



STANDARDS & FINANCE COMMITTEE – PART I

Minutes of the one hundred and fifteenth meeting of the Standards and Finance committee meeting held on Tuesday, 21 June 2022 held via Zoom.

**Present:
attended**

Meetings

Prof A Neill	Chair	(4 out of 4)
Mr G Beards		(4 out of 4)
Mr J Hiley-Jones		(4 out of 4)
Mrs J Pitman		(4 out of 4)
Dr K Webb	Interim Principal and CEO	(2 out of 2)

**Co-opted
Members:**

Mrs X Li-Bloodworth		(4 out of 4)
Mr D Andrew		(3 out of 4)

In attendance:

Mr L Feingold	Vice Principal, Finance	
Mr S Lovegrove	Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality	
Mrs J Munro	Assistant Principal, Learning and Quality	
Mr G Francis	Assistant Principal, A-Levels	
Mr S Jenkin	Assistant Principal, Vocational	
Mrs L Payne	Clerk to Corporation	(4 out of 4)

Meeting commenced at 5.25pm

Agenda item	Paper title	Action
115.1	WELCOME, APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST The Chair of the Committee apologised to members that the meeting was starting late, but that this was as a result of an Extraordinary Board meeting that had taken place just before this meeting. Apologies had been received from Mr R Dunford and Ms M Trinh. No member declared any conflict of interest with the agenda.	
115.2	COMMITTEE BUSINESS	
115.2.1	Minutes of previous meeting held on 10, February 2022 The minutes of the meeting held on 10, February 2022 having been previously circulated to members, were approved as a true record and would be signed electronically by the Chair. All Members were agreed.	
115.2.2	Matters arising from meeting held on 10, February 2022 It was noted the matters arising had been actioned or would be covered by the agenda.	
115.2.3	Review of Effectiveness of Committee As part of the College's continuous self-assessment, members were asked to complete the annual evaluation form highlighting the	



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	effectiveness of the committee. Members were pleased to complete the self-assessment and as part of the assessment agreed that the role of the Chair had been carried out very effectively throughout the year. There were no issues to raise.	Refer to Corporation
115.2.4	Terms of Reference Members were asked to consider the Standards and Finance Committee Terms of Reference. No changes were proposed at this time. All Members were agreed.	Refer to Corporation
115.3	STRATEGIC MATTERS	
115.3.1	Draft 1-year Strategic Plan The Interim Principal informed members that in readiness for the Strategy Session, now set for before the Board meeting on the 5 July, she would be sending out some pre-reading to set the scene for that session and then matters arising from that would be brought back to the Board in the Autumn term. The Chair of the Board informed members that there would be a key focus on the draft Strategic Plan at this session. The report was noted.	
115.3.2	Curriculum Statement of Intent The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality presented his report. He informed members that the Curriculum Statement of Intent was a 'framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and skills to be gained at each stage'. Members noted the summary of the College's values and ethos and a description of the key teaching aims and aspirations, the College had, for both learners and for the College generally. Members were asked to recommend the Curriculum Statement of Intent to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.	Refer to Corporation
115.4	EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	
115.4.1	Equal Opportunities KPI's The Chair took the papers 'as read'. The report for the committee had drawn together in summary form the detail of the KPI's. National averages were in relation in to 2018-2019 qualification achievement which was the last time National Data was published. The report was noted.	
115.5	STANDARDS AND QUALITY	
115.5.1	Curriculum Performance update The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality informed members that after the second round of Heads of Curriculum reviews, the current overall predicted achievement rate was 89.2%. Currently the 16-18 achievement rate was predicted to be 80.4% being a decrease of 1.1% on the previous academic year and significantly below the target of 84%. Members were advised that the decrease in predicted achievement was due to a large decrease in 16-18 retention. Retention was currently noted as 86.6% being 1.3%	



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	<p>below the end of year retention for the last academic year. Members challenged the retention rate for 16-18's and apprentices. The Vice Principal informed members that this seemed to be a trend with many Colleges reporting significant increases in mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, resulting in an increased number of withdrawals. Plans for next year were discussed including the previous 'deep dive' on apprenticeships at which Governors had the opportunity to really scrutinise the provision in detail.</p> <p>Members discussed the issues and whether any additional resource could be implemented to improve the situation.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
115.5.2	<p>Teaching and Learning Plan The report was taken 'as read' and noted.</p>	
115.5.3	<p>Review of the Self-Assessment Process 2021-2022 The report was taken 'as read' and noted.</p>	
115.5.4	<p>Student Recruitment 2022-2023 The report was taken 'as read' and noted.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal, A-Levels informed members that Student Recruitment looked good for September. Applications were up on the last year and there were strong numbers in year 1 and year 2. The biggest decline was noted in reapplications of Level 1 and Level 2 students and members noted the summary of the present position in the reports. Mrs Pitman informed members that it had been very useful to have Brockenhurst College representatives in her school and she felt that a meeting with students in person was much better than virtual presentations and helpful to students in terms of motivation and looking at courses and institutions in which to enrol.</p>	
115.6	FINANCIAL & COMMERCIAL MATTERS	
115.6.1	<p>Debt write-offs</p> <p>Members noted the report and agreed to recommend to the Board the debt write-offs.</p>	Refer to Corporation
115.6.2	<p>CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE This item was presented by the Vice Principal, Finance who updated members on the current Capital Projects at the College. The Capital Project committee had met recently and made recommendations for this committee to agree and then for the Board to approve.</p> <p>The Vice Principal informed members that progress had been made on the College's new build project comprising a SEND Independence Hub and new Classrooms. Members were reminded that as a result of recent growth in 16-19 learners the College's estate was nearing capacity. The College had had 2,824 16-19 learners in 2021, and as at April of this year this had increased by</p>	



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	<p>42 to 2,866. It was noted the demographic forecasts predicted further growth of 16 year olds, in the local catchment areas, of about 13.5%. Accordingly, the College would need to proactively manage the forecast growth in learners to mitigate the financial and physical risks of such growth.</p> <p>Members were updated on the 2021/2022 Capital Expenditure. The Vice Principal advised members that the College's Capital budget mainly comprised IT equipment and urgent classroom and estate improvements.</p> <p>He referred to the Strategic Development Fund and the Skills and Education Act which focussed on strengthening links between employers. He confirmed that under its 'Skills Accelerator' initiative it offered funding for collaborative projects which were employer led and projects led by FE Colleges.</p> <p>The main item to bring to the attention of the committee was the new build project SEND Independence Hub and new classrooms. The Vice Principal reminded members the College had been successful in its DfE post-16 Capacity Capital funding bid for expansion capital. The fund was to support expansion for FE Colleges in response to the current and forecast demographic increase in 16-19 learners. The total planned build costs were £4.9m, being a grant of £4.0m from the DfE and match funding of £0.9m. The match funding was to be provided by Hampshire Local Authority as part of their project to create a number of SEND independence Hubs to develop independent living skills within Colleges throughout Hampshire.</p> <p>The Vice Principal updated members on the project detailing who the professional consultants appointed were and outlining the design specification. With regard to planning the Vice Principal confirmed the pre-planning application had been submitted to the New Forest National Park authority on 21 March 2022 to assess whether the proposed design presented any major issue regarding planning permission. He confirmed a response received on 11 May 2022 was broadly positive and did not highlight any significant concerns. It was not anticipated that there would be any planning objections from local residents or businesses.</p> <p>In relation to the financial budget, members were reminded that the original feasibility study for the project was prepared in June 2021 supporting an overall of financial budget of £4.9m.</p> <p>The specification was based upon a modular building construction which was considered better value than a traditional construction, but more importantly required a shorter time frame and would allow the project to meet the deadline of March 2023.</p> <p>The costing for the agreed design and specification had been refreshed in April 2022 but due to construction material inflation and the identified need for deeper foundation piling, the revised costs had increased to £5.7m being £0.8m in excess of budget.</p> <p>The Vice Principal advised members the specification had since been 'value engineered' to achieve the project budget and the key</p>	



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	<p>proposed amendments were an adoption of an alternative building technique and a reduction of the dimensions of the building by around 90m2.</p> <p>It was noted that the project was on the College's Risk Register and was being monitored by the Audit Committee. The two key risks being related to the build costs and the opening date.</p> <p>Members were asked to note the Capital Project report and recommendation to this committee and agree to recommend the Hampshire SLA and Grant Agreement, including the use of the College Seal, to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>115.6.3</p>	<p>Office for National Statistics (ONS) Announcement to Review the Classification of Colleges The Interim Principal updated members on the recent Office for National Statistics (ONS), announcement to review the current classification of Colleges. Members were reminded that whilst Colleges were effectively private and autonomous, their funding was from public money. The ONS were now seeking to bring Colleges into the orbit of central control and looking at their reclassification.</p> <p>The Skills and Post-16 Education Act, includes objectives to better align the FE and HE funding systems. This is to place employers at the heart of the system by improving productivity and plugging skills gaps through education and training, and to place providers in the statutory FE sector under a duty to review their provision against local needs. This would ensure that providers and learners were supported by effective accountability and grant powers to the Secretary of State to intervene in the event of failure in the statutory FE sector. Members noted the report.</p>	
<p>115.6.4</p>	<p>POLICIES</p>	
<p>115.6.4.1</p>	<p>Financial Regulations Members noted the general housekeeping changes to the Financial Regulations and agreed to recommend them to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>115.6.4.2</p>	<p>Student Finance Support Policy Members noted the changes to the Student Finance Support Policy and agree to recommend it to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>115.6.4.3</p>	<p>Debt Management Policy Members noted the changes to the Debt Management Policy and agree to recommend it to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>115.7</p>	<p>OPERATIONAL MATTERS</p>	



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115.7.1	Student Union Accounts 2021-2022 Members noted the accounts and they were approved. All Members were agreed.	
115.7.2	Student Union Committee minutes of the meeting held on 7, March 2022 Members noted the minutes of 7, March 2022.	
115.7.3	SAFEGUARDING	
115.7.3.1	Minutes of the meeting held on 14, February 2022 Members noted the minutes of 14, February 2022.	
115.7.4	POLICIES	
115.7.4.1	Sub-Contracting Policy Members noted that there were no changes to the Sub-Contracting Policy and agreed to recommend it to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.	Refer to Corporation
115.7.4.2	Fitness to Study Policy Members noted the changes to the Fitness to Study Policy and agree to recommend it to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.	Refer to Corporation
115.8	Evaluation of Meeting Members contributed well to the meeting and the papers were sufficient to inform recommendations and decisions. The length of the meeting was about right with appropriate time spent on agenda items. Members considered they had 'added value' and made appropriate challenge.	
115.9	Any Other Business (to be notified to the Clerk in advance) No other business was raised.	
115.10	Date of next meeting	
	Tuesday, 15 November 2022 at 5.00pm	

Meeting ended at 6.05pm