

**\$MEETING OF THE FULL CORPORATION  
OF FAREHAM COLLEGE  
30 March 2021**

**M I N U T E S**

**As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic this meeting was held remotely using Microsoft Teams**

<b>Present:</b>	Kevin Briscoe (Chair)	Tanya Richardson ( <b>left at 18.00</b> )
	Sophie Burgess (student)	Samuel Rushant (student) ( <b>left at 18.00</b> )
	Emma Champion	Karen Shreves
	Gilbert Chivers (student)	Chris Thomas
	Mark Hoban	Pauline Tilt
	Ian Harris	Andy Wannell
	Andrew Kaye (Principal)	
	Bryan Newton	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Christian Allen-Kotze	(Deputy Principal Curriculum, Quality & Innovation)
	Richard Bryant	(Deputy Principal Finance & Resource)
	Shirley Collier	(Observer)
	Georgina Flood	(Head of Governance)

The Chair introduced AOC Consultant Shirley Collier who would be observing this evening's meeting as part of the current Board review.

This meeting was preceded by a 'deep dive' session on T levels, provided by the Deputy Principal Curriculum, Quality and Innovation. This presentation is available via the Governor's portal.

- Q A member queried to what extent do T levels have an impact on current student numbers – are these 'new' student number we're gaining?
- A DP CQI confirmed yes these is 'new' recruitment marketed as an alternative to A levels. We will continue to run applied general courses alongside (and there is some overlap) - in the longer term we will look at how we shape our offering (by potentially scaling back applied general courses in favour of T levels)
- Q A member asked when other local Colleges will be providing T levels i.e. how long can we enjoy the market share?
- A The Principal confirmed that Havant and South Downs College will offer T levels from 2021 but there were otherwise no other immediate competitors.
- Q A member requested clarification on the length of a T level course and queried why we had chosen the specific routes of early years, healthcare and digital?
- A The Principal confirmed qualifications were 3 years in length and the choice of T level provision was determined by DoE roll out.
- Q A member queried if the College was working with Employers to ensure that the T level students will provide what they are looking for in the workplace?
- A DPCQI confirmed that lots of work is undertaken to link with employers to shape the work placements and skills to meet employer demand.
- Q A member queried how T levels impact of take away from our apprenticeship offer?
- A DPCQI, yes to a degree but we are working hard to market them differently as an A-level alternative. There is some inevitable overlap/progression e.g., T level students would be encouraged to access higher level apprenticeships.

- Q A member requested clarification in terms of what make this workable in terms of scale?
- A DPCQI confirmed a cohort of 16 per class is our baseline requirement – we are working hard to achieve this via recruitment, but also via internal progression.
- Q A member queried how T level's fit in with other local area offerings bearing in mind there is no A' level provider in Fareham?
- A DPCQI confirmed it was a still a challenge with the established battle on the value of technical provision over academic means there is still work to do to 'sell' these to students and parents as a viable A level alternative. Increased marketing and outreach are definitely the focus of the new academic year. Of note is the intention to greater tailor the marketing from the government 'generic' T level marketing to more course specific detail.
- Q It was note recruitment was quite low in some areas e.g., Digital - what is the plan?
- A DPCQI confirmed that SLT regularly review applications via a dashboard. Action planning to boost numbers and plan/tweak marketing continues. In addition to new starts we are looking internally via our robust progression process. School liaison, outreach programmes and similar marketing will all continue to be rolled out (increasingly face to face/visiting schools with the lifting of restrictions).
- Q A member raised the issue of gender balance? -was there anything to be seen in terms of applications?
- A The Principal confirmed there was nothing of note- in fact the courses were fairly 'traditionally' split with mainly women on the early years and men on digital course - but yes, we have (as previously) made focus on engineering and digital courses for women, applying this to all our provision across the curriculum. It was agreed this would remain part of a wider programme to challenge stereotypes.

#### **01/21 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.

#### **02/21 Item 2: Apologies for absence, introduction of new members**

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Marchbank and Adam Spires. It was noted Tanya Richardson and Sam Rushant would both need to leave the meeting early. Will Terry was not in attendance.

#### **03/21 Item 3 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 December 2020**

The Corporation reviewed and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 subject to minor amendments (addition of Karen Woods as present, and Bryan spelt with a Y not an I) were agreed to be a true and accurate record. In respect of matters arising, HG noted that all actions have been completed except "examples of green agendas from Employers" which is still with the Business Plus team – these will be brought to the Corporation in due course.

The Corporation ratified a confidential decision made via written resolution, 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.

**The Corporation approved the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020.**

#### **04/21 Item 04i: Principal's report**

The Principal provided an overview of his report commenting on sector issues, local and national perspective as well as headline College Performance.

- Q A member queried if the College intends to retain the testing centre in the short-medium term?
- A The Principal confirmed that all full-time staff and students are now using home testing kits, we are likely to keep the testing centre in the short term in case there's eventuality where we need to re-instate – its hard to gauge at this point.
- Q A member noted the success via their Link Role of the mental health and wellbeing tirage system and the fact additional resource was required – has this been considered?
- A The Principal confirmed that yes, there is a business case for more resource which is being, considered very carefully, unfortunately due to not receiving any direct funding from gvt for mental health initiatives, this will need to found within the existing staff budget.
- Q A member queried if there was anything more tangible in respect of the intention (page 23) to 'deliver outstanding provision' – how do we plan to do this?
- A The Principal reminded members that the Director of CETC/CEMAST has recognised elements of quality that need looking at. Whilst we are confident in the general quality of approach, further into the detail of delivery we are aware there is some work to do. Whilst this was arguably not very measurable or achievable this is also covered in the QIP and KPI information. TSCQ received a dedicated presentation from the Director of CEMAST/CETC at their Autumn meeting and will be visiting the discussed action plan at their next meeting.
- Q A member queried what was happening in respect of the recruitment of the Managing Director of Business Plus?
- A The Principal confirmed that the advert had closed and that interviews were scheduled for next week.
- Q A member asked the Principal's view on the post-16 development piece, noting Southampton and Portsmouth seem to be taking different approaches. Is this a concern?
- A The Principal confirmed the post-16 landscape in Southampton is complex and as a result of too many relatively small colleges in competition with one another some colleges are facing challenging financial performance. Deloitte have been commissioned by the DfE to review the situation and propose a "City Wide solution". This may result in mergers or possibly even a proposal for the relocation of provision. The Principal has proactively engaged with Deloitte to provide feedback from the college's perspective and is also speaking with the Regional Schools Commissioner to highlight his view about the potential future relationship between Fareham College and St Vincent's. Any discussion of merger with St Vincent's is complicated though by the multi-academy structure of St Vincent's with Richard Taunton's College.
- Q The Chair queried of the AOC list of 'most pressing' items for FE Colleges, what was most key for Fareham?
- A Covid impact on apprenticeship income /AEB reconciliation (although we feel we will probably weather the AEB storm ok

### **Members of the Corporation reviewed and noted the contents of the Principal's report**

#### **05/21 Item 04ii: Key Corporation KPI's**

The Principal introduced the Corporation KPI's noting that that those delegated to Committee's had been scrutinised at their recent meeting. A member noted this was a welcome addition to reporting endorsing the layout and format which was easy to read/understand.

### **Members of the Corporation reviewed and noted the KPI position for the Autumn Term.**

#### **06/21 Item 05iii: Strategic and Quality Improvement Plan**

The Principal provided an overview of the QIP for the period until the end of February.

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.

**Members of the Corporation noted the report.**

**07/21 Item 05: Report from the Chair of Corporation**

The Chair of the Corporation provided a verbal report noting the huge pressure on SLT and College staff just before the end of term and preceding Lockdown 3. On behalf of the Corporation, he wanted to record thanks to all staff for the work they've done in respect of re-instigating online learning, setting up and running the LFT testing centre, supporting students and running the college in another extraordinarily difficult time.

He went on to note the publish of the long-awaited White Paper which puts vocational learning at the heart of the FE agenda and plays well to our strengths. It was noted this will be something we need to think about when we approach strategic review in May – he informed members a more digestible version of the paper will be circulated by HG in due course.

**The Corporation noted the report**

**08/21 Item 06: Link Governor Feedback**

The Corporation reviewed 10 feedback reports from four Link Governors during the Spring Term.

A member provided an overview of their role linking with the Careers team, of note was the funding of a 'progression mentor' role that subject to lack of ongoing government funding would be lost, and the notable improvement and plans for the improvement of destination data.

The Principal provided response that whilst the progression mentor role was great and the College received added value, it was of specific scope relating to supporting students in disadvantage postcodes into HE, in the longer term without external funding, it was not easy to see how this post could be justified.

A member provided feedback of their Link Role at CEMAST – it was noted that the initial meeting with Director of CEMAST/CETC Dave Richardson was really positive and what was reassuring was that similar messaging was reinforced by two other members of staff that were met. Both staff members met were new, and taking into account some of the previously discussed recruitment and retention issues at CEMAST, the Governor was impressed with the positive and upbeat attitude of these new staff.

A member noted that their link role in H&S continued to prove valuable. Moving forward they will be looking at how the College might further explore the audit approach, more context and use of benchmarks in comparison of either Colleges locally and or nationally. Finally was a consideration to look at how 'real' H&S was made from a student perspective. DPF&R suggested that the Link Member joined a lesson observation of students receiving a health and safety induction at the start of term. Agreed.

A member provided feedback on their attendance at an online lesson noting they were really impressed with the students attitudes and supportive nature with one another. Additionally as Safeguarding governor, there has been ongoing work with Victoria as Head of Student Experience and sharing of resources (received elsewhere via a role with the youth offending team). It was noted Victoria has made a very good impression and impact in her role.

- Q A member queried the take up and provision of IT for students in need. Wi-Fi issues were also discussed.
- A The Principal confirmed that we have a good supply of laptops and managed to provide them to all students who requested them. The College always maintain stock that can be attributed on a hardship/lack of access basis. The Student members confirmed she had sought IT support and found this easy to access (via a form distributed at tutor) and was provided a laptop within a fortnight. In respect of Wi-Fi, it was noted that whilst we have had some success in supplying dongles and vouchers for 3G access, physical connections within homes are something we will always struggle to combat. It was noted the student centre has been available throughout the pandemic for those that are unable to access at home.

The Chair reminded members how valuable the link role is in supporting and championing College staff in their roles. He requested those who are yet to meet their College counterparts to do so at their earliest convenience and to complete pro-forma via HG to evidence their visit.

### **The Corporation noted the Link Governor feedback**

#### **09/21 Item 07i: Chair of TSCQ report.**

The Vice Chair of TSCQ presented this report on behalf of the TSCQ Chair. Member were informed of the items discussed and reviewed at the latest meeting held on 11 November 2020. In respect of issues for the Corporation to be aware, the Committee noted the reduction in timely achievement rates, concern over the delivery of WEX as well as issues with CEMAST and CETC staffing issues.

- Q A member requested clarify that the decline in timely achievement within apprenticeships can be attributed to COVID and not any other underlying issues?
- A The Principal confirmed yes, whilst the overall achievement rate is in line with sector average, the timely rate has been notably affected.
- Q A member asked for a generalised view of the issues in recruitment/retention at CETC/CEMAST
- A The Principal replied that retention is generally good, however over the summer this was disproportionately affected. Its always hard to recruit staff from the marketplace into teaching when salaries don't compare. Additionally, due to pressure to fill gaps, there were some poor induction processes in place – we are now enforcing a fixed 2-week phased induction for all new CETC/CEMAST Staff. Some work around market supplements was used in 2020 to incentivise appointments but wider work looking at the pay policy is being undertaken by the Director of People & Culture. Similarly, a HR 'pulse' survey specifically around terms and conditions is currently underway – we are hoping this may pinpoint any other issues.
- Q A member sought clarification on the attendance/retention rates of students in Business Plus - what is happening here?
- A The DPCQI confirmed this was relating largely to traineeships, attendance within cohorts varied widely. Mainly as a result of COVID but there is increased scrutiny/focus in this area to monitor progress going forward.

### **The Corporation noted the report**

#### **10/21 Item 07ii Curriculum, Quality and Innovation update**

The DP CQI presented a report providing an overview of curriculum, quality and innovation items which was circulated to the Corporation in advance of the meeting.

**The Corporation noted the report.**

**11/21 Item 08i: Chair of Finance & Resources Committee report**

The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee provided an overview to the topics discussed and decisions made at the recent meeting held on 10 March 2020 as follows.

- continued positive tracking of H&S and exceptional response to COVID re: return to College and LFT testing centre.
- majority of debate spent on finances, reassured by cash days remaining strong, and financial score remaining in good health.
- capital investment – ambitious plans to develop the buildings for future proof/delivery of T levels.

**The Corporation noted the report.**

**12/21 Item 08ii: Management accounts ending 28 February 2021**

**13/21 Item 08iii: Capital Projects**

Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the above papers and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.

**The Corporation noted the report**

**14/21 Item 09i: Chair of Audit & Risk Committee report**

In lieu of the Chair of Audit, the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources provided an overview to the topics discussed and decisions made at the recent meeting held on 17 March 2020.

**The Corporation noted the report.**

**15/21 Item 09ii: Appointment of Internal and External Auditor for 2021-22**

The Deputy Principal F&R provided an overview of this report (recommended to the Corporation by the Audit Committee) in respect of the performance review and suggested re-appointment of both the Internal Auditor TIAA and External Auditor RMS for one year respectively from 2021-2022. The Corporation agreed to both contract extensions.

**DECISION: The Corporation approved a one-year extension to the Internal Auditor TIAA contract (expiring in August 2021) from August 2021-August 2022.**

**DECISION: The Corporation approved a one-year extension to the External Auditor RMS contract (expiring in December 2021) from December 2021- December 2022.**

**16/21 Item 10i: Membership update and appointment of Student Governors**

A report from the Head of Governance circulated in advance, provided a brief overview of the membership and succession planning status of the Corporation and its Committees.

**The Corporation noted the report.**

**17/21 Item 10ii: Regulatory Return report**

The Corporation received a short report circulated in advance from the Head of Governance providing an overview of the regulatory and statutory returns filed on behalf of the Corporation as at 31 March 2020. Members were asked to formally note Appendix A detailing the College's response to the OfS request to review current practice in light of consumer law (affected by COVID-19).

**The Corporation noted the report.**

**18/21 Item 11i and 11ii: Strategies and Policies**

**The Corporation ratified the following strategies already recommended for approval by the Finance & Resources Committee.**

- **Sustainability Strategy**
- **Property Strategy**

**19/21 Item 13: Any other business – next meeting**

There were no items of additional business and it was noted that the next formal meeting of the Corporation would be held on 29 June 2021 at 16.30.

The meeting ended at 18.30.