



Brooke House Sixth Form College

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held in the College Hub on 10 December 2020 at 1730 hrs.

Present	Adam O'Brien	Steven Blackshaw (Chair)	Martin Buck
	Annie Gammon	James Cross	Roda Abdi Hassan
	Sheridan Mangal	Adeshola Onakoya	Erin O'Shaughessy
	Sally Townsend	Kevin Watson (Principal)	
In Attendance	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Adrian Cottrell (VP(F&R))	Kishan Pithia (VP(SS))
	Mohanned Khabbaze (VP(C&Q))		
Apologies	Michael Desmond	Jonathan Beake	

PART ONE

14/20 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND APOLOGIES

- a. 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.
- b. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Roda Abdi Hassan and Erin O'Shaughessy, the student members.
- c. Nothing had been heard from Princess Anazodo Awunor; she had been absent for some time and it was agreed that the Clerk would contact her to determine whether she was able to continue as a member. **(Action 1)**

The information was received.

15/20 MINUTES OF AND ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020 were confirmed for electronic signature; the Clerk to action. **(Action 2)**
- b. Actions from the last meeting had been completed.

See referenced minute for full detail.		Status
Action 1	02/20a. Last minutes (02.07.20) confirmed for signature	Complete
Action 2	04/20d. Staffing update later in the year.	
Action 3	06/20. Weekly detail of enrolment position to all	

- c. It was agreed to consider the External Audit Letter of Representation as Urgent Business.

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (Table 22/20 below)

16/20 COMMITTEE MINUTES (UNCONFIRMED)

Each Committee Chair explained the minutes of recent meetings, all of which were attached, received and recommendations, detailed as appropriate, noted to inform later considerations:

- a. Audit Committee (AC) Meetings (21.09.20 & 03.12.20);

- b. Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGP) (01.10.20). re 04/20b Funding. The increase in student numbers together with additional Government funding was welcomed and led into consideration of the overdraft facility. The Bank had apologised for the delay with progress but would address the issue in the coming week. The suggested increase in the amount, to £750k, if a “secured” facility was arranged was unanimously agreed (**Action 3**). The outcome of the negotiations would be electronically circulated to FGP Committee members. (**Action 4**);
- c. Standards Committee (StC) Meeting (23.09.20, 22.10.20 & 19.11.20);
- d. Joint AC & FGP Meeting (16.11.20):
 - (i) re 04/20a. External Audit Management Letter recommended to Corporation;
 - (ii) re 04/20b. Annual Finance Statements (AFS) Governance Statement recommended to Corporation; and
 - (iii) re 05/20. AFS & Regularity Report provisionally recommended to Corporation for signature; and
- e. Audit Committee (AC) (03.12.20);
 - (i) re 13/20a. Internal Audit Service (IAS) Annual Report (AR) recommended to the Corporation; and
 - (ii) AC Annual Report (ACAR) recommended to Corporation.

The information was noted and received.

17/20 PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

The Principal’s Report was discussed, in particular:

- a. Covid. Compliance with the Covid policy of maximum attendance in person had been working well but had recently deteriorated to the extent that on the most affected days there were 400 students and 45 staff absent, mostly self-isolating; only 3 staff had contracted the virus, with 6 further home working by vulnerable colleagues. Generally online teaching was working well, second year A-Level students had been given a week of on-line delivery rather than prejudice their fitness for mock exams 9-11 December. There were plans for full resumption of “in-college” teaching next term but contingency arrangements were in place for a post-Christmas spike. This led into consideration of the pressure on staff from the present working patterns and some weariness was apparent, the forthcoming break would be welcomed by all.
- b. Further Education Commissioner’s (FEC) “Stocktake” Report. The attached report had been received on 30 November and paid no attention to the Chair’s assertion that the suggested savings of an additional £100k were unrealistic and possibly unnecessary. They had however noted “Significant Progress” generally and had given a positive exit interview. As had been previously reported, additional government funding had been announced for those students with lower than a grade 4 in GCSE English/or Maths and this would ease the situation somewhat.
- c. Ofsted. Ofsted had announced that fully graded inspections would not be resumed until summer term 2021.
- d. Staffing. Bob Herring, the Estates Manager would retire at the end of term, he had been on site in that role for 37 years and had clearly pre-dated BSix. It had been decided that the new space which houses the “Panini Bar” would be re-named the “Herring Suite” and Bob had agreed to return and open the facility.
- e. Beacon Awards. BSix was a finalist (the opponent was Weston College) in the Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Awards with the “Knowledge is Power” programme in the National Centre for Diversity’s “Inclusive Leadership Award” category. This was a tremendous achievement and the news was warmly received. Further to this award the VP(SS) would present to a break out session at the AoC Annual Conference in February 2021.

- f. Student Numbers. Numbers on roll had received a significant boost through the “back-on-track” initiative, a total of 45 additional learners had been absorbed into existing groups thus incurring no additional costs. The Funding Return had been submitted and had exceeded the 15% normal trigger over the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) target of 1126, hopefully this would prompt some in-year growth funding.

The information was received.

18/20 AC MATTERS

- a. IAS AR. The IAS Annual Report for 2019/20 was a stand-alone document, which had informed the AFS “Statement of Internal Governance and Internal Control”, and thus the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on internal audit issues; it was a digest of previous information presented to the Committee. The Report had also informed the annual AC report to the Corporation, which would be considered later in the meeting. The overall and positive opinion, based on the work that had been undertaken through the year, was that the College has **“An adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control. However, their work had identified further improvements to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control to ensure that it remains adequate and effective” (Amber/Green)** The IAS Report was received to inform later consideration of the AFS. There was some consideration of the feedback on the individual assignments and it was confirmed that action was in progress to address “Procurement” and “Follow-Ups” comments; these would be monitored by the AC.
- b. External Audit Management Report. The external auditor’s Management Report, which reviewed the systems and financial arrangements had been considered by the AC and recommended to the Corporation. Key Audit Issues, tabulated at P6 were considered, particularly the “going-concern” element, which had experienced increased sector wide focus this year, reflecting ESFA interest since many colleges had suffered significant Covid related income reductions. The issue was then specifically discussed in relation to BSix, it was clearly of prime importance that members fully understood this aspect for this year in particular. The AC Chair and the VP(F&R) answered relevant questions and all members signified that they understood the statements and agreed. **(Action 5)** The management responses including the discussions with the Further Education Commissioner (FEC) who had recently completed a monitoring visit were noted. The Management Report was received to inform later consideration of the AFS.
- c. ACAR (inc Assurance Matrix). The tabulated and RAG rated Governance and Internal Controls Matrix was considered together with annual report to the corporation. The Committee opinion had been formed after due deliberation of the IAS annual report and other influencing issues. The document, was received to inform later consideration of the AFS.

The information was received.

19/20 FINANCE

- a. AFS. The AFS approval was informed through parallel assurances; the AC remit was to scrutinize the Corporate Governance Statement with respect to the systems of financial control, Risk Management (RM) and governance processes and the FGP would consider the findings of the External Auditor, scrutinize the AFS and the Regularity Report, then both committees would recommend the document(s) for signature if appropriate. Complete sets of documents had been circulated to inform the associated considerations. The unqualified opinion on both the accounts and the Regularity Report was noted and welcomed. The AFS narrative and numbers were then fully and closely scrutinised and some agreed minor amendments were identified. The “Going Concern” statement on P18 had been considered and agreed earlier. The technical deficit (£1.6m) after application of pension account numbers was noted and would be reconciled back to the management accounts. It was noted that the considerable income reduction had not translated directly into an increased forecast deficit; a testament to the tight rein on expenditure controls. The AFS was approved for signature. **(Action 6)**

- b. Management Accounts. The summary of accounts, supplemented by graphical and tabulated information accurate to 31 October had been studied and discussed in depth by the FGP and had been commended to the Corporation. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were heartening and a Financial Health Grading of “Good” was looking possible without further savings. The recent FEC Review report had included 3 recommendations, one of which was to cut £100k from non-teaching related expenditure, which had been robustly contested as discussed earlier. Some additional funding had been notified and any additional income would be subjected to the prudent spending regime now established and would not fund any easing. The current year-end forecast was for a deficit (c£300k) which would be an improvement of £34k against budget; all variations from budget were clearly detailed in the accompanying papers and were discussed individually. Non-pay expenditure was adverse by c£48k, staff costs were in line with budget, all contributing factors were detailed in the papers and were explained. The cash flow forecast (CFF) was considered and the low point in March 2021 was noted, however some easing of the cash position for the remainder of the year was welcomed; the CFF would be regularly and scrupulously monitored and updated. Financial Health remained as “Requires Improvement” (RI) however the associated data had improved and risen inside that category. The balance sheet was considered and noted. Key PIs were noted; there were 21 cash days in hand, the adjusted CR was .58 and the staffing ratio was 74.2%. All covenants remained in scope. The information was received.
- c. Risk Register. The attached full Register was a “live document” specifically to facilitate speedy response to changing situations, which had been tested through the Covid influenced last 9 months. It was agreed that the risk information would continue to be regularly scrutinised by the Corporation. The full register had been attached and was reviewed informed by the attached detailed report, Risk 8 (inadequacy of resources) fluctuated according to the time of year and this was discussed.

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (Table 22/20 below)

20/20 URGENT BUSINESS

- a. Letter of Representation. The Letter of Representation had not been received in time for consideration at this meeting. It would be circulated electronically for consideration and approval. **(Action 7)**
- b. Student Members. On invitation, student members raised the points:
- (i) perhaps time spent on enrichment activity could be better utilised for study; and
 - (ii) the student washrooms were often untidy.
These management issues would be considered. **(Action 8)**

The information was received.

Actions had been identified. (Table 22/20 below)

21/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meetings would be:

- a. Corporation Development Day at the Institute of Arbitrators 1330 on 5 February 2021; and
- b. College at 1730 on 18 March 2021.

22/20 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full detail.		resp	date
Action 1	14/20c. PAA to be contacted.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	15/20a. Last minutes (24.09.20) confirmed for signature.		
Action 3	16/20b. Overdraft limit to £700k.	VP(FR)	asap
Action 4	16/20b. Outcome from Bank to be circulated to FGP.		
Action 5	18/20b. “Going Concern” matters all agreed.	Chair	wie
Action 6	19/20a. AFS and Regularity Audit to be signed.		
Action 7	20/20a. Letter of Representation to be circulated.	VP(FR)	
Action 8	20/20b. Student issues noted by management.	VP(SS)	

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Final Audit Report

2021-03-22

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