



Full Corporation Meeting

7 July 2022

Time: 6.00 pm
Chair: Mr Nick Horsfall

Present:

Mark Rigby	Y	Carol Davies	Y	Nick Horsfall	Y
Martyn Cox	X	Stuart Merrills	Y	Bashir Sharma	Y
Angus Hughes	Y	Ann Webster	X	Carole Swarbrick	Y
Susan Wright	Y	Nicola Singleton	Y	Alison Oakley	Y
Glenys Hughes	X	Rob Coyle	Y	Andy Lythgoe	Y
Bilkis Ismail	Y				

In Attendance:

Lesley Hart Deputy Principal	Y	Sandra McManus Deputy Principal	X	Sarah Ball Assistant Principal	Y
Tracy Dawson Clerk	Y				

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Martin Cox, Glenys Hughes and Ann Webster.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2022 were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Minute 6.1 – Minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee

There was nothing further to report regarding the SFCA National Conditions of Service and Contracts of Employment in relation to the effects of continuous service for sickness and maternity pay. SMT would consider this at some point in the future.

5. Re-Appointment of Governor

The Chair informed Governors that the term of office of Martyn Cox would expire on 10 July 2022. Councillor Cox is willing to continue for a further term of office and Governors **agreed** to re-elect him for a further term ending on 10 July 2026.

6. Minutes of Sub-Committees

6.1 **Minutes of the Student Affairs Committee** held on 11 May 2022 were **noted**. The Chair drew Governors' attention to events which students have been involved in and highlighted, in particular, the Careers Day where students had an opportunity to look at a variety of post sixth form options including university, employment and apprenticeship pathways. Governors **noted** how successful the Culture Day had been. This had been suggested by a student earlier in the year and had proved to be hugely popular with both staff and students and will continue to be held on an annual basis. Other Colleges have seen how successful the day was and are now planning to hold their own event.

The Chair informed Governors that she has recently undertaken training and has achieved the Senior Mental Health Lead Qualification.

From September the Student Council will change its name to 'Learner Voice' as this is more modern and links better to Ofsted criteria.

6.2 **Minutes of the Governance and Search Committees** held on 23 May and 27 June 2022 were **noted**. The Chair informed Governors that this Committee was very much in its early stages. Two meetings had been held which had focused on Corporation membership and the current vacancies. A skills audit of our current governors will take place shortly in order to identify any potential skills gap prior to seeking to fill the vacancy. A review of how the Student Governors are elected had taken place and it was **noted** that an election will take place for a new Parent Governor in the Autumn term. Governors were reminded to complete and return their self-assessment forms to the Clerk. The Governors self-assessment report will be discussed at the Full Corporation Meeting in December.

6.3 **Minutes of the Risk and Audit Committee** held on 7 June 2022 were **noted**. The Chair drew attention to the presentation given by the Learning Services Manager and informed Governors of the increase in the numbers of students seeking help for anxiety and other mental health issues. He also informed Governors of the challenges being faced by the lack of external services which are available to refer students to as resources are stretched within these organisations.

The Chair informed Governors that Wylie and Bisset had presented the audit planning memorandum to the meeting via zoom.

The Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy for 2022/23 were considered and **agreed** that no amendments were required. They were forwarded to Full Corporation for formal approval.

The Risk Management Policy 2022/23 was **formally approved**.

The Risk Management Strategy 2022/23 was also **formally approved** as being an appropriate and effective framework for risk management.

6.4 **Minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee** held on 14 June 2022 were **noted**. The Chair informed Governors that teaching staff have been cautious in predicting this year's results. She drew attention to the mismatch of information received from the exam boards in relation to the topics which had been set and informed Governors that a complaint would be made. The Principal reported that there had been a number of national complaints and that the SFCA had lodged a joint complaint on behalf of all colleges and as a result of this, Ofqual has withdrawn a question from some papers.

Governors **noted** that there are no changes to the admissions criteria and no plans for new courses although Urdu is to be phased out as it is no longer a popular course. Urdu will continue to be offered to students through the enrichment programme.

The Chair drew Governors' attention to the new Professional Growth Programme which replaces the ASE and WOW programmes. This will give each student a high quality personalised experience to support their personal development journey as each student will choose a pathway to follow over their two years in College. This programme is unique to us.

A Governor asked how often subject trends are looked at and **noted** that these are reviewed annually around March. She also asked if students were consulted about what courses they might want and how long it would take to add an additional subject to the curriculum. Governors **noted** that this may take between 12 and 24 months and would be dependent on staffing needs.

6.5 **Minutes of the Governors' Strategy Event** held on 19 May 2022 were **approved**.

7. Management Accounts

The Deputy Principal reported on the financial position. She informed Governors that the projected outturn of £757k included £193k Tuition Funding which is additional funding to support students in catch up lessons and missed work. There has also been a number of staff vacancies over the year although these vacancies have been now been filled and the College will be fully staffed in September.

A Governor asked if there was an opportunity to draw down the Apprenticeship Levy but **noted** that it was difficult to offer an apprentice role in College.

Governors **approved** the Management Accounts and year-end position.

8. Strategic Development Plan and Financial Forecasts

The Principal outlined the vision of the College to be an outstanding Sixth Form and reported that the strategic objectives had not changed. He informed Governors that the curriculum would continue to be developed and revised in light of the impact of T Levels and BTECs. A new Ofsted framework is due by 31 July 2022 and will include a focus on Post-16 providers to develop additional skills of learners. An additional Inspector will be appointed to look at this area during an inspection. Over the medium to long term the Sixth Form will continue to grow in student numbers and seek to work with Bolton Council to potentially acquire land in order to complete further phases of the Accommodation Strategy to support the growth of the Sixth Form.

Governors **noted** that 100% funding would be required for any project although capital funding may be available and would continue to be pursued.

There was a lengthy discussion. A Governor asked if there are still any staff vacancies to be recruited to in September and **noted** that 15 new staff have been recruited for September and the teaching staff will be fully staffed. There are still some outstanding vacancies within both the Finance and Security Teams.

Student enrolment figures were discussed and **noted** that these have increased year on year but Governors asked if the enrolment figures could go higher. The Principal reported that the current figures look good but he will report further at the next meeting. For the purposes of predicting expansion he had used 51% of students enrolling based on the number of applications received meeting entry criteria.

There was a general discussion regarding the broad range of subjects offered and whether or not a narrower curriculum to provide more focussed expertise, offering STEM subjects in particular, would create more growth in student numbers. It was **noted** that many students come here because of the breadth of choice of subjects and the courses delivered.

A Governor asked how well the College performs in relation to STEM subjects alongside other Colleges. It was **noted** that the Science department are to be monitored closely by the Deputy Principal – Curriculum throughout the Autumn term, she will go into lessons and meetings in order to drive up results.

Following further discussion it was agreed that irrespective of what courses are offered we can only work with the students who enrol. Further questions were asked:

- What is the purpose of the College?
- What do we want to do?
- What can we do?
- Are our grade requirements comparable with other sixth form colleges?
- Are we setting our students up to fail?

Governors **agreed** that a Strategy Day would be useful to look at this year's results and subject trends, comparing ourselves to other sixth form colleges on entry grade requirements and test ourselves to see what other options are available to ensure we are certain of what we want to achieve.

8.1 Budget 2022/23 and Financial Forecast 2023/24

The Deputy Principal informed Governors that the Financial Forecast 2023/24 sits alongside the Strategic Plan. She reported that the budget is based on being fully staffed, with a total number of students of 1750 - 1800 and has a pay award of 2.5% built in. Governors **noted** the healthy financial position which will allow the bank loan to be paid in full by the end of its term.

The Financial Forecast 2023/24 was approved.

8.2 Utility Costs

The Deputy Principal informed Governors that the contract for energy supplies will end in October. She reported that energy costs have significantly increased with wholesale electricity prices

increasing by 786% and wholesale gas by 906% and as such she tabled a report outlining the costs of renewing a contract for 12, 24 and 36 months.

Governors **agreed** to fix the energy costs on a 24 month contract.

9. Roof Repair Project

The Deputy Principal drew attention to the Roof Defect Report and costings. She reported that some of the plant is now 12 years old and that the cost of replacing the equipment with new plant would be more appropriate at this stage. The proposal is now ready to take to tender with a view to submitting a bid for CIF funding for the first round of applications in December.

10. Principal's Report

The Principal spoke to his report. He informed Governors that this year has seen a return to normal examinations and consequently results days. A Level results day is Thursday, 18 August and Governors are welcome to attend the celebrations.

The Teachers' Pay Review is proposed as a two-year deal of 3% for 2022/23 followed by a 2% rise the following year. The NASUWT has asked for 12% and is considering balloting on industrial action.

The Principal highlighted that 756 students had attended the new students' day which had taken place throughout the day.

The Principal informed Governors of the surprise announcement last month that The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is reviewing the private sector status of Sixth Form and FE Colleges and drew attention to the letter which had been received. The ONS review should be concluded by September and if agreed there will be inevitable changes to reporting and accountability processes. Colleges will no longer be able to borrow commercially but would benefit from the financial advantages of being in the public sector e.g. access to the VAT refund scheme.

The Principal's report was **noted**.

11. Health and Safety Policy 2022/23

The Deputy Principal informed Governors that the Health and Safety Policy is reviewed on an annual basis and reported that no changes were required to the Health and Safety Policy for 2022/23.

Governors **approved** the Health and Safety Policy.

12. Ofsted – Guide for Governors

The deep dive questions which may be asked of Governors during an Ofsted Inspection had previously been circulated for Governors to reflect on. The potential answers for Governors were tabled for information.

13. Committee Chairs and Membership 2022/23

The current Corporation Membership was **considered**. The Clerk asked Governors to let her know if anyone would like to change to a different Committee or would like to put themselves forward to Chair a committee in the new academic year. The finalised Committee Membership would be circulated at the beginning of the new academic year.

14. Schedule of Meetings 2022/23

The Schedule of Meetings for 2022/23 will be circulated to Governors in due course.

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting has yet to be arranged.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.