

**MEETING OF THE FULL CORPORATION
OF FAREHAM COLLEGE**

30 March 2020

M I N U T E S

As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic this meeting was held via teleconference using POW WOW NOW

Present: Mr K Briscoe (Chair)
Ms E Champion
Mr M Hoban
Mr A Kaye (Principal)
Mr P Marchbank
Ms T Richardson
Ms K Shreves
Mr A Spires
Dr C Thomas
Mrs P Tilt
Mr A Wannell
Ms K Woods

In attendance: Mr R Bryant (Deputy Principal Finance & Resource)
Mrs L Davis (Asst Principal Students & Improvement)
Mrs G Flood (Head of Governance)
Mrs L Palmer (Asst Principal Curriculum)
Mrs Lesley Roberts (Managing Director, Business Plus)

01/20 Register and Etiquette reminder for teleconferencing

The Chair reminded members of the etiquette in conducting a meeting via tele-conference and conducted a register. Members were informed the Head of Governance would be utilising the 'record' function of the call-in order to assist with minute taking. All agreed.

02/20 Item 1: 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. No interests were declared.

03/20 Item 2: Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Sophie Burgess, Louie Martin and Will Terry. Joshua Dukes was not in attendance.

04/20 Item 3i: The Principal's Autumn Term Report – December 2019

Members of the Board received the Principal's Autumn Term Report 2019 which was confidential to members of the Board and which summarised key issues and developments in the work of the College during the Spring term - it was noted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the report by way of forecast has now changed. The Principal noted the report would however, be a useful snapshot of the College's position before

things changed so drastically.

COVID-19

The Principal noted that communication has been critical in this period and from early on daily updates were provided to all staff. Other information in terms of staff priorities in this situation e.g. childcare/other health concerns were also collected by the survey.

Teaching and Learning Update

The Principal informed the Corporation that due to current events, it has become necessary to fundamentally shift our teaching and learning online. It was noted the key risk was the ability to carry out practical assessments and apprenticeship End Point Assessment in order for students to achieve final qualifications, but pre-COVID-19 potential results looked promising.

APS&I informed governors that we feel we are in a good position to judge where students will or would have been at the end of this academic year and that to this end, there shouldn't be a huge differential in the results data. APC noted further clarification from Ofqual and DfE is required but estimation grade models look likely to be used by most awarding organizations and we feel we're in a strong position to evidence our grades. Generally, Governors we re-assured that the College felt confident in achieving FT students' qualifications.

Student safeguarding, welfare and well-being

The Corporation were informed that home learning as a result of COVID-19 presents a concern for the safeguarding and welfare of our most vulnerable students. Safeguarding duties now lie outside of our controls, and we are aware many of our students live in challenging circumstances. Significant time and resource have been factored into ensuring we continue to keep in touch with all these students remotely and regularly carry out welfare checks.

Work Experience and Industry Placements

The Corporation noted that since the issue of report it has been necessary to withdraw all students from placements with employers.

Full time recruitment

The Principal informed the Corporation that it is likely there will be some impact to FT recruitment however we intend to continue with normal communications and publicity leading up to the new academic year. The College has removed the "Intro Sessions" that were in place and have initiated a conditional offer approach based on application and telephone interview.

Business Plus & Apprenticeships

The Principal highlighted this as the College's biggest area of risk. It was noted the Business Plus Team have been contacting key accounts this week to review the impact on the college apprenticeship income. MDBS also informed the Corporation that much work has been completed to review all current apprentices, and whether a 'break in learning' should be instigated. It was noted generally students are engaging well and we intend to keep as many 'on programme' as possible.

Members of the Corporation reviewed and noted the contents of the Principal's Spring term report February 2020.

05/20 Item 3ii: College response to COVID-19

Members of the Committee received a report which provided an overview of the College's response to date in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Principal noted that as expected SLT were forced to move quickly and teams worked to prepare for online learning, remote working and classroom delivery alternatives in a matter 10-14 days. All staff have responded extremely positively, and the Principal noted his thanks to all. The Corporation were informed that wef Friday 20th March aside from the Nursery (which is a privately owned business) 2 members of the estates team only were accessing the BRC building on a daily basis (observing social distancing and related preventative measures) in the interests of health/safety and security.

The Chair told the Principal he was very impressed with way College has pulled together in a very short period of time, almost seamlessly moving from 3 campuses to working remotely. He noted that the Principal's communications to staff and students (all shared with Governors) have been excellent, reassuring and informative in equal measure. The Corporation were informed that a 'thank you' email on behalf of Governors was issued from Kevin to all staff earlier today.

Safeguarding

The APS&I informed the Corporation that all students considered at risk in respect of safeguarding have been RAG rated with an individualized communication plan in place for each student. The Health and Wellbeing team are working really hard to maintain contact and relationships. Additionally, we are taking on board new challenges in respect of safeguarding online - remote learning, protecting staff/students in relation to use of various apps etc. The Corporation were informed that the government have released bespoke advice around safeguarding during COVID-19 and this will be converted to an annex of the current Safeguarding policy.

The Corporation were informed that staff welfare remains a focus, noting that working from home can be stressful especially combined with a lack of childcare/caring for relatives etc. Staff messaging is being distributed encouraging regular breaks, being realistic about what's achievable and 'logging off' at the end of the day.

Free College Meals

Governors we told that little guidance was provided in respect of how to handle free school meals. As such, the College made a decision to pay the bursary and free school meals up front, rather than issuing weekly cash. This will be monitored, but as we are aware a number of these students are in wider financial hardship, it was hoped this would be the most useful resolution.

Online Learning

The Principal informed the Corporation that the move to online learning has been extraordinary and the teams have worked incredible hard to get this off the ground. The response from students has been equally rewarding with attendance improved in some areas. Staff Governor TR provided her view as a teacher and agreed that this had been overwhelmingly positive, she noted that there was a huge teaching and learning community working really closely.

Apprenticeships

MDBP gave an overview noting that the team (as a result of a potential COVID-19 case) were homebased a week earlier than the rest of the College. The on-going monitoring of apprentices is now being conducted by tele- / videoconferencing which has enabled some continuity. Students who had been accessing online learning and virtual 121's were surveyed this week, and results are very positive. The most concerning issue remains the security of apprenticeships jobs which is beyond our control. It was noted for the time being, a key focus is to try and retain those apprentices already on programme.

HR matters

The Corporation were informed that a FAQ sheet was issued to all staff covering pay, sick pay and time away

from the office. Signposting to wellbeing resources including the EAP services was also included. Informal 'coffee' catch ups via team /Skype are being encouraged. Line Managers have been reminded to check in with staff regularly and to ensure no-one is overloaded. It was noted staff have been reassured that we are not considering redundancies, however we will be investigating furloughing staff esp. in the more commercial enterprises e.g. salon, restaurant and perhaps e.g. reprographics team.

Regulation/Recruitment/Communications & Marketing

- The Corporation were informed Ofsted have paused inspection for the time being
- The OfS have introduced two new measures of intervention including one based on cash liquidity
- Publicity continues 'your place is here', T'Level awareness and public messaging in line with government and NHS including stay at home etc.

Community

The Principal noted he was aware that the College was yet to make a notable COVID-19 related 'community' contribution (the College has donated masks to QA Hospital, provided a 'rent holiday' to the Nursery and other staff based actions) however whilst a number of ideas had been considered but there is nothing practical of help at this time. AW noted that Fareham Borough Council (FBC) have developed their local resilience plan where they are trying to co-ordinate a cross-agency response. He suggested the College make contact to offer their services. All agreed.

ACTION: Principal to contact FBC to offer College services as part of the local resilience plan

Recovery

The Principal introduced this section of the report as a work in progress, suggesting that whilst we were still in the midst of the pandemic it was important to think ahead to what the new 'normal' might look like.

It is likely our cycle of business will be more fluid, we may have alternative term starts for 2020-21, online learning may need to be more widely incorporated. Going further we need to consider the Strategic Plan –do we need to change our corporate priorities?

A member suggested the College consider any practical work that might need to take place to re-open campuses and to consider a timeline of partial opening. If we are able to access the campus during the summer, are there opportunities for some of the apprenticeships to finalise any work, with the online resources in place, is there merit in looking at a staggered 'online' introduction for 2020-21.

Another member commented that 'recovery' planning is being completed across businesses, he noted that many were suggesting a less risky outlook, to 'hunker down and recover'. To this end any future strategic plan would be conservative, for a College perhaps a less ambitious growth plan is more sensible. It was agreed online working has been a huge advantage and this may well have long term effects.

Another member noted that there will be opportunities to look for, in respect of new business income there will be companies looking to re-build, links with JobCentre plus, look at re-training, hard hit industries such as hospitality. He suggested reaching out to our larger employers in 2-3 weeks, to see what they're thinking, most companies are re-evaluating strategy, and by getting an idea of what they will be looking for, will then help us to form our own. He echoed the concern with previous ambitious growth plans and for example: would be wary of a Highbury and St Vincent's merger noting economically fragile institutions will be very affected. All agreed.

A member informed the Corporation that there is a notable increase in potential fraud and online fraud noting that these 'unusual' situations are often taken advantage off since it's not quite 'business as usual' and systems can be open to more flexibility. The APF&R agreed and suggested the Head of Technical services circulated a fraud reminder to all staff. Staff support Governor KS confirmed she would raise this with the Finance team at

their next briefing.

ACTION: RB to ask Head of Technical Services to circulate fraud reminder to all staff.

Governors reviewed the report and noted;

- **the details of the current continuity programme of the pandemic action plan**
- **the headlines of the recovery stage**
- **the potential impact on the college's future strategic plan**

06/20 Item 3iii: T Level's Summer Works

Members of the Corporation received a confidential paper on the T level Capital works. 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.

07/20 Item 4i: Management Accounts as at 28 February 2020

Item 4ii COVID-19 Financial Impacts

Item 4iii Outline Budget Strategy

Members of the Corporation received the following confidential papers; **Management Accounts as at 28 February 2020, COVID-19 Financial Impacts , Outline Budget Strategy**. 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.

08/20 Item 05: Building cleaning services contract

Members of the Corporation received a confidential paper on a building cleaning services contract. 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.

11/20 Any other business

The HoG noted that it was likely we would need to prepare for the summer committee meeting round to be conducted at a distance. It was agreed HoG would liaise with individual Committee Chair's in respect of their preferred way or working e.g. tele-conference or video-conference such as Zoom or Microsoft teams. It was noted Chris Thomas had no access to IT equipment but would only be able to join a meeting via the telephone.

ACTION: HoG to contact Committee Chairs to discuss format of summer term meetings.

A number of Governors gave congratulations to the Principal and the wider SLT team for their response to the pandemic and current situation. All felt that communications were strong, frequent and that the wider College team had responded incredibly well to the challenge.

A member queried what was in place for staff support, noting if this continues for some time, we need to ensure we are supporting and providing what staff need to be successful. The Principal informed the Corporation that HR updates have been circulated to all staff, and a wellbeing chat group has been developed. Informal 'coffee' catch ups via team /Skype are being encouraged. Line Managers have been reminded to check in with staff regularly and to ensure no-one is overloaded. It was also noted that contact with the union representatives continues to take place.

The meeting ended at 18.15