

GOVERNING BODY
Minutes of the meeting held at 2.00pm on 20 March 2015

Present:

R Carter (Chair	K Golding (Vice Chair)
A Gordon-Stables	C Manning
S Gerber	A Maltpress
S Clarke	F Hotston Moore
A Head	J Bloomfield
W Burrlock	S Daley
N Savvas, Principal	

In attendance: D J Howells, Deputy Principal
M Wagner, Vice Principal, Business and Community
L Johnson, Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality
J Bridges (Clerk to the Corporation)

There were no interests relevant to items on the agenda declared by members.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Wildridge and J Finn.

2 Minutes of the meetings held on:
i. 12 December 2014

The minutes of the meeting (minute book pages G363-G375) were agreed as a correct record subject to amending the closing sentence of the fourth paragraph under item 5.2 to read "Members asked that the surplus forecast for year end 2015/16 is marked as a yellow status to indicate that in this year it is close to a breach of covenant given to the College's bankers".

ii. 27 January 2015 (Extraordinary Meeting)

The minutes of the meeting (minute book pages G376-G377) were agreed as a correct record.

iii. 6 March 2015 (Extraordinary Meeting)

The minutes of the meeting (minute book pages G378-G382) were agreed as a correct record.

3 Matters Arising
From the meetings held on 12 December 2014, 27 January and 6 March 2015

The matters arising from the meetings were summarised in the report (minute book pages G383-G385) and all actions reported had either been resolved or, where appropriate, an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.

S Daley, S Gerber and A Head left the meeting for the following agenda item.

4 Membership

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G386-G388).

The resignation of M Symonds was formally noted. This leaves the Standards and Excellence Committee without a Chair and given the personal circumstances of J Finn at this time, also without a Vice Chair. To fill the vacancy on the Board left by M Symonds' departure the Corporation **approved** appointing S Daley as a full member and that she takes up the post as Chair of the Standards and Excellence Committee. **Proposed** by A Gordon-Stables and **seconded** by W Burrlock.

Action

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The terms of office of both Staff Governors, S Gerber and W Burrlock, are due to expire in July 2015. S Gerber has served two terms of four years, W Burrlock has served one. As with all members (excluding student governors and exceptions for the Chair and Principal) terms of office under our new governance arrangements are limited to a maximum of three terms of three years (nine years). The Corporation **considered** the proposal to stagger the staff governor appointments this year so that the terms of office of both posts in future will not fall due for renewal in the same year. This will provide mentoring and hand over opportunities between staff governors as they arrive/depart from membership. The Corporation **approved** the proposal to appoint S Gerber to serve a further term of one year, to expire July 2016. Staff governor, W Burrlock, commented that he felt the decision would be well supported by staff. A nomination and election process will be launched in the summer term. W Burrlock will be eligible to stand again. The proposal was **proposed** by A Maltpress and was **seconded** by W Burrlock.

The Corporation **considered** the proposal to renew the appointment of D Wildridge to serve a further term of office of three years. Members **approved** the appointment. **Proposed** by C Manning and **seconded** by K Golding.

Student Governor, A Head, has confirmed that it is his intention to continue his studies next year. As he will be a continuing student he is eligible under the Instrument and Articles of Government (clause 11(4)) to hold office. The Corporation **approved** the appointment of A Head to serve a term of office expiring July 2016. **Proposed** by S Clarke and **seconded** by C Manning.

S Daley, S Gerber and A Head were invited to rejoin the meeting.

5 **Quality and Performance**

5.1 ***Key Performance Indicators***

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G389-G394).

Financial Key Performance Indicators

Modelling against prior year enrolments indicates that the College should achieve the funding target.

It was noted that the total income budget to forecast key performance indicator should be amended to a green status indicating the positive forecast against budget variance.

The forecast staff cost as a percentage of normal operational income key performance indicator at the year-end is predicted to be 64%, 0.9% below the percentage target set by the Corporation.

Cash balances are conforming to trend based on the previous year. The Head of Finance is looking at how movement changes in the month impacts cash reserves and this will be reported to the next Resources Committee meeting.

Curriculum and Quality Key Performance Indicators

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment profile is 89% good or better. Four observations were graded inadequate; two as a result of teaching finishing too early. The individuals concerned have been given clear instructions that they must prepare lessons for the full duration of the class, one grade four teacher, in training, is receiving coaching from the Teacher Education team and the

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caseload of the remaining grade four teacher has been rationalised bringing about a marked improvement in the subsequent observation. Members asked that the key performance indicator includes the national rate of good or better teaching included in future reports.

There is no national rate for attendance although across the sector a benchmark of 90% indicates good. Since the last report attendance for both 16-18 and 19+ remains static overall but is anticipated to improve. Retention rates are good and comparable with the same points in 2013/14. Apprenticeship timely best case success rates are currently projected to be ahead of last year. There are many apprentices with planned end dates of June and July which is when success rates are expected to improve further.

Completion of students' assessments continue to be monitored. Since the time of reporting Healthcare and Early Years completion has improved. The issues in Automotive concerning assessments relate to compliance issues. This has been addressed with the team and clear expectations set.

There has been long term absence due to ill health and difficulties recruiting to vacancies in the School of Computing but there is every confidence that the team will get back on track with assessment completion.

All Access to HE courses are now set up on MarkBook and are on track with completion.

Members asked for reassurance that the Automotive compliance issues referred to in the report are being addressed. The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality, confirmed that improvement is being seen. Teaching and learning has improved to good across the board but compliance with internal and quality systems is their area of weakness but the action plan arising from the recent Internal Quality Review of this area is starting to impact positively.

Members asked if all student attendance is captured. The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality, confirmed that it is. There have been some technical glitches capturing Maths and English attendance on registers but this does not impact on the reported attendance rate. Register completion is a weekly key performance indicator monitored by the Senior Management Team and completion is constantly chased by managers.

5.1.1 **Financial Performance**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G395-G396).

The financial position is better than planned due to receiving additional income along with savings on staffing and other costs. Non-pay costs are running below budget although this is largely due to phasing differences with the exception of interest payments and depreciation. Full cost course performance is below budget due to changes in how certificated training is funded and the College's reducing energy in the area of Gas and Oil in particular.

The Corporation received assurance that the College has focussed on plans to rejuvenate full cost work in this area and to diversify the provision. The plan includes revisiting the proposal to relocate Gas and Oil to the Milburn Centre and to deliver both commercial and domestic provision. The three year forecast plans to expand our offer of full cost income and double full cost work over this period.

N Savvas joined the meeting at 2.55pm

6 Strategic Matters

6.1 Principal's Briefing

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G397-G405).

At the end of February the Skills Funding letter was released indicating that adult skills funding cuts could be as much as 24%. The Principal confirmed that the College has accounted for this in the three year financial forecast covered under agenda item 6.3 of this meeting. The College's allocation for classroom based adult funding was confirmed during the meeting to be a reduction of 20%.

Confidential item under paragraph 18(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government

The College is relocating its adult education, literacy and numeracy classes to Thetford from the existing outpost in Mildenhall. The work will be co-ordinated from Thetford and the premises in Mildenhall sublet for the remaining two years of the lease. There is a break clause opportunity to terminate the lease at Stowmarket. Due to changes in funding and the lack of demand for classes the centre will close. Staff are to be relocated to the main campus to undertake central administrative duties relating to the provision of delivery in Stowmarket.

It was noted that the grant received in relation to the new Newmarket provision was received from the Assessment Network Ltd, not the Newmarket Assessment Network Ltd as detailed in the report.

The College held the Little Bang STEM event on 18 March 2015 and invited schools to the College. Despite low attendance those who did attend really enjoyed the event. Feedback from the schools that didn't attend commented that transport issues were the main reason why pupils did not come.

Members noted the proposal of Moreton Hall Secondary School to develop its plans to cater for 400 plus students in their sixth form. The Principal confirmed that it is important for the College to maintain its relationships with the schools and to look for the opportunities to complement their curriculum by working in partnership and not in competition.

Confidential item under paragraph 18(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government

6.2 Acquisition of Freehold Site

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G406-G408).

Confidential item under paragraph 18(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government

6.3 Three Year Financial Forecast

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G409-G412).

The forecast has been reviewed by the Resources Committee and amended based on their comments. It is now published to the Corporation for approval

and adoption as the College's financial forecast, subject to future changes in assumptions or circumstances.

Assumptions used in determining the three year financial forecast were detailed in the report. A basic 20% cut in SFA adult classroom based provision has been assumed and the College received confirmation during the meeting of the allocation at this rate. EFA income 16-18 is assumed at the indicative allocation, plus growth based on lagged student numbers. HE income is based on student number projections and minimal growth assumed in 2015/16 fee income and student loans.

Targeted savings will need to be made on non-pay costs and staffing levels will need to be carefully managed to achieve the balancing figure of the 65% staffing costs to income ratio.

The forecast surplus for 2014/15 has increased because of increased income and savings on staffing costs. The revised forecast for 2015/16 now provides a surplus of £211K, increasing to £217K and £584K over the next two years. The three year financial forecast presented to the Corporation is pessimistic but considered more realistic than the draft presented to the Resources Committee. It was noted that if approved, key performance indicators will be measured against the revised 2014/15 forecast and not the forecast approved by the Corporation for the year back in July 2014. The Corporation **approved** the three year financial forecast. **Proposed** by S Clarke and **seconded** by S Gerber.

F Hotston Moore left the meeting at 4.30pm

7 Information, Discussion and Decisions

7.1 Committee Chair's Summary Reports (meetings held since 12 December 2014)

The report was received and **considered** by the Corporation (minute book pages G413-G420).

Resources Committee

Nothing further to report.

Standards and Excellence Committee

More information has been requested from management concerning the low retention of Access to HE Nursing. The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality confirmed that due to a formatting issue with QSR reports the data reported at the meeting was not accurate. Best case success is actually 86%, not 74% as reported. It was noted that as the report provided to the Corporation is a summary report of the particular points of interest or concern they did not necessarily reflect the good discussion points raised at the meeting.

Audit and Risk Management Committee

At the request of the Committee the Corporation received a verbal report concerning the current status of appraisal completion. The Principal confirmed that three quarters of the appraisals are completed. Two managers who have not completed the appraisals of their staff are to be disciplined and all appraisals will be completed and progress reported to the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Appointments and Governance Committee

The Chair has been approached by the Acting Principal of Mid Kent College to share governance observations. Their Corporation has asked if they can enter

into a reciprocal relationship with us to share and observe governance practice. The Corporation agreed that this is an interesting proposal and that the Chair and Clerk should propose an exchange of basic information between Corporations. Governors are asked to express their interest to visit Mid Kent College as part of the process to the Clerk.

Remuneration Committee

The report confirmed that the appraisals of the Principal and other Senior Post Holders have been completed.

7.2 *Safeguarding Board Update*

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page G421).

i. *Minutes of 12 February 2015 meeting*

A review of membership has been carried out to ensure that the composition of the Board is representative of all College areas in relation to Safeguarding and a number of managers invited to join as members.

It was noted that the number of bullying incidents in the school of Automotive has increased. This is attributed to a particular cohort of learners. Increases have also been noted through social media means that happen not necessarily at College or in classrooms. There are lots of positive interventions employed by the College to try to tackle the issue and improve e-learning materials and information to students about safe use of social media.

The College offers an online Safeguarding training module that is available for governors to undertake. Members interested in undertaking the training should contact the Clerk for registration and logon details.

ii. *British Values and Challenging Radicalisation, Extremism and Terrorism Policy*

The policy has been reviewed by the Safeguarding Board and endorsed by the local Prevent Co-ordinator. Staff will receive training and tutorials will be delivered to students. The policy was **approved** by the Corporation. **Proposed** by C Manning and **seconded** by S Daley.

7.3 *Health and Safety Committee Update*

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page G422).

The membership of the Committee has reduced in size providing more effective discussion of the health and safety issues in College. There are no major concerns to report although it was noted that recruiting first aid volunteers is still proving problematic. The College Secretary confirmed that a review of our current first aid provision and resource is being carried out and an initiative to recruit volunteers from the community is being looked into.

A local Counter Terrorism Support Advisor carried out an independent review of our security arrangements across the College and made a number of recommendations to take forward. Decisions have been balanced between the risk posed to the College and the implementation cost involved. One recommendation made involved the need for students and visitors to wear identity badges. An internal publicity campaign will be launched to encourage everyone to wear them and for those found without them to be challenged. At a

recent Student Council Meeting students said that cards needed to have a purpose and if they are required to be worn then this should be enforced. They put forward a number of ideas to improve their use and ways that they could be used to identify particular groups of students perhaps studying in a particular vocational area or school.

7.4 **Risk Management Update**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G423-G433).

At the request of the Standards and Excellence Committee the risk rating of risk number R050 has been increased from a total score of 22 to 33 (red status) in recognition that recruiting people to specialist posts (electrical, engineering, computing and Maths) has been difficult.

The Board Assurance Map continues to develop well and has been challenged by internal auditors. As a result of the internal audit work undertaken five development actions have been agreed that the College Secretary is currently working on achieving.

Further to training that C Manning and the College Secretary attended it is the intention of the College Secretary to explore introducing an assessment of risk appetite that would be used to measure the level of risk the College would be prepared to take when entering into strategic opportunities. A proposal is to be presented to the Audit and Risk Management Committee and further shared with the Corporation.

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8 **Governance**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages G434-G440).

8.1 **Governance Self Evaluation**

The report provided the Corporation with a summary of the actions arising from the 2014/15 governance self-evaluation questionnaire and the resulting improvement plan. This has been reviewed and is being monitored by the Appointments and Governance Committee.

8.2 **External Review of Board Effectiveness**

The Corporation and its Committees currently self-assess effectiveness by completing an annual questionnaire circulated by the Clerk at the end of the summer term but this provides little assessment of collective board performance or indications of where improvement may be required. The report detailed the proposal to introduce an external periodic review of board effectiveness and contract the services of a consultant to undertake the review at a cost of £6K plus expenses. The Corporation **approved** the proposal. **Proposed** by A Head and **seconded** by S Daley.

8.3 **Skills Audit**

Over the coming years the shape and skills mix of the Corporation will change, not just due to changes in membership, but also because the skills and expertise needed may change with the direction of the College's strategy. In order for the Corporation to plan effectively for succession it needs a process that will adequately assess the skills required in the future, understand the skills the Corporation currently has, who has them and to identify what is missing. The Clerk will release a skills assessment questionnaire subsequent to the meeting

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for members to complete and return by Friday 10 April 2015. The results will be compiled in the form of a matrix for the Appointments and Governance Committee to consider. Findings will be shared with the Corporation.

A Gordon-Stables left the meeting at 5.05pm

8.4 *Governors' First Hand*

The programme of activities for Governors' First Hand Week (week commencing 20 April 2015) is currently being finalised and will be shared with the Corporation by the end of this month. The programme currently consists of opportunities to shadow a student, PSTs (Personal Support Tutors), undertake Learning Walks and Observations, attend Maths and English lessons, Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, work on Reception, Student and Staff HelpZone, spend time in Student Welfare and many more.

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9 Governors' Reports and Information

9.1 *Representational Activities*

Governors have attended and represented the College at a range of events including attending the Public Transport Forum and submitting a joint bid with West Suffolk Hospital for research funding plus the Chair has attended College Open Events in January 2015, took part in UCS TDAP assessment, NALP Grants Event, attended Conservatoire EASTs Dracula Theatre performance, tourism and business launch in Newmarket, joint Theatre Royal Management meeting, AoC Governance Summit, FE Minister's FE 'Thank You' event, visited the WSC Expo Event, attended the High Sheriff annual Justice Service, met with Jo Churchill (Conservative Party Candidate) and Havebury Housing project and the High Sheriff Annual Community Awards Event.

9.2 *Training, Development and Governor Link activities*

The Clerk is currently reviewing the Governor link system with the intention to re-establish links that governors had with particular areas of the College. Details will be circulated to members once the review is complete. It was noted that S Daley would like to be linked with the English team.

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10 Any other business

The Clerk will organise governor induction for S Daley and F Hotston Moore including meetings with each of the members of the senior management team.

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The Chair asked members to consider temporarily covering the role of student engagement in the absence of J Finn at this time. Members are asked to express their interest to the Clerk.

Members

The Corporation formally thanked the Deputy Principal for his contribution to the College over the past 22 years building a financially sound College for the future. He retires in the summer term this year.

11 Review of meeting

Members are invited to send comments to the Clerk.

Date of next meeting

Friday 17 July 2015 at 2.00pm. Room TG1.16

Meeting ended at 5.20pm