

**GOVERNING BODY**
**Minutes of the meeting held at 2.00pm on 13 December 2019**

**Present:**

E D'Souza (Chair)	S Daley (Vice Chair)
C Higgins (Vice Chair)	K Points
S Clarke	D Wildridge
A Maltpress	N Wingfield Digby
D Jugg	E Lawrance
S Howard	N Savvas, Principal/CEO

**In attendance:** S Jones, Vice Principal Finance and Resources  
 C Shaw, Vice Principal Quality and the Student Experience  
 S Graham, Interim HR Director  
 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 J Wakelam and J Gazzard. The apologies of the Vice Principal Employer Engagement, L Moody were also received.

**2 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2019**

The minutes of the meeting (minute book pages I185-I194) were agreed as a correct record. **Proposed** by K Points and **seconded** by S Daley.

**3 Matters Arising from the meeting held on 8 July 2019**

The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report (minute book page I195) and all actions reported had either been resolved or, where appropriate, an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.

The Clerk was asked to send a reminder out to those governors who are still to complete and return the Innovation Evaluation Tool.

It was agreed that an update with regard to the progress made and development of an environmental policy is to come back to the next meeting of the Corporation to be held in March 2020.

N Wingfield Digby, D Jugg and E Lawrance left the meeting at 2.10pm

**4 Membership**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I196-I198).

The appointments of an independent governor, FE Student Governor and HE Student Governor were considered by the Corporation. Background information about each proposed appointment was detailed in the report. It is proposed that N Wingfield Digby would join the membership of the Finance Committee and the FE Student Governor, D Jugg and HE Student Governor, E Lawrance, would both join the membership of the Standards and Excellence Committee. The Corporation considered each appointment and **approved** all three. **Proposed** by D Wildridge and **seconded** by S Clarke.

Furthermore it was duly noted and **approved** that due to increased work commitments S Howard is to withdraw her membership on the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

N Wingfield Digby, D Jugg and E Lawrance joined the meeting at 2.15pm

**Action**

JBridges

RStevenson

## **5 Committee Chairs' Summary Reports**

### **5.1 Finance Overview**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I199-I200).

As at month 3, it was reported that the College has made a positive start to the year despite the setback of lower HE recruitment and its associated impact on income. This has been achieved by stronger performances against budget on both pay and non-pay income lines but also by other income streams such as Apprenticeship Levy income showing strong starts to the year.

It was noted that cash remains healthy even after the investment into the STEM Innovation Centre project.

It was pleasing to note that the forecast year end outturn is £305K but could be higher.

The Corporation considered the new requirement of the ESFA to produce the multi-year cashflow return, known as the Integrated Financial Model for Colleges (IFMC) which will require Board approval early in the New Year. This return has to be completed by all Colleges and it is the intention of the ESFA that this return will replace both the three-year financial plan and the finance record with effect from the 2020/21 academic year. For this year however, all three returns will need to be completed.

As the Corporation is not scheduled to meet before the deadline for submission of the IFMC (28 February 2020), the Finance Committee seeks delegated power of the Corporation to approve the submission on their behalf. The Corporation **approved** delegated power to the Finance Committee for the IFMC return. **Proposed** by A Maltpress and **seconded** by S Howard.

#### **5.1.1 Office for Students Designated Quality Body return**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page I201)

The Corporation was informed that we had received notification from the Office for Students that we were one of 278 (73%) HEIs who for one reason or another had failed to complete an annual regulatory requirement; in our case we failed to make timely payment of fees to the Designated Quality Body (DQB). The Corporation was informed that the requirement to meet this deadline is underpinned by a general ongoing condition of registration and a failure to do so could constitute a breach of this condition of registration.

The Corporation was assured that this has been investigated and resolved promptly. The payment was made (in accordance with the College's terms) albeit 15 days later than the requested payment date. The College system has now been adjusted to a shorter payment term in order to prevent a 'late payment' occurring in the future so this has now been resolved.

We will respond to the Office for Students by 21 April 2020 as requested.

### **5.2 Standards and Excellence Overview**

#### **5.2.1 College 2018/19 Self-Assessment Report**

The Self-Assessment Report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page I202).

The Standards and Excellence Committee invited all members of the Corporation to attend its meeting held on 2 December 2019 to help develop, scrutinise and comment to the Self-Assessment Report. Amendments were incorporated and the overall effectiveness grade recommended as 'Good'. The report has also been subject to external validation by an Ofsted HMI, who also validated the 'Good' grade.

The grade profile has been agreed as Good overall effectiveness; Good Quality of Education, Outstanding Behaviour and Attitude, Outstanding Personal Development and Good Leadership and Management. It was noted that where improvements are required to progress our judgements to outstanding these are documented, monitored and tracked in the Quality Improvement Plan which is presented and scrutinised at each of the meetings of the Standards and Excellence Committee.

The Corporation **approved** the 'Good' grade College 2018/19 Self-Assessment Report. **Proposed** by C Higgins and **seconded** by S Clarke.

### **5.3 Audit and Risk Management Overview**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I203-I207).

The number of risks on the risk register with a high likelihood is 1 in the red zone; 2 amber; 17 yellow and 15 in the green zone (low risks). There are no new risks added to the register and 1 risk has been removed as detailed in the report.

With regard to GDPR, the College has completed 80% of its Compliance Action Plan, leaving 16% progress required (amber) and 4% good progress (green) to be made. It was reported that the Committee is satisfied with the progress and the GDPR compliance managed and driven by the DPL. They received a report from the DPO Centre that confirmed the good progress the College has made and how in comparison with other organisations the College is well ahead and advanced with the management of its GDPR arrangements.

### **5.4 Property Overview**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I208-I210).

Phases 1 and 2 of the STEM Innovation Centre completed on time for students at the start of term and the official opening ceremony was held on Friday 6 December 2019. A new floor has been fitted in the Hanger area and new outsourced caterers are currently fitting out a new food counter. It was noted that the temporary pedestrian crossing is still in use pending works to start for the Abbeygate Sixth Form junction.

The lease to house Abbeygate Sixth Form College students temporarily at West Suffolk College has finally been issued by the DfE and signed. The new build is on schedule to open as planned (phase 1 September 2020).

### **5.5 Safeguarding 2018/19 Annual Report and Minutes of 14 November 2019**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page I211).

The Welfare Department saw a total of 1,221 students, who attended 4,443 appointments in the year. Welfare Officers made a total of 16 Child Protection referrals to Social Care and completed 300 mental health welfare assessments. The team dealt with 4 general PREVENT enquiries although these did not require a full referral and were not referred onto the Channel Panel. We had 51 Children in

Care in the year and dealt with 6 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) referrals involving students on work placements in nurseries and transport issues involving taxi and coach services. The full report was available for members to read.

It was reported by the Governor Lead and Chair of the Safeguarding Board, K Points, that governors and all staff will be encouraged to complete a level 2 safeguarding qualification, and this will be rolled out in the coming months. In addition, the College has introduced an Employee Assistance Programme which will help and support staff resilience.

### **5.6 Health and Safety Overview**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page I212).

The report confirms that the College continues to monitor incidents, accidents, near misses and first aid data to identify trends and implement proactive interventions.

The Governor Lead for Health and Safety, A Maltpress, commented that in the absence of a Health and Safety Manager the part time Officer, H Ponder, in the department has done a sterling job to keep the College compliant and safe. A Health and Safety Manager has been appointed and commences in post on 2 January 2020.

It was noted that the College meets its legal duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

### **5.7 Equality Objectives**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I213-I216).

The College is required to set Equality and Diversity objectives to meet its three public duties under the Equality Act 2010. The objectives are updated annually to include reference to the focus on embedding equality into the curriculum and to identify and address “gaps” in achievement.

It was noted that Staff EDIM reports are also presented and scrutinised by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board and these are regularly (monthly) reported and analysed by the Senior Executive Team. These reports are shared with the Standards and Excellence Committee and in turn come through to the Corporation in key performance indicator reports that governors receive.

The Corporation **approved** the objectives for publication on the College’s website. **Proposed** by C Higgins and **seconded** by S Daley.

## **6 Audit and Risk Management Committee 2018/19 Annual Report**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I217-I230).

The Audit and Risk Management Committee has prepared and presented its annual report to the Corporation. The report details the audit and risk management activities in the year.

In the opinion of the Committee, an effective internal control framework has been in place for the year and the framework is based upon effective risk management. In framing this opinion, the Committee has considered the seven opinions required of an Audit Committee under the Post 16 Audit Code of Practice; assurance, risk management, governance, internal control, value for money, safeguarding of assets and solvency.

The report was recommended to the Corporation and it was **approved** for submission to the ESFA. **Proposed** by D Wildridge and **seconded** by S Clarke.

**7 Annual report of the Internal Auditors 2018/19**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I231-I243).

Internal Auditors are satisfied that sufficient internal audit work has been undertaken in the year to allow them to draw a reasonable conclusion as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's risk management, internal control and governance processes.

In the opinion of Scrutton Bland, for the year ended 31 July 2019 the report concludes that the College has adequate and effective risk management, governance, control, efficiency, effectiveness and economy processes in place and green compliance status has been awarded across all four process areas.

The Post 16 Audit Code of Practice requires the Corporation to consider and approve the Annual Report of the Internal Auditors prior to its submission to the ESFA. The Corporation **approved** the report. **Proposed** by C Higgins and **seconded** by S Clarke.

**8 Financial Auditor's Findings Report for the year ending 31 July 2019**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I244-I273).

The College's external auditors have completed the audit for 2018/19 and their findings were confirmed in their report. This has been scrutinised and challenged by the Audit and Risk Management Committee at the meeting held on 26 November 2019 and the report confirms an unqualified opinion. It was the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Management Committee that the Corporation approved the report and that the letters of representation for the financial statements and regularity audits be signed. The Corporation **approved** the recommendation. **Proposed** by D Wildridge and **seconded** by C Higgins.

**9 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 13 July 2019**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page I274).

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2019 were considered by the Audit and Risk Management Committee at the meeting held on 26 November 2019 and subsequently by the Finance Committee at its meeting held on 4 December 2019. It was noted that neither Committee has proposed any subsequent modification to the financial statements as presented to the Corporation and therefore the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2019 were **approved**. **Proposed** by S Howard and **seconded** by C Higgins.

**10 Strategic Matters**

**10.1 Principal's Briefing**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I275-I293).

There has been an extensive number of events held and hosted by the College since the last meeting of the Corporation and these were all detailed in the Principal/CEO's report.

The most notable for mention included an update and overview of (from page 3 onwards) the opening of the STEM Innovation Centre, current and future HE provision prospects, the work and engagement with Employers and our apprenticeship offer (working with Lotus for example), our 16-19 study programmes (Sixth Form equivalent Vocational offer here at the College at our 3 centres), professional learning opportunities to enhance our curriculum and student experience, HE QAA and Office for Students (OfS) requirements, the work we undertake to help and support employers to upskill their workforce and the work that we do with primary and secondary schools under the escalator model.

In the future the report detailed a number of projects including our development with the nuclear sector and a huge repertoire of Awards, Promotional Events, Seminars, Talks, Conferences, Media highlights and digital activity since the last meeting of the Corporation (held in July 2019).

## **10.2 Update on Multi Academy Trusts (SAT and SENDAT)**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book pages I294-I302).

### *Suffolk Academies Trust (SAT)*

Abbeygate Sixth Form College

The report detailed the awards, enrichment activities for students, engagement with schools, promotional events/media, presence/digital activities and horizon scanning/strategic matters that they have been recently been involved in.

In addition, it was reported that over 700 students attended the Open Event in October 2019 and Abbeygate has also been part of the College open events held in November 2019 and continues to actively promote its courses and increase its social media presence.

One Sixth Form College

The report of One Sixth Form College also informed the Board about the awards received, enrichment activities for students, the school engagement work, promotional activities and strategic matters encountered since September 2019.

### *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Academy Trust (SENDAT)*

Two further academies; Stone Lodge Academy and Chalk Hill officially joined SENDAT on 1 November 2019.

Stone Lodge Academy transferred from the Rightforsuccess Trust, approved by the DfE and were Ofsted graded 'Good' in January 2018. There are 176 students, aged 5-16years.

Chalk Hill was a sponsored academy conversion, brokered by the DfE to support what was Hampden House PRU, now renamed Chalk Hill. They are an Alternative Provision Academy for 30 boys, aged 8-14years, who have been permanently excluded or at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream school, who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs. There are also 6 residential places. The Priory School has 190 students on roll, with many more applications than available places for admission in 2020/21.

The Angel Hill provision, subcontracted to SENDAT from the College has 13 students enrolled, with a further 2 planned to start early December 2019 onto a transition programme, then onto a full programme in January 2020.

The Trust has submitted an application to the Norfolk Local Authority to open a Special Free School in Norwich for 170 students, aged 4-19years, delivering a similar educational profile to that of the Priory School. The current proposed site is on land adjoining Easton College.

It was noted that the SENDAT outreach service contract has been extended to July 2020.

**11 Governance**

The report was received and **considered** by members (minute book page I303).

**11.1 Register of Interests**

The Register of Governors' Interests has been updated. In accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government all members are required to complete the register to confirm their continued eligibility to serve on the Board. The register is available for public inspection on request and a similar Register of Interests for Senior Staff and Budget Holders has also been completed and updated.

**11.2 Strategic Conference**

The Strategic Conference this year will be held at the College on Thursday 23 January 2020. The format of the day is currently being planned and more details once finalised will be shared with the Board. We will be welcoming fellow SAT Trustees and Members and Governors of the Local Governing Bodies of One and Abbeygate Sixth Form Colleges.

**12 Governors' Reports and Information**

**12.1 Representational Activities**

Governors have attended and represented the College at a range of events during the past few months including the opening of the STEM Innovation Centre, meetings of the SENDAT Trustee Board and the openings of the Stone Lodge and Chalk Hill centres for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Abbeygate Tree Planting ceremony, HE Graduation Ceremony and a tour of the Milburn Centre and the Innovation Park.

**12.2 Training, Development and Governor Link activities**

Governors have attended ALPS training for governors and the AoC National Conference which was reportedly optimistic.

**13 Any other business**

None.

**14 Review of Meeting**

Comments to the Clerk to the Corporation are welcome.

**Date of next meeting**

Friday 27 March 2020 at 2.00pm

The meeting ended at 3.30pm