

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY held on Wednesday 12th December 2018 at 16.30

Present: Mrs Sally Bromley (Principal), Mr Tom Cox, Ms Jazmin Demjan, Mrs Ann Donoghue, Mrs Barbara Hobday, Mr Graham Lawrence, Mrs Patrice Mantey, Dr Grant Powell, Dr David Skipp, Mrs Helen Smith, Mrs Smita Warren, Mr Robert Yorke

In attendance: Mr Ian Dumbleton, Ms Andrea John, Mr Dan Lodge, Mr Steve Martell, Ms Nicola Whitehead (Clerk)

Apologies: Mrs Rebecca Aylett, Dr Melaine Coward, Mr Reuben Crawford Clarke, Mr Thom Hodson, Mr Roger Raymond, Mr Hugh Stafford-Smith

In the Chair: Dr David Skipp

The meeting was preceded by a presentation on the Extended Project Qualification from the EPQ Co-ordinator.

Members were content with the proposed consent items and emphasis on the key strategic items including the QIP, Report and Financial Statements, Principal's and Student Voice reports as illustrated by the indicative timings on the agenda.

1442) Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interests.

1443) Minutes (Parts I and II) of the meeting held on 3rd October 2018 were approved.

1444) Matters arising

Item 1428 (ref 1412): The Clerk confirmed that she had chased the outstanding registers of interests and declarations of eligibility with just one of each owing, plus two of the supplementary forms.

Ref 1418: The Principal confirmed that she had written to WSCC about the delayed **S106 money** which had now been received and placed in a 95-day notice account.

1445) Principal's report including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Paper: Principal's report to the Governing Body Autumn Term 2018

- i) The Principal introduced her report for the autumn term covering admissions, results, curriculum developments, 4As provision, staffing and an update on Mercers' funded projects. She drew attention to the **partnership with West Sussex Music** which had already resulted in a new venue for Horsham Music Centre and the West Sussex Youth Orchestras and Choirs, as well as a new home for the administrative side of the charity itself. In addition, the move had facilitated two further key partnerships, with Horsham Symphony Orchestra and the National Children's Orchestra, both of which were also now based at Collyer's. The partnership not only brought much needed additional income through lettings' fees but helped to place Collyer's at the centre of music education in West Sussex.
- ii) A further key area of work over the term had been the close **liaison with HNW Architects in drawing up a coherent estate masterplan** covering eight phases based on the College's Property Strategy. The development of a long term campus masterplan –

looking 10-15+ years ahead - was intended to strengthen the identity of Collyer's as the post 16 College of aspiration and choice in the region and realise the potential of the College site to meet the evolving educational and recreational needs of the students and wider community. The linchpin was the College's bid for Condition Improvement Funding (CIF) covering phases 1 – 3 which had been submitted on Monday with support from education consultant David Friend from Amicus.

Resolved: The Clerk confirmed that the written resolution covering agreement to a CIF bid for phases 1-3 had passed on 10th December with 16 (of 18 possible) signed resolutions returned (and unanimous agreement by e-mail). Similarly 14 (of possible 16 -i.e. excluding student governors) had signed the written resolution agreeing that the College should include in the bid a potential College contribution of £1.5m.

- iii) In discussion members congratulated the Deputy Principal (DP) in particular on the sustained **high enrolment figures** given the double dip in demographics. They were keen to explore the 'shut door' policy of some local schools with sixth forms which risked limiting awareness of the choices available to young people in the area for their 16-19n education. The Principal explained that she had written to these schools – Heads and Chairs of Governors – to encourage access but without success. The College did however seek to promulgate its message through a wealth of events and word of mouth - helped by the fact that there had been a growth in student numbers from all such schools in recent years. **Marketing** sought to target both independent and state sector institutions. Members recognised also that the College's excellent results spoke for themselves in attracting students and that the College's quality assurance processes were well-targeted both to sustain and improve even further on performance.
- iv) In response to questions, the DP explained the constraints on offering **apprenticeships** in conjunction with smaller non-levy paying employers following a change in the criteria which affected smaller providers such as Collyer's. There was however the prospect of a further bidding round in c. 18 months.
- v) Members noted the evidence, and in some instances changed presentation of information, in the **KPIs**, welcoming the increased ease in absorbing the data. For example, the attendance graph reflected year on year trends and helped to show the impact of the College's new intervention policy.
- vi) The Principal drew attention to the inclusion of the report on the performance of **international students** in response to governors' request at the last meeting. Asked whether the College was more selective in respect of these students given their very high levels of success, the Principal explained the intake was largely self-selecting in that aspirational young men and women were attracted to such overseas study, and in some cases were high achievers selected under Government sponsorship programmes. The IELTS entry language test and interview were relatively straightforward. To-date the majority of students had been from the independent sector in China, now supplemented by those from the Guangya School in the state sector. The College's fees aimed to keep in step with the market (whilst reflecting the fact that Collyer's was an outstanding college) and were still about half those charged in the UK's independent sector. Given the students aspirations, members asked if there were any feeder relationships with universities albeit that they were a relatively small cohort. **(Action: Principal to explore scope for such links)**

1446) Student Voice

Paper: Written report of 3rd December 2018

The student governor present reported on their joint activities in the autumn term. They had been working with the RCU on a number of activities including:

- Octoberfest - **£600 raised** – almost double the previous year but students were still ambitious to raise more;
- Ideas for **Christmas activities** and a decision on **charity to be Cancer Research**;
- **Red box charity with sanitary products** available for those with financial difficulties or caught unawares;
- **Feedback on Well-being week** where there had been a good atmosphere;
- **Timetable review** where there was support for the aim to reduce pressure on space particularly in the Refectory;
- **New Progress Review feedback** including positive support for the new self-assessment approach but with a request for some more contextual information to be provided;
- **Tutor reps ideas** (and any concerns) from their tutor groups including an interest in peer mentoring and the potential for food sales separate from Refectory to relieve overcrowding, and automatic rather than self-closing doors e.g. to Duckering Hall;
- **Forward planning of Collyer's Pride event** taking place in February with ideas covering rainbow dress-up day, music department shows, LGBT films, liaison with feeder schools.

Reuben had attended the Collyer's Association meeting with other RCU officers contributing on E&D and Tutorial Committees.

Members noted in particular the strong focus that term on University applications and career planning with Unifrog proving a very valuable resource. Universities appeared to be offering a range of approaches to attract students including unconditional offers and scholarships (e.g. for A*s). As such both student governors were conscious of the impact on motivation and stress levels and were seeking to get the right balance in their studies and university choices.

1447) Quality Assurance

Papers: *College Self-assessment report (SAR) 2017-18 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018-19*

- i) The Chair introduced the **College SAR and QIP** as significant documents - covered in some detail by the Quality and Curriculum (Q&C) Committee - for which the Vice Principal was to be congratulated. The VP thanked Q&C members for supporting the change in template which facilitated a focus on **25 main targets** as well as being flexible to accommodate new initiatives in-year. Whilst structured around the College's strategic aims, the SAR also included a summary analysis of performance against the Ofsted measures. The VP also thanked those governors who had supported the preparatory faculty and cross college meetings looking at the more detailed assessments across the college which underpinned the whole College SAR and QIP.
- ii) In follow-up to the last meeting, the VP explained that the strong overall Alps score of 2 for the college was owing to the fact that so many of the students were studying subjects with high Alps performance scores so the score reflected this proportionality. He explained that all the different **value-added measures** were useful. ALIS and the newer LV3A were similar in relating value-added to a grade (e.g. +0.22 for LV3A in 17/18) albeit with some difference in scope. Alps however graded performance on a scale of 1-9. In response to questions, he confirmed that the College also looked at individual groups of students e.g. according to gender, target grade and disadvantaged students where the College had a good track record.
- iii) Members commented on the very helpful **new format** which, for example, enabled a clear read-across from SAR to QIP. Those involved in the **Faculty SAR meetings** commented on how useful these had been, recognising their potential to facilitate further the spread of

good practice across subjects as part of the clear commitment to improvement. An F&GP Committee member drew attention to recent discussion of the strong **marketing** of the College and the plans to enhance this further. The DP explained that, with the assistance of the Admissions and Internationals Manager starting in the New Year, he would be looking in particular at the website and social media. SMT were currently considering a proposal from marketing firm, Grebot Donnelly, to seek to pull together an affordable and targeted package of support to supplement the existing cost-effective measures focussing on an extensive visit programme to schools and recruitment fairs.

- iv) In response to questions concerning **trapped time**, the VP explained the measures taken by the College to support students in using this time well such as the new Aspire workshops. The student governor commented that these periods were long enough to enable useful study and there was sufficient study space, with the extensive Library having constituted a significant draw in her choice of Collyer's. Those nearer to home were more able or possibly inclined to take a break than those traveling from further afield. The range of smaller areas of study space could possibly also be made clearer earlier to first-year students.
- v) Further to discussion at the recent Q&C Committee, the VP updated governors on subsequent contact with the three partner schools about **T levels** to arrange curriculum briefings. As such contact in the New Year would be addressing the usual recruitment of students for September 2019 in parallel with preparing students and parents for T levels from 2020. Concerns about the possible lack of a university progression route had now been allayed by DfE. The Principal reported also on a very recent communication from DfE confirming that there would be no per student uplift in funding for 19/20 but some additional pots of money would be available including £38m for T levels. As one of the first tranche of colleges to offer the qualification, the College would be well placed to receive some assistance. She clarified that that there was cross party support for T levels given their aim to achieve parity in technical skills education.
- vi) The Estates Sub-Committee Chair expressed some disappointment that the enhanced kitchen facilities had not resulted in increased satisfaction with the Refectory. The Finance Director commented on the strengths of the Refectory as an in-house resource which at least broke even by contrast with many outsourced facilities in other colleges. Footfall had increased, more healthy options were on offer and the canteen staff continued to be receptive to student feedback e.g. on environmentally-friendly packaging. The student governor commented that the feedback on price was inevitable given that students were largely 'broke' but that she considered the food and prices acceptable and the service very convenient. Members noted that satisfaction levels were also still high albeit less so relative to other services so welcomed the Principal's offer to seek further feedback from the RCU.
(Action: Assistant Principal/RCU Manager)

The Chair concluded that members appeared very content with the revised reports and thanked the VP once again for his comprehensive work on these, the explanations offered at the meeting and the ambitious targets for the College.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved:

- a. the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2017-18; and
- b. the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018-19

1448) Audit Committee Annual Report to the Governing Body 2017-18

Paper: Audit Committee Annual Report to the Governing Body 2017-18

In the absence of the Committee Chair, the Clerk summarised the report's coverage of the activities of the Audit Committee in advising the Governing Body on the adequacy of systems and controls in the College. Most notable were the commitment and skills breadth of its relatively small membership, for example, in seeking assurance across all three possible levels- internally, by governors and externally. Members particularly valued the External Quality Reviews (EQRs) and, as testified by those Audit members present, recognised the strength of message in the three 'full' assurance internal audit reports as well as the increasingly small number of low level recommendations. Furthermore there had been thorough discussion of the Audit Findings Report with some changes agreed with the external auditors better to reflect the evidence. Decisions on where to focus audit attention were underpinned by the Principal's commitment to rigorous risk management processes and reports.

Members were content that the report reflected a very satisfactory position both in terms of the committee's attention to its remit and the assurances provided by both internal monitoring and the services of internal and external audit firms.

Resolved: The Governing Body endorsed the Audit Committee Annual report.

1449) Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st July 2018

Papers: Draft Audit Findings Report incl. Letters or Representation; Report and Financial Statements, Regularity Self-assessment

- i) Members noted the discussions of the Report and Financial Statements by both the F&GP and Audit Committees and that it had been a straightforward audit. The Finance Director reported that the College had achieved a good operating surplus of £571,000. After making a non-cash charge of £300,000 in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), together with two other smaller non-cash adjustments, the surplus for the year had been £256,000. The College had a cash balance of £3.9 million at the 31 July 2018. Further to this, the College had received circa £562,000 from WSCC relating to section 106 money which had been included in the year end accounts as a debtor. The cash position had therefore strengthened further.
- ii) Asked about the auditor's suggestion that governors discuss the level of cash reserves, the Principal explained that this would, in part, be addressed were the College to contribute the £1.5m agreed in principle to Phases 1-3 in the event that the CIF bid was successful. Subsequent to F&GP discussion, she and the Finance Director would be looking further at the options both in terms of an investment strategy and bearing in mind potential accommodation needs including a possible house purchase. This appraisal would also address F&GP's request that borrowing also be considered for the latter. A further report would be made at the next meeting in March.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved:

- a. **The Audit Findings Report**
- b. **Signature by the Chair of the letters of representation on behalf of the Governing Body**
- c. **Approval of the Financial Statements and their signature with individual attendance (not) included**
- d. **Signature by the Chair of the Regularity Self-assessment on behalf of the Governing Body**

e. **Signature by the Chairman of the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control.**

1450) Report from the Nominations Committee

Papers: Minutes of the meeting of 16th November; Governance Self-Assessment report (SAR) 2017-18 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018-19

The Committee Chair thanked Graham Lawrence for attending his first meeting (following agreement by a majority of governors (12) by written resolution dated 7th November, agreed on 16th November with no objections received). Further to the Committee's discussion, Governing Body agreement was sought to:

- i) **The new governance SAR/QIP.** Committee members had recognised the pressure on governors in juggling commitments to meet target attendance whilst recognising that governor absence detracted from the richness of debate in meetings. This would be taken forward with individuals but views were sought on the pros and cons of potential technological solutions. On balance members favoured piloting virtual attendance (e.g. through Skype) albeit as the exception rather than the rule. **(Action: Clerk).** Whilst there had been a slight dip in attendance at formal meetings members agreed that wider participation and the quality of contribution warranted a Grade 1 outstanding for governance.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved:

- a. **the Governance Self-assessment review 2017-18**
- b. **the Governance Quality Improvement Plan 2018-19**

- ii) Appoint a new **co-optee to the Audit Committee.** Members noted that Sarah Ediss was a partner local accountancy firm Kreston Reeves with particular expertise in education and charities. The Clerk confirmed that the Chair of the Committee had met the candidate and was fully supportive of the appointment.

Resolved: the Governing Body approved the appointment of Sarah Ediss as a co-optee to the Audit Committee with effect from 1st January 2019 to end July 2022.

- iii) Explore **changes in the framework for SPH appointments** to assist with **succession planning.** Members agreed the Committee's proposal that national advertising of a vacancy for Principal should always be retained but that, whilst there were generally advantages in testing the wider market, it could be helpful to have **flexibility with regard to national advertising of any further SPH posts.** Changing the Instrument and Articles to this effect could, for example, facilitate restructuring or stability if there were several concurrent staff changes in what is a small senior team, or simply timely internal recruitment if there were a strong field - whilst not ruling out an external trawl. It was not intended however that senior/SMT posts would be earmarked for internal progression. Going forward it would be essential to get the underlying framework and process right, for example, to ensure an appropriate test of a candidate's competencies against the job specification.

Resolved: Approval in principle was granted to enable:

- a. discussion with the trade unions through the Principal's SMCG group and research into other SFC processes **(Action: Principal to take forward and report to the March Governing Body meeting)**
- b. exploration of the changes required to the Instrument and Articles (and possibly Rules and Byelaws/ policies) with a view to further consultation and agreement by the Summer Term - or earlier if needed. **(Action: Clerk, Principal and Nominations Committee)**

- iv) A **separate Remuneration Committee** to make recommendations on **SPH (Principal and Deputy Principal) and Clerk's pay and appraisal**. In the light of the new draft AoC Remuneration Code reflecting best practice (intended as a guide rather than for adoption) as well as the pressure on F&GP time, members agreed in principle the proposal for a separate Committee subject to further approval of its terms of reference (ToRs) in the Spring Term in time for pay recommendations in the summer term. The ToRs would reflect the proposed membership at its inception of the Chair of the Governing Body (GB), Chair of F&GP (also GB Vice Chair) - given their respective responsibilities for SPH appraisal and e.g. general staff pay - as well as the Chair of the Nominations Committee given her HR experience (as had the Vice Chair). **(Action: Clerk)**

Resolved: Approval in principle was granted to a new Remuneration Committee subject to approval of its terms of reference at the next meeting.

In conclusion the Committee Chair reported on approval of the **latest Governor Training and Development Programme for 18/19** with a focus on induction, curriculum strategy, national context and new CIF framework for 2019. They had agreed signing up to the new **SFCA College Governance Network**, with a suite of webinars potentially providing a practical offering in addition to the recent governance handbook. The Vice Chair reported on her positive experience of the first webinar that week on the Strategic Context which had been a useful reminder of the information shared by the Principal and SMT and insight into SFCA's lobbying on behalf of colleges.

(Action: Clerk to i) circulate webinar recording for wider participation by governors and ii) feedback to SFCA on governors' request that recordings be available sooner after the event)

1451) Report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Paper: Minutes of the meetings of 26th November 2018; Quarterly Management Accounts to 31st October 2018; Policies: Health and Safety and Fire

The Committee Chair:

- i) Expanded on the earlier discussion of the use of **cash reserves** in the context of the **Property Strategy**, clarifying that the £1.5m for Phases 1-3 would not be allocated if the bid were unsuccessful. The March meeting would aim to build on earlier F&GP discussion of **property, treasury management and international strategy** as well as draw on further independent advice on an **investment strategy** in making an appraisal of options. The impact on the College's financial health and a wider risk assessment would be taken into account. (See also 1445ii and 1449 above)
- ii) Drew attention to the favourable **management accounts** at the end of October and the modest surplus anticipated at the end of the year with the, as yet unknown, outcome of the pay negotiations a key variable.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the first quarter management accounts;

- iii) Reported on (F&GP's delegated) approval of amendments to the **Financial Regulations**, on this occasion concerning procurement with one aspect deemed necessary to refer to the Governing Body. A review of delegation thresholds to take account of rising costs and size of smaller refurbishment projects suggested that F&GP's own delegation from the Governing Body be raised from £100k to £150k incl. VAT.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved delegation of procurement decisions up to £150k incl VAT to F&GP;

- iv) Highlighted the minor *changes to the **Health and Safety and Fire Safety Policies largely reflecting staff changes.***

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the minor changes to the Health and Safety and Fire Safety Policies.

1452) Report from the Audit Committee

Paper: Minutes of the meeting of 21st November 2018

Further to the annual report from the Audit Committee (*see also item 1448-9 above*), members noted the summary and minutes of the recent Audit Committee meeting.

1453) Report from the Quality & Curriculum Committee

Paper: Minutes of the meeting of 28th November 2018

Members received the minutes reflecting discussion of the College SAR and QIP (*see 1447 above*). The Chair drew attention to:

- i) Fruitful early discussions with HE/Safeguarding governor re **potential placements at Collyer's of mental health nurse undergraduates** from University of Surrey helping with triage. The AP reported that it was hoped to have such support from January to July subject to a system of induction and clear parameters in supporting students;
- ii) Clerk to liaise with SMT re **Learning walk programme for 5th February** to include demonstration of MyProgress;
- iii) Much revised **Safeguarding Policy** to incorporate the previously discrete **Child Protection Policy** and reflecting government updates to the latest statutory guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018). These included management of child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment, peer on peer abuse, contextual safeguarding and use of reasonable force. In response to questions, the AP lead confirmed that students were still covered by the policy once they turned 18 whilst they were in full-time education as well as to any 19-25 vulnerable adults. Members thanked her for the considerable work in the rationalisation and update.

Resolved: The Governing Body approved the combined Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- iv) **Student Disciplinary Policy** with revisions further to the summer review approved. These mostly reflected the updated intervention procedures including student action plans which were now working effectively, supported by the systems on MyProgress which facilitated staff, student and parent access. The Chair welcomed the definition of gross misconduct and referenced investigations, the scope of which had been explored by the Committee.

1454) Chair's report

The Chair reported that:

- i) **Governor attendance** overall at meetings in the Autumn term was 82%. This reflected strong attendance of over 90% at committee meetings but a more disappointing figure of 70% from the two Governing Body meetings;
- ii) A governor panel had been convened to consider an **appeal against exclusion** by a 1A student. The panel had upheld the appeal on grounds of process and some fresh evidence. However, in confirming the decision to the student, the panel had made clear that this did not exonerate him from responsibility for his past behaviour. The panel had reinforced that the

Principal had their full support in upholding the values of the College and ensuring students abided by the Student Code of Conduct. The Chair expressed his understanding that the decision could have been difficult for staff and gratitude for the positive response in tightening up the Student Disciplinary Policy.

1455) Trustees' report

The Chair reported on the meeting of the Trustees of the Collyer Endowment of 29th November 2018 which had covered areas familiar to governors from the current meeting e.g. ref property as well as:

- i) **Progress with the new investment managers**, Smith and Williamson. The transfer of the portfolio from Cazenove had been slow and less than straightforward. It was however anticipated that this would be complete by mid-December. Clearly markets were volatile but S&W were confident they could meet the target of £60k p.a. income plus 3% growth;
- ii) Straightforward **Report and Accounts**;
- iii) **Management Accounts** with some concern at the volume of cash held but this was considered acceptable given the clear strategy to support the College in its longer term plans most notably in terms of Property Strategy.

1456) Any other business

The Principal advised governors that, against the background of national publicity of drugs activity across County lines, she would be writing to parents before the end of term. She would be reminding them of the College's zero tolerance of drugs on site and signposting advice and guidance on how to identify any issues and support students in making sensible choices. Members supported the College's measures to enforce its policy in this regard.

1457) Governance Quality Framework

Paper: Governance Self-assessment

Members were content that the meeting had focussed on the appropriate priorities.

1458) Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 27th March 2019 at 10.45 a.m. at Mercers' Hall in London.

The meeting closed at 19.03

Chair

Date

NCW 14/12/2018