was being closely reviewed by Senior Managers. Detailed analysis had suggested that three local schools (Brookfield, Cams Hill and Crofton) had shown a decline in their application numbers with others having either increased or were broadly in line with previous years. Members reviewed a graph on page 3 of the report which illustrated the proportion of the local (Fareham and Gosport) 16 year old market that the College had attracted over the previous three years and which projected forward to show what the College should be targeting as a minimum over the next three year period. The Principal concluded by saying that “in a nutshell” the College was not attracting a large enough market share of the local cohort;
* **Teachers, Curriculum, Students and Quality 4 x 4 Report** - Members reviewed and noted the successes and challenges outlined in the 4 x 4 report for TCS&Q;
* **Solent Leadership Academy** – The Principal reported lower than anticipated recruitment due to the awaited apprenticeship reforms and implementation of the apprenticeship levy. Members noted apprenticeship numbers currently stood at 70-80 with a target of 200 to be achieved by December 2017;
* **Internationalisation** – The Principal confirmed that the 3 day visit of Chinese Agents which had focused on introducing and familiarising the Chinese Agents with the College, its culture and what it had to offer a Chinese student had gone well and had resulted in the signing of an agreement to represent Fareham College in China;
* **RoATP** (Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers) – The Principal confirmed that the College had been one of 200 colleges that had been accepted onto the new apprenticeship training register. In addition, members noted that the SFA had excluded around 30 colleges from the register as well as a number of universities and long-established training providers. In most cases this had been due to the fact that a number of questions in the procurement exercise had not been answered satisfactorily;
* **OFSTED** – The Principal reiterated the fact that the College was anticipating being inspected at some point during the current academic year. He went on to say that this was partly because the College had last been inspected in May 2013 and, as a result, was back ‘in cycle’ and partly because OfSTED were currently very active in the area. Members reviewed and noted a summary of the first address of the new Chief Inspector of Education, Amanda Spielman, and key messages for Governors arising from recent OfSTED inspections. Governors sought clarification on the role of Governors under the new regime and the Deputy Principal outlined the process;
* **Spring Budget** – The Principal advised the Board that the Spring Budget had included a surprisingly large funding announcement for 16 to 19 education with additional funds of £60million being made available from 2018/2019. Members noted that this was the first revenue spending increase in a budget for FE funded by tax since the free college meal money in 2013 and it had been over a decade since there had been more investment in teaching;
* **Funding Allocations** – Members noted that:  
  - SFA Adult Education Budget allocations were still awaited;  
  - EFA allocations had been circulated and were broadly in-line with expectations;  
  - HEFCE allocations had been received and reflected a modest growth in funded learners;
* **College Insolvency Regime** – Members were provided with a Governor Briefing Paper on the College insolvency regime which was due to have its second reading in the Lords.

**Members of the Board reviewed and noted the contents of the Principal’s Spring Term Report.**

**13/17 Review of Progress against Strategic Priorities 2016/2017**

Members of the Board received a paper which provided a progress review of the Strategic Priorities for 2016/2017. The Principal spoke to the paper and highlighted the fact that there were 60 actions in total which had progressed as follows:

* 33% completed;
* 57% substantive progress or KPI is ‘Good’;
* 6% limited progress or KPI ‘Requires improvement’.

He referred members to the objectives which had deteriorated since the previous progress update and which related to:

* **To continue with the internal apprenticeship programme** – The Principal confirmed that there were currently 11 apprentices and the College would be looking to take advantage of the Apprenticeship levy to increase activity;
* **Reduce overall number of complaints received into the College** – The Principal explained that an increasing number of complaints had been received in relation to Art, Design and Fashion which had inflated the number expected at this time of year to 51. He went on to say that, primarily, the issues had been due to a series of serious staffing issues in this area of the curriculum. He assured Governors that actions were being implemented to address these issues which would not impact on student outcomes;
* **Improve English and Maths outcomes in traineeships** – The Principal advised members that exam resits now included those that had achieved an ‘E’ as well as a ‘D’ grade. There was a brief discussion about inspection and the College not now being able to achieve ‘Outstanding’. The Principal confirmed that if the College received a short inspection it could only maintain it’s current grade and there had been no instances of a College receiving a short inspection being converted to a full inspection which had then converted up a grade. The Deputy Principal added that the new inspection regime was really tough and ‘Good’ was the new ‘Outstanding’. He advised members that the proportion of 6th Form colleges being good was higher than GFE colleges due to the fact that GFEs were more complex. He confirmed that Truro College was the only college to achieve an ‘Outstanding’ inspection outcome so far.

**Members reviewed and noted the progress of the Strategic Objectives 2016/2017 achieved to date.**

**14/17 Presentation from the Principal on Strategic Planning**

The Principal provided members with a presentation on Strategic Analysis and Options: Challenges, Action and Opportunities. The Slides used during the presentation are an **Appendix** to these minutes.

**15/17 Apprenticeship Reforms & The Apprenticeship Levy: An Update & Progress Check for Governors**

Members of the Board received an update and progress check on the Apprenticeship Reforms and the Apprenticeship Levy. The Deputy Principal spoke to the paper and reminded members that a comprehensive presentation on the apprenticeship reforms had previously been provided at a meeting of the Board. He went on to say that the reforms which had been in the pipeline for more than a year had now come into scope. Governors questioned the process for monitoring the delivery of the plan. The Deputy Principal responded by saying that there was a detailed ‘rag rated’ spreadsheet which was presented to the TSC&Q Committee and he outlined the tracking system used to monitor implementation. In addition, he drew members’ attention to pages 5 and 6 of the paper which outlined the ‘Self-Assessment of Apprenticeship Reform Preparation’. He concluded by saying that the new regime was complicated but the College was prepared and as far ahead as it could be given the delays that were being experienced.

There was a general discussion in which the following points were made:

(i) That Functional Skills may be more appropriate compared to the GCSE and whether the Employer should be told which English and Maths route the learner was taking. The Deputy Principal stated that the employer would be in the ‘driving seat’ and the College would need to provide guidance about the most suitable route to take;

(ii) How to get the message into schools to ensure that they were promoting and encouraging apprenticeships to those better suited for them and that they were being given the appropriate guidance. The Deputy Principal stated that he felt the ‘tide was turning’. The Principal acknowledged that there was a perception that an ‘A’ Level was the gold standard and if a learner didn’t get the grades then they had to do an apprenticeship. He went on to say that the Government had taken this on board and had tried to address this issue with the introduction of the ‘T’ Level but it wouldn’t happen overnight. The College would continue to promote the successes achieved from apprenticeships;

(iii) Parents would already be thinking and talking about the best route for their child or children and in particular the potential for them to be left with significant student debt if they went to university. Members felt that the perception about ‘A’ Levels being the gold standard was as much with parents as it was with schools and getting the message across to parents about the opportunities in apprenticeships was equally as important. The Deputy Principal stated that universities were now talking more about degree level apprenticeships which was helping to dispel the myth that apprenticeships were for those that had not ‘made the grade’. He went on to outline the changes to staffing and the College’s approach to advice and guidance. The view of the Student Governors was sought as to whether parents influenced the final decision about where a student chose to study. Overall, it was felt that, although the student may discuss their options with their parent, generally they had little impact on the final decision.

The Deputy Principal assured members that the College was on track to be ready for the new reforms.

**Members of the Board reviewed and noted the contents of the paper and the current position.**

**16/17 Facts and Figures ‘Pocket Brief’**

Members of the Board received the Facts and Figures ‘Pocket Brief’ which provided updated key performance data for the Spring Term 2017 which was reviewed and noted.

**17/17 Internationalisation Strategy 2017-2022**

Members of the Board received the Internationalisation Strategy 2017-2022 which had been considered, reviewed in detail and was recommended by the TSC&Q Committee.

The Deputy Principal spoke to the paper and advised members that the Strategy represented a five year plan of the College’s journey into international recruitment and internationalisation of Fareham College to benefit students by developing a more culturally diverse wider student population which would assist each student in becoming better prepared for working in an increasingly globalised UK economy. He referred members to page 6 of the Strategy which outlined the KPIs by which to measure progress.

Governors questioned how the College was risk assessing other countries and ensuring that the individuals coming into the country and attending the College were reputable individuals. The Principal responded by saying that it had taken the College two years to secure the licence for 15 students. He confirmed that each student was vetted in a number of ways and the College was required to prove that it had a rigorous infrastructure in place to ensure it was a worthy sponsor for the student. He went on to say that if any students were ‘lost’ or 10% of the 15 did not turn up the College would have its licence revoked.

**Members of the Board formally approved the Internationalisation Strategy 2017-2022.**

**18/17 Higher Education Strategy 2016/2017**

Members of the Board received the Higher Education Strategy 2016/2017 which had been considered, reviewed in detail and was recommended by the TSC&Q Committee.

The Deputy Principal advised the Board that the Strategy had been updated to include an emphasis on Higher Apprenticeships and had been adjusted to be in line with the new quality assurance arrangements.

**Members of the Board formally approved the Higher Education Strategy 2016/2017.**

**19/17 Student Attendance Strategy**

Members of the Board received the Student Attendance Strategy which had been considered, reviewed in detail and was recommended by the TSC&Q Committee.

Members of the Board noted that the College had set a minimum student attendance target of 90%. The Deputy Principal highlighted the fact that the strategy now made it very clear whose responsibility it was to monitor individual student attendance and all action taken would be recorded on Pro-Monitor for HoDs and Tutors to see.

**Members of the Board formally approved the Student Attendance Strategy.**

**20/17 Management Accounts at 28th February 2017**

Members of the Board received a confidential paper on the Management Accounts for February 2017. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the paper and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

**21/17 Outline Budget Strategy for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019**

Members of the Board received a confidential paper on the Outline Budget Strategy for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the paper and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

**22/17 2016/2017 IT Strategy Update: Position** Statement

Members of the Board received a confidential paper on the 2016-2017 IT Strategy Update: Position Statement. The Principal spoke to the paper and advised members that the new Head of Technical Services had prepared the Position Update. Members noted that the team restructure had now been completed and good progress was being made. The Principal confirmed that the paper provided the latest position regarding the set of considerations that would need to be factored into the 2017/2018 Information Technology Strategy due to be presented to the full Corporation for formal approval at its next meeting on the 28th June 2017.

**Members of the Board reviewed and noted the contents of the paper.**

**23/17 Annual Review of 2017-2019 Fees Policy and Guidance**

Members of the Board received the Fees Policy and Guidance for 2017-2019. Members were reminded that the purpose of the Policy was to provide a framework within which the College’s fee setting and fee refund processes were devised and operated. In addition, the policy also set a framework for ensuring that comprehensive guidance and information regarding fees was available and accessible to (prospective) learners, staff and Governors.

The Director for Funding and Finance spoke to the paper and outlined the main changes which related to:

* International fees;
* Higher Education fees;
* Advanced learner loans and the introduction of a refundable 10% fee deposit once receipt of the first loan payment had been made to the College. In addition, Mrs Baxter highlighted the fact that students would retain ultimate responsibility for the payment of their fees
* Tuition fee remission;
* One-off student contribution towards trips etc.;
* Payment of fees – all fees to be paid for in full at enrolment unless students an instalment plan through Flex-Ed has been agreed.

**Members of the Board reviewed and formally approved the Fees Policy and Guidance 2017-2019.**

**24/17 Contract for the External Audit Service Provider 2017/2018**

Members of the Board received a paper on the Contract for External Audit Services. Members were reminded that the current External Audit contract with Grant Thornton had been awarded in June 2010 following a tender exercise. The Chair of Audit spoke to the paper and advised members that the Audit Committee had reviewed the performance of the External Auditors at their meeting on the 21st March 2017 and that no key issues of concern had been raised.

**Members of the Board accepted the recommendation of the Audit Committee and formally approved the re-appointment of Grant Thornton as the Financial Statements Audit Provider for a further financial year to run from 1st August 2017 to 31st July 2018.**

**25/17 Membership Issues and Report of the Search Committee**

Members of the Board received the General Report of the Search Committee and considered and formally approved the recommendations enshrined within it as follows:

1. **Reviewed the contents of the paper and noted the current membership position as outlined in Appendix A to the paper;**
2. **Approved the recommendation that Mr Mike Mansergh, Mr Kevin Briscoe and Mrs Karen Woods be re-appointed to the Board to serve for a second term of office from 01.05.17 to 30.04.20;**
3. **Noted the position regarding the memberships which come under review during the remainder of the 2016/2017 academic year and the Autumn term 2017 and the related actions;**
4. **Formally approved the Membership of Corporation Committees as outlined in Appendix B to the paper.**

**26/17 Preparations for Governor/Board Self-Assessment 2016/2017**

Members of the Board received a paper on the Preparations for the Governance/Board Self-Assessment 2016/2017. Members reviewed the contents of the paper, considered the proposals and agreed the action in preparation for it as outlined in the paper.

**Members of the Board formally agreed the arrangements for the Self-Assessment session for 2016/2017 and the action to be taken in preparation for it as outlined in the paper.**

**27/17 Performance Review of the Deputy Principal 2015/2016**

*Staff and Student Governors and Executive Officers withdrew from the meeting at this point.*

Members of the Board received the 2015/2016 Performance Review for the Deputy Principal. Due to the strictly confidential nature of the contents of the report and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate strictly confidential minute for Governors who are not Staff and Student only.

**28/17 Performance Review of the Clerk 2015/2016**

Members of the Board received the Performance Review Report of the Clerk for 2015/2016.

Members were aware that the report had been considered and discussed by the F&R Committee at its meeting in March 2017 and members had agreed that the report was an excellent representation of the last year’s performance. In addition, members noted that no issues of concern had been raised.

**Members reviewed and noted the contents of the Performance Review 2015/2016 for the Clerk.**

**29/17 Performance Review of the Principal 2015/2016**

Members of the Committee received the Performance Review 2015/2016 for the Principal. Due to the strictly confidential nature of the contents of the report and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate strictly confidential minute for Governors who are not Staff and Student only.

**30/17 Termly Reports of Corporation Committees**

The following termly reports from the Corporation Committees had been electronically circulated to Members of the Board:

* Teaching, Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee;
* Finance and Resources Committee;
* Audit Committee;
* Marketing Working Group minutes from 25th January 2017 and 13th March 2017 meetings;
* Minutes of the Wellbeing Committee meeting held on the 1st March 2017.

**Members reviewed and noted the contents of the reports, minutes and the issues which had been discussed at committee meetings during the term.**

**31/17 Student and Staff Liaison Committee Minutes**

Members of the Board received (electronically) the minutes of the following meetings for information:

* Staff Liaison Committee (BRC) meeting which had taken place on the 1st February 2017;
* SLC (CEMAST) meeting which had taken place on 2nd February 2017;
* Student Board minutes from the meeting which had taken place on the 13th January 2017;
* Staff Liaison Committee (BRC) meeting which had taken place on 22nd March 2017;
* SLC (CEMAST) meeting which had taken place on 23rd March 2017;
* Student Board minutes from the meeting which had taken place on the 29th March 2017.

**Members reviewed and noted the contents of the minutes and the issues which had been discussed at these meetings during the term.**

**32/17 Date of next meeting**

In accordance with the approved Corporation Calendar 2016/2017, members noted that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 28th June 2016 at 4.30pm.**