

CORPORATION

DATE: WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2014

PLACE: 4th FLOOR EXECUTIVE SUITE

TIME: 4.00pm.

PRESENT: Godfrey Allen (Chair), Sue Rimmer (Principal), Daud Ilyas, Cllr Brenda Fraser, Cllr Jim Maddan, Karen Fullman (Item 5 onwards), Jonathan Hick, Paul Robinson, Lucy Ashman, Michael Helene (Items 5 onwards), Cllr Stuart Thom, Andrew Brown, Kazi Hossain, Yvette Stanley, Ross Maloney.

IN ATTENDANCE Ralph Moran (Director of Finance)
Sue Jones (Interim Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality)
Bev Giarraputo (Vice Principal Curriculum and Student Services)
Katie Driver (Observer)
Natalie Watt (Clerk to the Corporation)

1. Apologies for Absence

Russell Pocock, Atiqa Javid, Julian Grindell (Interim Vice Principal Special Projects), Rhea Augustus-Noel, Chris Wright (VP Planning & Resources).

The Chair introduced Katie Driver as a prospective Governor who had been invited to observe the operation of a Corporation meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Jim Maddan – Re Item 12 iii only - Capital Project development at the Wandsworth Campus.

PART ONE CONFIDENTIAL

3. Senior Post Holder Recruitment – Presented by the Principal

Items discussed:

- Subject to a separate confidential minute.

4. Confidential Minutes

- The Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th October 2014 were approved and signed by the Chair of the Corporation.

5. Strategic Review Process – (Structure & Delivery Model)– Presented by

the Principal

- Subject to a separate confidential minute

PART TWO

6. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th October 2014 were approved and signed by the Chair.

7. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Members noted that the development in Wandsworth of the Brewery site was progressing and the Principal confirmed that the College would be looking to explore any new opportunities that came with this. Noted.
- Members noted that an update on Retention was included on the agenda.
- Members were informed that the contract referred to in item 14iii had subsequently been signed on behalf of the College by the Principal. Noted.
- Members noted that an update on item 12 would be provided at the away day event.

8. Chairs Action

- AoC London Regional Forum chaired and attended
- AoC Governors Council attended
- Deed of Variation signed for Mobile Phone Mast to be moved to a new position at the Merton Campus.

9. Health & Safety

i)Annual Report 2013/14– Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the staffing changes that had taken place in this area. The Principal confirmed that appropriate cover had been maintained and that the area was now the responsibility of the Director of Finance.
- The Director of Finance provided a brief overview of the report and confirmed that increased staffing costs for the area were due to the use of interims.
- Members noted the level of reporting.
- The Director confirmed, that staff, were now systematically reporting both actual incidents and near misses which were used to take preventative action.
- Members were advised that due to a change in the reporting system that figures would not be truly comparative until the following academic year. Noted.
- Members noted that the number of RIDDOR reportable incidents had reduced.
- Members queried whether the costs of interims had been calculated into the budget? Members were advised that the management accounts took this additional spend in to account.

- Members noted the increase in the level of violence and aggression incidents.
- The VP Curriculum confirmed that these mainly related to the Aurora Centre where students behaviour was often more volatile. It was agreed that these figures would be shown separately in future.
- Members were advised that additional training for staff in how to deal with students in difficult situations had also been delivered.
- Members queried the phrasing used in 3.1 regarding progress being made? The Director of Finance confirmed that at the time of the report these were a work in progress that had subsequently been completed. Noted.
- Members noted at point 3.7 that a Green Fund bid had been submitted. Members were informed that South Thames College had piloted the scheme and that it had engaged students well.

Report RECEIVED.

ii) Health and Safety and Environmental Policies – Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- The Director of Finance confirmed that only minor changes had been proposed and that the Policy had been to both the Senior Leadership Team and the Health and Safety Committee prior to recommendation for approval.

Report RECEIVED and Policy APPROVED

10. Principal & Chief Executive's Termly Report – Presented by the Principal

Items discussed:

- Members noted that HRH Prince Charles would be attending the College for a visit to celebrate the work of the Princes Trust.
- Members were also advised that the Adult and Community Learning Contract currently delivered for Wandsworth Borough Council was also being inspected.
- Members noted the update on competitions and the achievements of those who participated.
- Members noted the update at paragraph 12 and the Principal confirmed that the College was holding discussions with Merton Council regarding potential delivery of a significant part of the Adult Community Learning provision held by them.
- The Principal informed Members that some initial discussion had taken place and that the College was seeking additional information on the impact of TUPE and the level of risk involved. Noted.
- Members noted the feedback on the Stakeholder's Dinner. The Principal confirmed that the event had been a significant success for the College and the students. Several key leads for new business were being pursued following the event.
- Members noted the update on page 3 and discussed the reasons for the different success rates between long and short courses. Detailed discussion followed on the length and type of course in each category.
- Members noted the areas of concern and discussed the College success rates without these areas being taken in to consideration.
- Members were informed that the impact had approximately a 6%

impact. Debate followed on the culture in schools within the College and the inconsistency that still existed in some areas.

- Members queried the level of progression and the Principal confirmed that it was slower than expected in the areas of concern but progress was now being made as a result of management actions.
- Members also discussed the AS and A2 results.
- Members were informed that functional skills showed good improvement and good progress was being made in implementing the English and maths strategy.
- Members were also informed that study programmes had also been well established and were developing well.
- Members discussed the targets set and the level of retention and asked what the College target was. Discussion took place on national averages against forecast and expectations.
- Members noted on page 9 that the UK Border Agency returned to the College for an in depth visit but that no concerns had been reported as yet.
- Members noted the update at paragraph 57 on Earn As You Learn and the update in paragraph 58 on LEP's

Report RECEIVED.

11. Teaching, Learning & Assessment – Presented by the Interim VP Curriculum & Quality.

Items discussed:

- Members noted that as previously reported graded lesson observations had been suspended. Discussion followed on the introduction of learning walks, developmental and peer observations as methods of assessment and the increased use of bespoke CPD and better deployment of Teaching and Learning Coaches.
- Discussion followed on the key areas highlighted on the front sheet of the report.
- The Principal assured Members that significant training and development had been taking place and was programmed. More robust checks had been introduced to ensure that standards for assessment were checked across the board.
- School Managers were encouraged to facilitate the sharing of good practice and evidence indicated that this was increasingly taking place.
- Members were informed that learning frameworks were visible to all students on classroom walls.
- Members discussed the further roll out of pro-observe and the impact this had.
- Members were assured that although initially roll out was cumbersome now that staff were more familiar with the system that completion and use was considered to be much more effective and efficient and that staff generally were increasingly keen on further developments and use of the system.
- Members queried the level of reporting capabilities that pro-observe had and whether themes could be identified. Members queried whether key outputs from pro-observe were shared with staff? The Chair of the Quality and Performance Committee informed Members that the Committee had received a short demonstration on pro-

achieve and would be following this up further.

Update report RECEIVED.

15. Quality & Performance Committee

i) Self Assessment Report (SAR) 2013/14 – Presented by the Interim Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the draft Quality and Performance Committee minutes where the Self Assessment Report (SAR) was discussed in depth.
- The Chair of the Committee also provided a brief overview of the discussion and the report and drew Members attention to the requested changes in format which had been made following consideration by the Committee.
- Members were informed that considered debate had taken place and that the Committee had probed and challenged the Senior Leadership Team and were satisfied that actions being taken supported the grades recommended to the Corporation.
- Members noted the disappointing results for long success 16-18 success rates for the previous year and discussion followed on the expected outcomes for 2014/15.
- Members queried the usefulness of the report. The Principal informed Members that she was hoping to change the format for the following year to move away from the historical format which was more externally focused towards the requirements of Ofsted to one that better suited the College's needs. Agreed.
- Members were informed that the College is officially no longer required by Ofsted to produce a self assessment report, following debate Members confirmed that they found the report helpful in summarising activity in the previous year across all curriculum areas.
- Members discussed the update on page 4 for ICT and Business and the reasons for the downward trend.
- The Principal identified some of the challenges for the area and the level of previous attainment by students prior to coming to the College. Concerns with assessment practices had also been identified and steps put in place at the end of last year to address issues identified.
- The Principal confirmed that the school was being required to review its assessment practices and ensure students were being provided with every opportunity to achieve the best they can, including increasing the number with higher grades.
- Members debated the grade for catering. The Principal expressed her confidence in the success of the area now that it was established.
- Members were assured that these issues had been identified prior to the report being written and a broad range of steps undertaken during the latter half of the previous year to address the issues and systems and processes and focus had been changed for 2014/15.
- Members noted the good performance on English and maths.
- Members discussed their concern with the success rates presented. However, the Board unanimously agreed that the College should continue to focus on students making progress and successfully achieving their aims.
- Members noted the three significant areas of change. Stopping

graded lesson observation to focus on the daily learning experience, driving up challenge and expectations of students and staff and increasing employer engagement within curriculum areas.

- Members debated about the grade awarded for Leadership and Management, following significant debate it was agreed to retain the grade.

Self Assessment Report RECEIVED and APPROVED.

ii)Curriculum Update for 2014/15 – Presented by the Principal

Items discussed:

- Members noted the key priorities updated at paragraph 3.
- Members discussed the recruitment update provided at paragraph 6 and noted the continuing challenging environment.
- Members expressed concern at the under achievement of the target for 16-18 and discussion followed franchise options and expected January 2015 starts.
- Members noted that the FE loans allocation was for 2.1m but that only 800k had been allocated in the budget which was on track.
- Members were informed that some SFA payments were still to be confirmed.
- Members noted the number of apprenticeships and discussion followed on the challenges in this area even with large developments happening in Wandsworth Borough.
- Members discussed utilisation and the need for this to improve to ensure that efficiency gains could be maximised to ensure the buildings were fully utilised.
- Discussion followed on average class sizes. Members also discussed the need for publicity regarding the letting of the buildings amongst College and community contacts.
- The Principal confirmed that this was done wherever possible.

Report RECEIVED.

iii)Learner Voice 2014/15 – Presented by the VP Curriculum & Student Services

Items discussed:

- Member's attention was drawn to the attached appendix and they were informed that the College had already had nearly 1300 respondents to date on the Ofsted Learner View site and at least a 90% satisfaction rate had been recorded for each category in the survey.
- Members discussed the various methods of capturing learner feedback employed at the college.
- Members also informed the Board that undertaking the Learner Walks had also been informative in gaining feedback on the learner experience first-hand.
- It was noted that new dates for the Spring Term would be circulated when confirmed.
- The Chair proposed to Members that each Governor undertake attending one learning walk by the end of the academic year. Noted.

Report RECEIVED.

Clerk

12. Governance

i) Membership, Constitution & Appointment of Governors – Presented by the Clerk to the Corporation.

Items discussed:

- Members **RATIFIED** the appointment of the two Student Governors Atiqa Javid and Rhea Augustus Noel. The Clerk confirmed that initial contact had been made and induction meetings would be set up the following term to suit the educational schedules of the students.
- Members noted the update on the constitution at Appendix A and the Committee Membership at Appendix B.

Report RECEIVED and APPROVED.

Clerk

ii) Governance SAR and QIP – Presented by the Clerk to the Corporation.

Items discussed:

- Members noted delivery of the previous year's Quality Improvement Plan and **APPROVED** the proposed quality improvement plan for 2014/15.
- It was noted that further work would take place during the year to review how Governors develop their understanding of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Members also noted the introduction of Learning Walks and the positive feedback received from those who had attended to date.
- The Clerk confirmed that following the Development Event in February 2015 feedback and suggestions for developing self assessment further would be sought for consideration by the Search & Governance Committee.

Report RECEIVED Quality Improvement Plan APPROVED.

13. **Audit Committee**

i) Audit Committee Annual Report 2013/14 – Presented by the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Items discussed:

- The Chair of the Audit Committee summarised the report for Members.
- Member's attention was drawn to the conclusions of the Committee, in particular point 12d) regarding pensions.
- Members discussed FRS17 and the revaluation of the scheme by actuaries every three years noting that this impacts on contribution levels.
- Members were advised that the Committee had scrutinised the full management letter and that the accounts had been given an unqualified audit opinion and were recommended to the Corporation for approval on this basis. Noted.
- Members queried how risks were incorporated into the work of the Internal Audit Service. The Director of Finance confirmed that the two were linked as he chaired the Risk Management Group (RMG).
- Members were also informed that the Audit Committee always allocated some contingency to ensure that should it be necessary as new risks were identified that had potential audit implications resources would be allocated to any reviews necessary. Noted.
- The Chair of the Corporation thanked the Chair of the Audit Committee and Members for their report.

Report RECEIVED.

ii) Risk Management – Presented by the Director of Finance

Items discussed:

- Members welcomed the revised approach adopted from September 2014. Member's attention was also drawn to the recent Finance & Resources Committee minutes and the request for cash flow to be added to the Risk Register.
- The Director of Finance confirmed that this had been done and this risk would be specifically reported upon at the next RMG meeting.
- Members discussed at length priority areas 4 and 5 and the concerns around failure to achieve external income.
- Members noted the need for forward planning and the need for a topical focus on risks at the Development Event in February.
- Member also queried why succession planning had not been included as a risk.
- The Principal informed Members that the Audit Committee had accepted that a talent management Policy was evidence of succession planning but accepted that this also still needed to be flagged up as a risk. Agreed that this would be included for discussion at the next RMG meeting.

Principal

Director of Finance

Report RECEIVED.

14. Finance & Resources Committee

i) Financial Out-Turn and Final Accounts 2013/14 – Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the overall deficit of £976k including FRS17. Members also noted that excluding FRS17 the College was able to demonstrate a small surplus.
- Members were referred to the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee and the detailed discussions held at Committee were summarised.
- Members were informed that following the Committee meeting the Director of Finance had confirmed with all the College lending banks that no loan covenants have been breached. Noted.
- Members noted in particular the points raised in paragraph 1.3 regarding significant variances against the budget.

Financial Statements APPROVED and Financial Statements letter APPROVED for signature by the Chair.

ii) Management Accounts to 31st October 2014 – Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the key points identified and as summarised by the Director of Finance.
- Members were advised that a recalculation of depreciation was due in July 2015. There was also a decline in cash revenues due to the potential cessation payment for the pension issue outstanding from the merger. Noted.
- Members were assured that a prudent approach had been employed for the forecast position and that the Finance and Resources Committee had instructed the Director of Finance to keep them fully engaged and informed outside of meetings should any significant variance take place.
- Additional options requests had also been made at the Committee for

future options to be considered at its next meeting. Noted.

- It was confirmed that potential receipts from the sale of the Tower Block have been moved into the following financial year.
- Members discussed the potential support in place from banks if needed.
- Members also queried the use of NPV when assessing future capital schemes and the interim VP Special Projects confirmed that all schemes looked at the NPV (net present value).

Management Accounts RECEIVED.

iii)Capital projects & Estates Matters – Presented by the Interim Director Special Projects.

Items discussed:

- Members were informed that the development of the Tower Block was on track and that the Council would be considering Planning consent at its meeting the following week. Noted.
- Members informed the Board that as the Council was also one of the Landlords for the joint scheme extra scrutiny would be brought to bear hence the slight delay. Noted.
- Members noted that the asset would substantially increase in value once planning permission had been granted.
- Members were informed that the intention was to move construction over the summer in to the link block to ensure vacant possession of the Tower Block.
- Members noted from the F&R Committee minutes that the expression of interest application for grant funding for the link block to create a new construction area had been approved.
- Members agreed that this would progress and noted that that a detailed submission would be made in January 2015.
- Members noted that further detailed submissions would be made regarding the summer works for 2015.
- Members noted the update on facilities and estates.

Report RECEIVED.

iv)Financial Regulations – Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- The Director of Finance confirmed to Members that the proposed changes were minor and that it was an updating exercise in terms of job titles etc and that there were no significant changes being proposed.
- The Clerk confirmed that a full set of the Financial Regulations had been provided to Members of the Finance & Resources Committee prior to its recommendation to the Corporation. Noted.

Financial Regulations APPROVED.

16. Progress against the Strategic Priorities and College Performance Indicators for 2014/15 – Presented by the Principal.

Items discussed:

- Member's attention was drawn to the forecast against long success rates and the expectation that they would bounce back this year. Noted.
- Members queried at what point in the year these indicators of

improvements were concrete. The Principal informed Members that this was an ongoing process.

- However, the Spring Term would be crucial in determining the level of success achieved for some areas. It was noted that A level results would be unknown as a fixed outcome until results were released in August.
- Members discussed the more robust assessment processes rolled out across the college and the increased level of certainty in this academic year over previous years.
- Members also discussed pro monitor tools available and the greater assurance available.
- It was agreed that if possible a demonstration of pro monitor would be given at the Development Event in February.

VP Planning & Resources

Report RECEIVED.

17. Minutes of Meetings

i)Health and Safety Committee - RECEIVED

ii)Audit Committee–. RECEIVED

iii)Finance & Resources – RECEIVED

iv)Quality & Performance Committee – RECEIVED

18. Any Other Business

- **Potential International Visit** – The Principal updated Members on a potential for increased international student recruitment that had arisen via contacts made in Turkey. A brief overview of delivery was discussed. Members debated the level of business that resulted from the International programme and the increasing competition from all Colleges looking to increase this aspect of delivery. It was agreed that the Principal would investigate the parameters of the trip further.

Members APPROVED the visit subject to the Chair authorising the final details.

Chair

19. Date of the Next Corporation Meeting

Wednesday 18th March 2015 at 5pm at the Wandsworth Campus

Signed By: _____

Date: _____