**SIR GEORGE MONOUX COLLEGE**

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 14 December 2021**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Present** | Alastair Owens (Acting Chair of the Corporation and Chair of the Quality & Performance Committee), Riddhi Bhalla (Vice-Chair of the Corporation and Chair of the Audit Committee – agenda 9-16), Jonathan Bush (Vice-Chair of the Corporation and Chair of the Resources Committee), Mariam Benamer (Student Member: agenda 6-15), Adenike Betiku, Stephen Jones, Farhana Juhera (Support Staff Member), Wasif Khan (Student Member – agenda 6-15), Maurine Lewin, Usha Puri-Dewage (Parent Member: agenda 6-11), Nazia Shah (Teaching Staff Member), David Vasse (Principal), Sara Whittaker. |
| **In Attendance** | James Gould (Vice-Principal: Student Services and Recruitment), Robert Smith (Clerk to the Corporation). |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1** | **Resignations, Apologies for Absence and Quoracy**  Apologies were received from the following members of the Corporation: Kwame Atta, Tom Foakes, Stewart Maclean.  Holly Bembridge (Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Quality) was unable to be in attendance.  It was formally recorded that, since the previous meeting, Talia Chirouf, Jagdev Kenth and Alan Wells had resigned from the Corporation. Grateful thanks were extended to all of them for their service to the Corporation, in particular to Alan Wells who for almost eight years had led the Corporation with exemplary skill and commitment through difficult times, and been instrumental in creating conditions that enabled a successful drive for improvement within the College.  It was also reported that Tom Foakes, a nominee of the Drapers’ Company, will be stepping down from membership of the Corporation as soon as a replacement for him can be identified and appointed.  It was subsequently reported that Farhana Juhera (Support Staff Member of the Corporation) is leaving her employment with the College. Her membership will therefore cease on 17 December 2021. Arrangements for the election of her successor will be put in hand in due course. She is warmly thanked for her service to the Corporation.  Thanks were also extended to Robert Smith on the occasion of his last attendance at a Corporation meeting in the role of Clerk; he retires on 31 January 2022 after eleven years’ service.  Alastair Owens is Acting Chair of the Corporation pending the election of a successor to Alan Wells. He observed that changes in its membership and secretariat introduces a moment of risk for the Corporation, but also the opportunity for fresh perspectives and leadership as the College moves forward into a new phase of its development. He reported that, in addition to engagement with a number of free governor recruitment agencies, head-hunters had been appointed to assist the Corporation in its search for a new Chair.  The meeting was quorate. |
| **2** | **Declarations of Interest**  None. |
| **3** | **Draft Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Ordinary Business): 12 October 2021**  It was noted that the draft minutes had been approved for circulation by the Chair of the Corporation.  They were approved as a correct record of the business transacted and *prima facie* evidence of the proceedings to which they relate. |
| **4** | **Matters Arising from the Draft Minutes (Ordinary Business): 12 October 2021**  There were no other matters arising apart from those dealt with under the agenda below. |
| **5** | **Appointment of Student Members of the Corporation**  The following resolutions were approved:  THAT, *Mariam Benamer be appointed as a student member of the Corporation from 14 December 2021 to 30 November 2022, or to such earlier date as the appointee may cease to be a student of the College.*  THAT, *Wasif Khan be appointed as a student member of the Corporation from 14 December 2021 to 30 November 2022, or to such earlier date as the appointee may cease to be a student of the College.* |
| **6** | **Ofsted Inspection: November 2021**  The Ofsted Draft Inspection Report was received and considered.  It was noted that:  *the College had been rated as Good overall;* and  *each of the component elements of the inspection had been rated Good.*  Key areas of provision had been commented on favourably.  Three areas of provision had been identified as in need of further improvement, namely that leaders should:  *continue to improve learners’ attendance and punctuality to ensure that a higher proportion of learners attend their lessons, on time, every day;*  *improve the quality of feedback that teachers provide to learners, to ensure that learners on all courses know how to improve their work or correct misconceptions;* and  *further improve the quality of teaching in those areas where it is not yet good to ensure learners receive an equally high quality of education in all subjects.*  The Principal reported that the published report is due imminently, and that the College had requested a minor change in how the Reach-Up programme is described so as to emphasise its inclusivity. No significant changes are expected in the published report.  Student members observed that the Report, though positive in tone with regard to teaching standards, may have failed to take full account of the ways teachers support students “in the round” in addition to formal modes of feedback.  The Principal observed that the Report had focused on the quality of teaching, but that inspectors may have failed to fully appreciate the impact of the public health emergency on the College and its students, especially those who are in their first year at the College having missed development opportunities at Key Stage 4. In essence, the College is having to make good these missed opportunities as best it can whilst delivering a demanding curriculum. An inspection at an early date in the College year exacerbates the exposure of these competing demands. The root causes of insufficient attendance had become more complex, arising from losses of habits, routine and self-discipline, all factors which are replicated throughout the sector.  In response to a question from Adenike Betiku, it was confirmed that the areas where poorer teaching had been observed are known to the College, and are the subject of targeted improvement strategies, entailing training, coaching and performance management.  It was agreed that the Quality and Performance Committee will specifically address the issue of teacher feedback to students at its next meeting. Wasif Khan suggested that a distinction should be made between difficulties which arise from the public health emergency, and those arising from other causes.  The Acting Chair, in his capacity as Chair of the Quality and Performance Committee, noted that a full action plan would be prepared for the Committee’s attention and scrutiny.  Members congratulated all who had contributed to the success of the inspection, including the leadership team, middle management, teachers and students. |
| **7** | **Report of the Quality and Performance Committee: Meeting held on 30 November 2021**  The draft minutes of the above meeting, approved by the Committee Chair for circulation, were received and noted, together with the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR), the outcomes (2020-21) of KPIs relevant to the Committee’s remit, and the KPIs (2021-22) relevant to the Committee’s remit which had been approved by the Committee on behalf of the Corporation.  It was noted that the College SAR closely reflects the outcome of the subsequent Ofsted inspection, thereby confirming that the College management had presented a realistic assessment of both the College’s strengths and of the areas in need of further improvement.  Stephen Jones noted with appreciation progress reported in relation to areas of previous weakness (e.g. Mathematics), and the improved College culture, including standards of student behaviour and their readiness to learn. |
| **8** | **Report of the External Relations Committee: Meeting held on 9 November 2021**  The draft minutes of the above meeting, approved by the Committee Chair for circulation, were received and noted, together with the outcomes (2020-21) of KPIs relevant to the Committee’s remit, and the KPIs (2021-22) relevant to the Committee’s remit which had been approved by the Committee on behalf of the Corporation.  The Vice-Principal: Student Services and Recruitment reported that schools liaison had picked up in the current term, but is now subject to the uncertainties introduced by the emergence of a new, more infectious Covid-19 variant. A successful open day had been held at the College. Applications are running at a level 30-40% higher than at the corresponding point in 2020-21.  Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that the College’s successful Ofsted inspection outcome be communicated widely to potential recruits.  Wasif Khan drew attention to the very strong team of student ambassadors, and urged greater use of them.  Sara Whittaker asked what arrangements are in place for Spring Term promotion of the College, given the uncertain pandemic outlook. It was reported that most Spring Term events had been planned in a virtual format, so it is hoped that the impact will be minimised.  It was reported that the number of safeguarding events is increasing, though this may reflect a greater willingness on the part of students to disclose their circumstances.  The Acting Chair asked those members who had not completed prescribed online safeguarding and Prevent training to do so as an urgent priority. |
| **9** | **Report of the Audit Committee (Ordinary Business): Meeting held on 23 November 2021**  The draft minutes of the above meeting, approved by the Committee Chair for circulation, were received and noted, together with the following documents which were also noted:  *Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2021;*  *Post–Audit Management Letter: Financial Statements’ Audit and Regularity Audit for the year ended 31 July 2021;*  *Letter of Representation;*  *Regularity Self-Assessment (as amended by the Resources Committee);* and  *Audit Committee Annual Report 2020-21.*  It was noted that the financial statements’ auditor had “stood back” from completing his assessment of the accounts pending an internal audit report into irregularities occurring in the 2018-19 year in relation to procurement. The latter’s report had not identified any matter which would cause the financial statements’ auditor not give an unqualified assurance.  On this basis, the draft Annual Report and Financial Statements were approved, and the Acting Chair was authorised to sign the Letter of Representation. |
| **10** | **Report of the Resources Committee: Meeting held on 30 November 2021**  The draft minutes of the above meeting, approved by the Committee Chair for circulation, were received and noted, together with the management accounts (to Period 3: 31 October 2021), which were also noted.  The management accounts (as at Period 3: 31 October 2021) had highlighted the poor state of repair in some aspects of the estate, which would lead to a measure of volatility concerning in-year maintenance expenditure. The College is to enter into an overarching maintenance service agreement which will be monitored by the Committee.  In terms of the effect of reduced student numbers at the 2021 census date, it was agreed that the College will aim to make small surpluses over the coming years by adjusting its expenditure to match the lagged funding income.  The power delegated to the college management to vary teacher’s pay in the interests of staff continuity in hard-to-recruit areas is not intended to increase the overall level of pay as a percentage of income. |
| **11** | **Principal’s Report**  A verbal report was provided by the Principal.  It was reported that:  Following a period of low Covid-19 infection rates, there had been a spike in the current week, as well as an increasing number of staff cases. Plans had been made for a possible conversion to online teaching in the last few days of term. A majority of students remain unvaccinated, and the College is making them aware of vaccination opportunities, including the possibility of an on-site vaccination centre.  The Annual Strategic Conversation with the ESFA had included an outline discussion of the Government’s academisation agenda as it may affect sixth form colleges. It was agreed that a Saturday development session will be devoted to the topic, with a paper analysing the process, its advantages and disadvantages, to be circulated to members in advance. |
| **12** | **Clerk’s Announcements**  None. |
| **13** | **Dates and Times of Corporation Meetings 2022-23**  The following dates and times were approved:  ***Tuesday 11 October 2022 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 13 December 2022 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 17 January 2023 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 28 March 2023 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 9 May 2023 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 4 July 2023 (6.30pm)*** |
| **14** | **Any Other Competent Business**  None. |
| **15** | **Dates and Times of Corporation Meetings 2021-22**  The following approved dates and times were noted:  ***Tuesday 5 April 2022 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 10 May 2022 (6.30pm)***  ***Tuesday 5 July 2022 (6.30pm)***  In accordance with the decision of the Corporation at the meeting held on 11 May 2021, Corporation meetings will be held virtually, subject to the outcome of a review at the 10 May 2022 meeting. |

**Action Arising from the Meeting**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Minute*** | ***Person(s) Responsible*** | ***Action*** |
| **8** | Relevant Corporation members | Complete the prescribed online safeguarding and Prevent training. |