

SOUTHPORT COLLEGE

MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2018

Present:	Christine Bampton	Independent Governor
	Paul Cochrane	Independent Governor (minutes 6 to 91)
	John Clarke	Principal/CEO
	John Fell	Independent Governor (minutes 7 to 91)
	Veronica Fell	Independent Governor (Chair)
	Rob Firth	Independent Governor (Vice-Chair)
	Terry Fleetwood	Independent Governor
	Liam Gaskell	Student Governor (minutes 6 to 91)
	Vickie Hayes	Staff Governor
	Lily Irvine	Student Governor (minutes 6 to 91)
	Suzanne Knowles	Staff Governor
	Mo Kundi	Independent Governor
	Kathy Passant	Independent Governor
	Carol Reid	Staff Governor
	Vipin Trivedi	Independent Governor
	Jim Turner	Independent Governor (minutes 6 to 91)
	Richard Jacklin	Associate Member

In Attendance:	Anne-Marie Francis	Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality)
	Eddie Green	Vice Principal Services
	Nicola Hurst	Director of Teaching & Learning
	Jesamine Kelly	Assistant Principal (Curriculum & Quality)
	Lesley Venables	Clerk to the Corporation

PART ONE

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Alex Kenny (Independent Governor), Ian Raikes (Independent Governor), Stephen Breen (Associate Member) and Anita Holt (Associate Member),

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2 A declaration of interest was received from Veronica Fell as she is married to another independent governor.

APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS

3 The Chair of the Governance Committee reported on recent recruitment activities that had resulted in a recommendation for the appointment of two new independent governors and two student governors.

4 A nomination and election process was underway to appoint a new parent governor as Jim Turner had agreed to step down due to his child having finished their studies at KGV in July 2018. The Committee considered that Jim Turner would be a suitable independent governor.

- 5 **Resolved -**
- 1 That Paul Cochrane be appointed as an independent governor for a 4 year term of office and as a member of the Resources and Remuneration Committees
 - 2 That Liam Gaskell and Lily Irvine be appointed as student governors for a one year term of office and as members of the Standards Committee
 - 3 That Jim Turner be appointed to an independent governor for a 4 year term of office and as a member of the Audit Committee

CHAIR'S REPORT

6 The Chair of the Corporation updated governors on her activities since the July 2018 meeting. These included attendance at the Higher Education Graduation ceremony, A Level results day at KGV and two events arranged by the Association of Colleges – Chair/Principal Forum and governor induction.

John Fell joined the meeting.

7 Governors were reminded of the decision taken by written resolution that Southport College and Hugh Baird College would not be progressing the second stage of the merger process. This had now been notified to the appropriate regulatory bodies.

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 4TH JULY 2018

- 8 **Resolved -** That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

MATTERS ARISING

9 Governors received for information a report on progress against all items identified for further action. It was noted that the majority of these were either completed or featured on the agenda.

10 Under minute 324, the Principal reported that the College had been invited to apply for funding for a pilot project for Technical Levels in Construction. However, nationally the only bids that had been successful were from colleges graded as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, despite the 'good' colleges being asked to apply, and there were none in that category within the Liverpool City Region.

11 In response to questions on the planning process involved in the current accommodation projects, the Vice Principal Services reported that a revised Accommodation Strategy would be brought to the December meeting for approval. Additionally, the College had an annual cycle of planned maintenance.

12 Governors requested that any changes of meeting times and venue for both Corporation and committees should be notified as soon as possible. The Clerk undertook to recirculate the calendar of meetings for 2018/2019.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

13 The Clerk presented proposals for the reclassification of confidential minutes relating to the 2017/2018 academic year.

14 None of the items on the current agenda (Part 1) were deemed to be confidential.

15 **Resolved -** That the reclassification of minutes for 2017/2018 be approved

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018/2019 TO 2020/2021

16 The Principal presented the Strategic Plan for 2018/2019 to 2020/2021, which reflected changes in the external environment, such as Devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the Liverpool City Region, funding and the impact of the merger with KGV including the grant from the Transaction Unit.

17 Governors questioned the level of the staff pay to income ratio, which was currently 72%, compared to the recommended baseline figure of 63%. The Vice Principal Services reported that this was partly due to the merger and that the College was working towards the sector norm. This was a strategy that had been agreed with the Transaction Unit to maintain the quality of teaching required to effect a successful merger.

18 It was recognised that there were potential risks to the College's financial health and reputation if the post-merger situation was not managed appropriately.

19 In response to a request from governors, management would review ways in which governors and staff could be reminded of the strategic objectives as part of each report or communication.

20 A governor commented that some of the proposed strategic objectives were difficult to measure and to determine over time whether they were achieved. One way of improving this would be to align each objective with specific targets, progress against which would then be monitored through the Principal's regular Corporate Performance Report. It was also the case that more detailed targets formed part of the remit of each of the Corporation's committees.

21 The Principal explained that top level targets were already included in the Strategic Plan but these could be refined if that improve governors' understanding.

22 Governors questioned whether the proposed objectives would enable the College to be graded as 'outstanding' by Ofsted. The Principal responded that several objectives did support this, but that other factors needed to be considered such as financial health and student recruitment. It was also noted that the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework would be updated for September 2019, which meant that some areas would not be allotted the same level of priority in future years.

23 A working group had been established to draft a vision statement (in addition to the mission statement that had been approved at the July 2018 Corporation meeting). Staff had been consulted and fed back on the proposed vision statement. It was agreed that the working group would re-convene with the involvement of 2 of the staff governors and that an updated vision statement would be submitted for approval to the December Corporation meeting. In the light of this discussion the Board referred back to the proposed Mission Statement and concluded that the words "...Southport and the region" should be replaced by "...for its community" to align to the College's inclusivity for all.

24 Governors reflected on a suggestion that the minutes of each meeting name individual governors providing challenge and support. It was felt that it was possible for the minutes to remain robust without necessarily naming individuals and the Clerk would endeavour to ensure that they included sufficient background narrative on any decisions that had been reached.

- 25 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the Strategic Plan and Strategic Objectives be approved
 - 2 That, subject to the amendment discussed above, the Mission Statement be approved
 - 3 That the Vision Statement working group reconvene, with two staff governors to provide internal feedback

HEADLINE TARGETS FOR 2018/2019

26 The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality presented draft headline targets for 2018/2019. Governors also received a detailed breakdown of learner outcomes in 2017/2018, which had informed the targets for the current academic year. This had been discussed at length at the September 2018 Standards Committee meeting.

27 Questions were raised as to why the targets for 2017/2018 had been set higher than the actual outcome for 2016/2017, even though the achievement levels were below the latter. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality responded that overall performance had only fallen by 1%, which was statistically insignificant, with the exception of A Level programmes. No areas of concern had been identified.

28 For 2018/2019 some targets had not been increased, some had even been lowered and concern was expressed over the outcomes for GCSE Maths and English. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality gave an assurance that this was part of a national picture. Although the results had been reviewed in detail, no clear patterns had been identified which could inform future provision or delivery methods.

29 However, a range of strategies had been devised to analyse the outcomes by the relevant examination board, the appointment of a new Maths teacher and partnering with a local high school to improve accessibility and the transition from school to college. Lecturers were teaching slightly closer to the examination paper than in the past.

30 It was agreed attendance at Maths and English classes was critical to raising levels of achievement, together with a greater integration of these subjects into students' main qualifications.

31 The College was working with a peer college whose results were higher, but it was recognising the difficulty for any post-16 provider to reverse learner achievements if they had performed at a lower level at school. A significant number of these learners had additional support and safeguarding needs, which stretched the College's resources even more thinly than in the past.

32 Governors were advised that Ofsted inspection reports offered a good insight. Colleges needed to focus on progress: for those learners who did not achieve their qualification aim, an improvement of at least 1 grade should be seen as a measure of success and it was noted that overall learners were working towards a GCSE grade '4'.

33 It was recognised that, for some learners, not passing their English and/or Maths qualifications may delay or prevent them from being accepted for further study or progress to university.

34 Those learners who had narrowly missed passing their GCSEs would be entered for re-sit examinations in November. The remaining students would undertake their re-sits in May or June 2019 to give that group the best chance of succeeding to a Grade 4.

35 The Vice Principal reported that the target for Value Added had been '1', whereas the College had only achieved a grade '2' for the last two years ??

- 36 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the targets for 2018/2019 be approved
 - 2 That future reports would include an explanation when actual progress is below the national benchmark

UPDATE ON THE COLLEGE'S ENROLMENTS 2017/2018

37 The Vice Principal Services presented a report on enrolments for 2018/2019.

38 The College had enrolled 1761 16-18 year olds, compared to the target of 1705 and against 1694 in 2017/2018. This compared favourably to the funding target, but was still subject to finalisation as students could still leave before the census date. Within this the 16-18 cohort was lower at Southport College than in 2017/18 and higher than anticipated at KGV; an overall increase. The Board and management discussed the reduced numbers at Southport College and governors were advised that analysis was ongoing including recruitment from individual schools.

39 Adult learner numbers had increased slightly against the same point in 2017/2018 and it was noted that additional students would be enrolled throughout the academic year.

40 Enrolments on higher education programmes were below last year's target, but there were still some students to be fully enrolled. This area had been predicted for growth and any under-performance will have financial consequences.

41 New governors requested that they receive a copy of the predicted learner numbers submitted to the Transaction Unit.

42 In response to questions, the Assistant Principal reported that a more focused curriculum planning process for adult progression routes had been undertaken for 2018/2019 to highlight potential career pathways to learners. A revised Marketing Strategy would be submitted to the Corporation's December 2018 meeting.

43 Some governors expressed concern at the apparent lack of press based publicity in the local community, compared to competitor organisations. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality responded that a different approach was being used, with a greater use of electronic media, as this was considered more cost effective in terms of reaching the intended audience. Management acknowledged that the College's website required development to make it more user-friendly.

44 The Board asked for a more detailed analysis of enrolments to be provided to the next meeting, including areas of growth, areas that had not met the target and what further actions may be needed. Governors were informed that the Marketing Department was currently reviewing the school leaver information as a basis for schools liaison activities in 2018/2019.

FAIR FUNDING CAMPAIGN

45 The Principal outlined the current national campaign for fairer funding of FE Colleges. The Government had recently announced a 3.5% pay award for school teachers, but this did not apply to the further education sector and it was felt that this signalled the lack of fairness in relation to funding and motivated colleges to express this directly to MPs and ministers. The Chair and Principal were travelling to London tomorrow to meet with the constituency MP at Parliament to raise these concerns in person.

46 The Vice-Chair had circulated an e-mail to all governors, asking them for ideas to promote the campaign and it was important for Corporation members to keep themselves informed of developments. A link to an online petition to Parliament would be sent to all governors and to learners through the student governors.

47 Comments were made by governors on the difficulty of recruiting skilled and experienced staff within such a competitive market, with the inability to award them the same level of pay increases as schools and sixth forms.

ANNUAL REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING FOR 2017/2018 AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR 2018/2019

48 The Assistant Principal presented the Annual Report on Safeguarding for 2017/2018.

49 Governors noted that there had been an increase in the number and complexity of statutory safeguarding referrals and management responded that these required varying degrees of intervention. The College had a significant number of Looked After Children, who required additional layers of support.

50 The overall number of cases had decreased in 2017/2018 and this was due to a more refined monitoring process, including the "Next Steps" programme, which provided a transition from learning in small groups to mainstream provision. Better use of ProMonitor had also been made to record potential issues and communicate these confidentially amongst staff.

51 The Designated Safeguarding Governor reported that she had recently attended a Safeguarding Committee meeting. Attention was drawn to the improvement in learner outcomes compared to last year's rates, which indicated that most students remained on programme, progressed to the next level and achieved a positive result.

52 The Corporation received a revised Safeguarding Policy for 2018/2019. This had been updated to align with new national guidance from the Department for Education, changes in staffing and the General Data Protection Regulations. The Assistant Principal was asked to ensure that the Policy included governors within the content and that a paragraph be inserted on all new and existing governors being subject to Disclosure & Barring Service checks.

53 The Director of Teaching & Learning reported that she and the Clerk had met to discuss governor training, including safeguarding. Approximately half of the staff had undertaken a safeguarding update and governors were assured that robust procedures were in place to follow up the remaining individuals. The Designated Safeguarding Governor was trained to Level 3 and would be attending a 2 day refresher course shortly.

54 It had been agreed that a compulsory training session for governors on safeguarding would be held before the end of this term, dates for which would be circulated.

- 55 **Resolved -**
- 1 That, subject to ensuring that all elements applied to governors, the Policy be approved for 2018/2019
 - 2 That all governors attend a training session on safeguarding prior to 31st December 2018

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY

56 The Assistant Principal presented a revised Policy on Comments, Compliments & Complaints. This had been reviewed against the requirements of the new Office for Students and the Office for Access and updated accordingly.

57 In response to questions, the Assistant Principal reported that the section on Learner Voice had been amended following the May Strategy Day and that both colleges now had the same procedures.

58 It was suggested that a sentence be added to the Policy to indicate that no further level of appeal was available to any complainant, once the full process had been followed.

- 59 **Resolved -** That, subject to the amendment above, the Policy be approved

STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 5TH SEPTEMBER 2018

60 The Chair of the Standards Committee presented a summary of the minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2018.

61 The Committee had received a report on SC learner outcomes, which were in line with expectations and with the final outturn for 2016/2017. Overall, the level of achievement was 88%, which was above the identified target. Further data on performance by level was requested to improve governors' understanding and this would form part of a presentation on performance measures to the next meeting.

62 A formal analysis of learner outcomes by the management team had been requested and this had been featured under a later agenda item at this Corporation meeting.

63 Even though it had been predicted that some areas of provision would not meet the identified target, the actual outturn at KGV was lower and had caused the College's ALPs grading to decrease from a 4 (good) to a 6 (satisfactory).

64 Governors had received an update on the actions that had been taken to address the issues resulting from the outturn report, such as course closures and supportive measures for teaching staff. Information on progress monitoring would be provided to each future Committee meeting.

65 There had been an unforeseen slight reduction in performance in English compared to 2016/2017 and a significant decline in maths GCSE.

66 The results of Learner Exit Survey had been received for information and the good response rate and high evaluations against each question had been noted.

67 A Freedom of Speech Policy had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Corporation, which was required as part of the College's registration with the Office for Students for its higher education provision.

68 The Committee had agreed the content of the evaluation of its own performance in 2017/2018.

69 **Resolved -** That the Policy on Freedom of Speech be approved

OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS 2017/2018

70 The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) presented a report on Outcomes for Learners in 2017/2018, which was based on the document received by the Standards Committee on 5th September and included detailed analysis of the actions being taken to identify and address areas for improvement.

71 Governors were reassured by the comprehensive nature of the report and noted that the Standards Committee would be monitoring progress on a regular basis. A staff governor reported that colleagues welcomed the new approaches that had been devised, as these provided greater clarity and ownership of the College's processes and that individuals requiring additional support could be identified much earlier.

72 At the Standards Committee meeting management had been asked to provide information on performance by level and by course, to enable governors to fully understand the outcomes for learners. The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) advised that this data would be included in the College's Self-Assessment Report.

RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 10TH OCTOBER 2018

73 Governors received a verbal report from the Chair on the Resources Committee meeting held on 10th October 2018.

74 The management accounts for June and July 2018 had been reviewed and were presented to the Corporation for noting. A number of accounting adjustments for 2017/2018 were included in the accounts.

75 The Committee had received for information a copy of the latest monitoring report to the Transaction Unit.

76 A number of amendments had been made to the Committee's terms of reference, which would be submitted for approval to the December 2018 Corporation meeting.

77 **Resolved -** That the management accounts to 30th June and 31st July be noted

AUDIT COMMITTEE – 25TH SEPTEMBER 2018

78 The Chair of the Audit Committee gave a verbal report on the meeting held on 25th September 2018.

79 The Committee had considered the revised Internal Audit Plan for 2018/2019. The original version of the Plan had been approved by the Corporation in July 2018. However, following further discussions the 2 days of contingency activity would now be used to review the College's capital project management processes. It was agreed that the revised Plan would be circulated to all governors for approval by written resolution.

80 Letters of Engagement for both the Internal and External Audit firms had been approved by the Committee and would be signed by the Principal.

81 **Resolved -** That governors be asked to approve the updated Internal Audit Plan for 2018/2019 by written resolution

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

82 The Chair of the Governance Committee summarised the main points of the meeting that had been held on 3rd October 2018, in addition to earlier items reported under number 3.

83 Copies of the new Governance Handbook would be circulated to governors at the next cycle of committee meetings.

84 The Corporation was recommended to approve a number of documents that had been considered by the Committee.

85 The Chair of the Remuneration Committee had completed their two year term of office and the independent governors would be contacted shortly for nominations for the vacancy.

86 The Clerk requested that feedback on the proposed schedule of committee memberships, governor training/development plan for 2018/2019 and link governor schedule for 2018/2019 should be forwarded as soon as possible otherwise; it was

- 87 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the revised list of committee memberships be approved
 - 2 That the schedule of governor links for 2018/2019 be approved
 - 3 That the draft Governor Training & Development Plan be approved
 - 4 That the revised Instrument & Articles of Government be approved subject to some minor typographical amendments

GOVERNOR ACTIVITY REPORT

88 In view of the time, and the confidential meeting of independent governors which was scheduled to follow, governors were asked to forward details of any activities they had undertaken since the July 2018 Corporation meeting directly to the Clerk for collation.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 13th December 2018, 4.00pm
Tuesday 19th March 2019, 4.00pm
Wednesday, 10th July 2019, 4.00pm