

Brooke House Sixth Form College

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held on 14 December 2017 at 1730 hrs.

<b>Present</b>	Stephen Blackshaw	David Blagbrough (Chairman)	Denisa Bordas (SU President)
	Martin Buck (15/17c on)	James Cross	Michael Desmond
	Tasnia Kamal (SU Vice-President)	Sabrina Poma	Sally Townsend
	Ken Warman (Principal)		
<b>In Attendance</b>	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Denise Roulston (VP (StRec& Devt))	Nalini Seeromben (FD)(13-17/17 only)
<b>Apologies</b>	Alex Gancz	Shabaz Khan	Lajaune Lincoln
	Susie McKenna		
<b>Visiting</b>	Martin Buck (Until 15/17c)	Paul Butler (AoC)	

The Chairman welcomed Paul Butler, an AoC National Leader of Governance who was completing a review of governance for the Chair and Martin Buck a member designate. He also welcomed the representatives of the Students' Union who were to deliver an electronic presentation to the Corporation; all present then introduced themselves.

The meeting was preceded by an electronic presentation of outcomes of a study into attendance at lessons, the methodology was explained, and the resultant data had been drawn together into a logical and progressive sequence leading to clear conclusions. The presentation would be repeated at the staff training day early in the following week and would be also considered by the Standards Committee to inform on possible improvements. The Chair thanked the team for their initiative in conducting the study, their diligence in collecting the data and the clear delivery of the results.

#### 13/17 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND APOLOGIES

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and no interests were declared.

#### 14/17 MINUTES OF AND ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 were confirmed for electronic signature; the Clerk to action. **(Action 1)**
- b. Actions from the last meeting were completed or in progress. It was recorded that Action 6 at minute 06/17c. "Formal record of disappointment with the SFC" had been passed to the ESFA at their recent visit.
  - a. The information was received.
  - b. Actions had been identified. (Table 24/17 below)

#### 15/17 COMMITTEE MINUTES

- a. Joint Audit/Finance Committee (AC) Meeting (23.11.17) (unconfirmed). Outcomes from the AC Report would be considered in the next Item. (17/17).
- b. Remuneration Committee (RC)(14.12.17). (Confidential). The Remuneration Committee had considered the Principal's remuneration; any member wishing to discuss the issue and/or see the minutes (Copies available) should contact the Clerk.

- c. Search Committee (SC)(14.12.17). The SC had met immediately before the meeting and had, amongst other business, recommended Martin Buck for appointment to the Corporation. That recommendation was unanimously accepted and he was appointed for 4 years w.e. **(Action 2)** The shortage of specific skills identified from the recent audit and the wish to have more diverse and local representation had been discussed and all members had agreed to approach their personal network. Minutes from that meeting would be circulated in due course.

**a. The information was received.**

**b. Actions had been identified. (Table 24/17 below)**

#### **16/17 AUDIT ISSUES**

The Finance Committee Chair explained that the meeting held on 23 November had proceeded as a Finance Meeting since events had conspired to prevent attendance by AC members; both sets of auditors were present throughout. The meeting had discussed a wide range of issues and Corporation members were asked to note in particular the committee recommendations, a-d to inform Item 9a (17/17a below) in regard of:

- a. 17/17a the AC Annual Report to the Corporation;
- b. 17/17b. the External Auditors' Annual Report including the Management Letter;
- c. 17/17c. the Annual Financial Statements (AFS);
- d. 18/17a. the RM Annual Report to the Corporation; and
- e. 18/17b. the IAS Plan for 2017-20, which was approved. **(Action 3)**

**The information was received.**

**Actions had been identified. (Table 24/17 below)**

#### **17/17 FINANCE**

- a. Annual Financial Statements. The Finance Committee had drawn to the Corporation's attention that the financial outcome for 2016/17 was considerably more positive than the forecast; thanks had been recorded to all concerned, particularly in the light of the difficulties in the early part of the year. The F&GP Committee had been content with the accounts which had then been recommended to the Corporation. The external auditors' report (Audit Completion Document, the Letter of Comment and the Letter of Representation) had also been recommended to the Corporation; it was noted that there had been no material qualifications and only minor adjustments had been required to the accounts. The Committee took comfort from the positive tone of the Report. Thanks were also recorded to the External Auditors for their professional approach throughout the audit process. The F&GP Chair explained the significance and responsibilities of each individual member in their instructions (to the Chair and Principal) to sign the documents. The Accounts (AFS & Regularity) were then recommended for signature. **(Action 4)**
- b. Financial Position. A detailed position paper had been drawn together to refresh members on the contributory factors in the turn-round of the College financial position, which was now solid with a surplus out-turn and an SFA rating of "Good" for the current year projected as such for the next 2 years. The report continued examining the academic improvements, for example the 3 year-on-year impressive improvements in pass and achievement rates. Other indicators for the years ahead, included a refocused leadership team and complimentary outcomes of external appointing bodies. Close attention was now being given to improving enrolments over this year's disappointing results, which had undoubtedly, at least in some part, been negatively affected by adverse and mostly unjustified media reporting; the effects on next year's budget was under scrutiny. Accordingly, it was agreed that the financial performance of each department would be determined to inform the Corporation considerations at the Awayday. **(Action 5)** A progress report on preparations for the recruitment drive would be presented to the F&GP Committee at their next meeting at the Awayday. **(Action 6)**
- c. Management Accounts. The accounts, which were accurate to 31 October had been fully scrutinised in depth by the F&GP Committee. The surplus was considerably higher than the forecast due to the front loaded profiling of annual funding payments. The F&GP Committee had expressed concern at the divergence of actual performance against the budgetary targets and the need to get back to plan asap was required. The Committee had also discussed agency costs in relation to permanent

staff costs. Influencing issues such as current sickness levels were accepted, but it was stressed that realistic numbers were required to enable accurate budgetary control and if a deficit was to be avoided. The possible additional income from the “car park” and “mobile ‘phone masts” projects should not be assumed. Performance indicators of 71 cash days, a CR of 1.58 and staff costs ratio of 73.2% were noted.

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Table 24/17 below)

**The FD left the meeting.**

#### **18/17 PRINCIPALS REPORT**

The negative media reports regarding the college had partly been offset with favourable articles regarding initiative and success. Kevin Watson had joined the staff as Director of Learning and his appointment was welcomed.

- a. Support Funding. A bid had been entered for £63k support from the Work Placement Capacity Fund and is currently negotiating with a “Good” or “Outstanding” College (Portsmouth) to partner improvement on weaknesses identified in the Ofsted report, particularly around value added
- b. FE Commissioner. The FE Commissioner together with the Financial Specialist had formally visited on 4 November and met with the Chair, the Chair of the F&GP Committee, the Principal, the HR Adviser and the Clerk to the Corporation. The detailed considerations of financial issues and quality improvement led to the conclusion that the 2-year financial recovery plan was viable, quality was improving, evidenced by a 19 percentage points (15%) rise in achievement in 2 years and that achievement of an Ofsted Grade 2 and financial stability could ensure continuance as a “standalone” organisation. However, if both of these aims were missed then a “Structure and prospects appraisal” would be invoked.
- c. Financial Issues. Barclays Bank had now removed the College from “Intervention” status prompted by sound and improved financial management and reporting and the greatly improved financial position and future. Negotiation for the telephone masts were now at an advanced stage, considerations for the C Block/Car park project continued.

**The information was received.**

#### **19/17 SAR AND QIP**

The SAR would be fully considered at the delayed Standards Committee Meeting the following week. The SAR was the source document for the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), which would focus on raising aspirations; the document was an essential element in the incremental overall management policy involving all elements of the Strategic Plan. The SAR was crucial not only to determine the standards of provision but to inform the measures for improvement contained in the QIP. The SAR had been completed through a strictly impartial analysis, based on views of students, employers and other key stakeholders, which had been evaluated against the Ofsted criteria.

**The information was received.**

#### **20/17 SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding Issues. There were several important Safeguarding issues for Corporation consideration and these were discussed informed by circulated information; establishment of a new and improved structure was noted and welcomed, the shortfall due to the Student Welfare Officer’s phased return to work had necessitated some agency support and the capacity of that team was discussed in the light of increasing pressure especially with mental health issues. Awareness of and responsibility for safeguarding generally remained the responsibility of all staff and did not focus exclusively on teaching staff and there was then a debate on whether staff had the necessary skills to effectively monitor students. It was agreed as challenging but necessary. Particular assurance was given that “Prevent” measures had now been established including in external placements. Individual DBS check for Corporation Members had been established during the previous year. David Blagbrough was confirmed as the nominated Safeguarding Member. **(Action 7)**

- a. **The information was received.**
- b. **Actions had been identified** (Table 24/17 below)

**21/17 AWAYDAY**

The provisional programme for the Awayday t/h 19/20 January at a venue still to be confirmed was circulated. The focus would be on 2 key issues:

- a. the financial environment for the coming year; and
- b. the expected Ofsted Inspection in Spring 2018.

**The information was received and noted.**

**22/17 URGENT BUSINESS**

There had been no urgent business requested.

**23/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be on 19/20 January 2018 (Awayday). Members are asked to confirm availability to the Principal's pa.

**24/17 ACTION TABLE**

Action Table		resp	date
Action 1	14/17. Minutes to be electronically signed.	Clerk	asap
Action 2	15/17c. Martin Buck appointed to Corporation.		wie
Action 3	16/17e. IAS Plan 2017-20 approved.	KW	
Action 4	17/17a AFS & Regularity Audit approved for signature.	DB/KW	asap
Action 5	17/17b. Individual financial contributions to be quantified.	NS	
Action 6	17/17b. Recruitment progress to next F&GP meeting.	KW	19.01.18
Action 7	20/17. DB Confirmed as Safeguarding Member.	DB	wie