



## BRIGHTON HOVE AND SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON MONDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025 AT 6.00 PM IN ROOM 538, ELMS BUILDING

**Present:** William Baldwin (Principal), Kirstin Baker (Co-Chair of Governors), Guy Carr (Governor), Jo Davis (Governor), Eve Liu (Governor – Parent), Paul Lovegrove (Governor), Mick McLean (Governor), Marcus Palmer (Governor), Chris Piper (Governor), Simon Porges (Co-Chair of Governors), Jo Redfern-Evans (Governor), Nachi Subramanian (Governor – Parent), Florence Topping (Governor – Support Staff), Tom Trafford (Governor – Teaching Staff), Neil Wells (Governor), Andrew Wright (Governor)

**In attendance:** James Moncrieff (Deputy Principal), Jutta Knapp (Vice-Principal), Alison Cousens (Vice-Principal), Mark Monahan (Vice-Principal), Louise Pennington (GP).

The meeting was quorate.

Kirstin Baker chaired the Meeting.

#### 1.1 Apologies and Welcomes

Apologies were received from: Deya De Brun, Alison Mansell, Dibran Miha Lopez, Wilhelmenia Rantala

Welcomes: New Parent Governors: Eve Liu and Nachi Subramanian

The meeting was quorate.

#### 1.2 Membership Matters – refer S & G Committee minutes below

Based on the recommendations from the Search and Governance Committee meeting held immediately prior to Corporation and reported by Simon Porges (Chair of S & G Committee), the corporation approved the following:

- **Mick McLean (retiring 31/3/2025):** Recommend Geoff Davies (founder of Pivotal Edge AI), as Mick McLean's successor with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 for a 4 year term of office and that he be appointed as a Governor, Member of Resources Committee and Digital Link Governor. It was also noted that he had been introduced to the College as a contact of Mick McLean and had met with Kirstin Baker and Mark Monahan, who had also met 2 other candidates with digital expertise. The Corporation approved this appointment. **ACTION: Kirstin Baker.**
- **Jo Davis (retiring 31/7/2025):** the Corporation were updated on the S & G Committee discussions held, noting that the ideal candidate being sought was a female accountant.
- **Jo Redfern-Evans (retiring 31/12/2025):** a few candidates notified to the S & G Committee will be considered nearer the end of the year.

### 1.3 Minutes of the last Meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 main business (and confidential)

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting. **ACTION: LEP**

### 1.4 Matters Arising

The contents of the action schedule were noted including those actions which had been completed, in progress or would be completed by the date given in the schedule. There were no issue arising.

**1.5 Declaration of Interests** – none, other than declarations recorded by Governors via the annual Declaration of Interests return.

## SECTION 2: STRATEGIC ITEMS

### 2.1

#### a) Principal's Report

William Baldwin introduced his report which was received by the Corporation and the Principal highlighted the key points as recorded below:

- Size of report has been reduced owing to HR matters being reported directly to the Resources Committee, with the Risk Assurance Map included in the Audit papers.
- The majority of the current issues have been included in the Overview and the Student Success section of the Report.
- New Strategic Plan due for next academic year (in place for September 2025). SLT held a strategic planning day last Thursday looking at the timing, content and consultation process, and is proposing that the existing plan framework should be retained and evolved rather than creating a completely new Plan, based on the same key headings and a “contemporary creative learning community”, with various sub-headings under each key area.  
Initially, Students, Staff and Governors will be consulted on SLT’s proposals for the new Strategic Plan. After this there will be a consultation with other stakeholders including Parents. The final draft document will be included in all Governing Body Committee meetings during the Summer term for input, with the aim to approve the final Strategic Plan draft at the July Corporation Meeting. From a governance perspective, this process is proposed, rather scheduling a Strategic Planning event. The Corporation approved SLT’s proposal for updating and consulting on the new Strategic Plan. **ACTION: SLT**
- At this point, reference was made to pre-meeting questions submitted by Jo Redfern-Evans, noting the following.
  - New Ofsted framework – James Moncrieff reported that this had been discussed at the recent SLT Strategy Day and also considered at the latest HoD (Head of Departments) meeting, noting that there were no significant causes for concern. To some extent the pressure placed upon Principals and School Head Teachers has been eased by the removal of 1 single judgement, but the pressure upon Staff and Management to reach the requirements remains in place. Ofsted are adamant that no Provider would achieve the new “exemplary” classification in all areas. Although the framework has been updated to provide 7 categories compared to the previous 4 (excellent replaces outstanding grade), the detail is broadly the same, and the College welcomed the fact that SEND, Economic Disadvantage as well as Vulnerable Students were explicitly documented. The new framework is being piloted at present

and will be brought into effect across the sector from November 2025. There will be no more deep dives into specific curriculum areas and inspectors will accompany SLT and other lead managers to “roam” the college areas generally (ie Learning Walks), talking to managers/teachers/students, attending lessons and reviewing data and will then discuss with Management areas identified as need improvements etc to check that the College is working on the relevant areas and that the offer and working practices, match the College’s ethos.

- It’s difficult to predict when the College’s visit will be under the new framework but it may be as early as next academic year (from November when the new framework will be active).
- Governors were reminded that at the last Ofsted Inspection, under the old framework, the Chair, Safeguarding Lead Governor and Skills Link Governor had been involved in the process, meeting with Inspectors. James Moncrieff provided assurance that support governors in their role. He confirmed that at present a quality cycle template was in the process of being drafted which reflected the new, proposed framework and would be shared with the Governing body in due course, reporting via the Q & C Committee.
- Jo Redfern-Evans offered to provide notes on her recollection of participating in the last Ofsted Meeting with Governors if that would help and share this with James Moncrieff for future reference. **ACTION: JRE**
- Funding – Jutta Knapp confirmed that financially the College was managing the very difficult financial situation, particularly the delay in funding received from the DfE/ESFA and also mentioned the uncertainties for next year – refer Resources Committee papers and discussions below.
- Student Application Numbers for next year: the college is the most oversubscribed it has ever been. At this point in the year, numbers have reduced slightly from Category 1 (Brighton and Hove) Students (approximately 50 Students), despite local demographics increasing, but overall this is very unlikely to impact the College’s overall enrolments for next year, as any shortfall will be covered by enrolling more Category 3 Students. The reduction in city student applications reflects the growth of other local providers (Cardinal Newman and Kings school sixth forms).

## **2.2 Student Governors’ Report**

As neither of the Student Governors were present at their last Governing Body Meeting, there was no report, but reference was made to the Student Governor report given at the Q & C Committee meeting – refer draft minutes.

Thanks were recorded to the Student Governors for their service over the last year.

## **2.3 Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and College Development Plan (CDP)**

### **PAPERS:**

- a) Front Cover Sheet**
- b) Draft SAR 2024-2025 and Curriculum Data**
- c) College Development Plan 2024-2025 Update** (showing progress against the strategic plan)

William Baldwin and James Moncrieff presented the papers, the contents of which were noted and the following headlines were recorded, noting that both documents had been considered at the last Q & C Committee Meeting:

- Reorganisation of the SAR as reported previously, is underway with data systems being set up to ensure accurate data which is available in a timely manner for everyone to use – expected to be fully in place by late August/early September. This also includes historical and benchmarking data and the testing of this for accuracy before it's final. Despite been shared later than usual (December), It was recognised that the new format and content would be extremely useful development and reference document for the College. At this point, James Moncrieff also thanked Chris Piper and Simon Porges for their useful input via Q & C Committee pre-meeting questions/observations, the details of which were being considered and taken forward.
- Corporation endorsed SLT on the work in progress to date regarding the new SAR and James Moncrieff agreed to update Governors via the Q & C Committee including on the new data systems etc, next term. He also added that the College's Progress Central app was no longer being maintained, following the departure of the developer. The replacement of a developer has not occurred as these skills are too advanced for general college needs – hence the move to the new data systems proposal, based on 'off the shelf' online tools, with advice received from Mark Monahan (Vice-Principal – Digital and Communications). **ACTION: James Moncrieff**
- Regarding the update on the SAR since the last meeting, it was confirmed that the SAR had never been required to be submitted to the ESFA and that in line with the Ofsted Handbook, the requirement to submit this to Ofsted by 31st January no longer applied. SFCA has recommended that any College expecting to be inspected in the near future should aim to upload their SAR earlier in the next academic year. James Moncrieff confirmed that the College's aim was to complete the SAR format this year, ready for an early SAR in the Autumn.
- CDP – Governors were reminded that each section had been reviewed by the various Governing Body committees.

## **2.4 Accountability Agreement and Local Needs Duty 2025-2026**

### **Papers: a) Front Sheet, b) Accountability Agreement and Local Needs Duty 2025/2026**

Alison Cousens presented the above document to the Corporation, noting that this had been discussed at Q & C Committee and the following points were recorded:

- Front sheet – provides summative statement towards the end of the document as required, noting the contribution to the local and national skills needs.
- BHASVIC had participated in the pilot for the new agreement when it was introduced – the current document is the third version.
- Despite not being a GFE College, with a heavy vocational provision, the College is able to benefit the local community in certain areas where there are skill deficits.
- The analysis includes the College's assessment of its provision compared to local and national priorities.
- Reference in the document includes strategy and careers/skills over the last few years.
- Section 4 and 5 – reports on action plans from previous years' accountability agreements including updates and progress made.

The document was approved by the Corporation, noting that it would be submitted by the due deadline (attached to and part of the funding agreement). **ACTION: William Baldwin / Jutta Knapp**

## **2.5 EDIMS**

**Presented to Corporation directly (not via Q & C Committee).**

The document was presented by Alison Cousens to the Corporation, noting that this is not now considered by Committee as it extends across a number of them (Q&C, Resources, Search & Governance). The following points were recorded:

- Headlines recorded on the front sheet were noted by Governors.
- Information is based on the local community 2021 census, with comparisons made based on the College's latest data.
- Analysis includes Students, Staff and Governors.
- A recent focus upon neurodiversity in the last 2 years, was discussed with developments made to assist those with neurodiversity, during the recruitment process, was noted.
- Regarding the recruitment of Governors and in order to work on a continuing improvement in diversity, Simon Porges highlighted the fact that the Governor Recruitment and Succession Planning policy had been updated to incorporate EDI references, to enable the governing body to be more representative. However, it was also noted that with only 20 Governors on the Board, it wasn't always possible to achieve all the targeted EDI outcomes.
- Half-termly meetings are held with the core EDI team, who all contribute to the EDIMS report. Governors queried whether there were any particular concerns or issues identified and Alison Cousens advised that currently the team was focusing upon neurodiversity which had been identified as requiring attention and various initiatives and adjustments in the recruitment and selection process of staff were underway including, for example providing extra time for assessments. The team also liaises with various Student focus groups to discuss and resolve any inclusivity issues. It was noted that boys' high grade performance levels continued to be an area of concern (particularly in BTEC) and further work is underway to investigate this and seek solutions, such as making the College's support for those with neurodiversity, more widely known eg via social media etc.
- Alison Cousens will be meeting with the EDI Link Governor, Wilhelmenia Rantala, to go through the analysis.

The Corporation thanked Alison Cousens for the report.

## **SECTION 3: QUALITY, CURRICULUM AND GUIDANCE ITEMS**

### **3.1 Quality & Curriculum Committee 03/03/2025**

**Meeting Papers: Items for Noting (papers available on request or refer to Q & C Committee Team folder)**

- a) **Draft Minutes of Q & C Committee 03/03/25 – noted**

**Items recommended for approval included in section 2 SAR and CDO, Accountability Agreement**

**Risk Register/Assurance – for approval – refer minutes and audit Item 4.2c**

- b) **Items for noting – (papers available on request or refer Committee Team folder):**

- **Principal's Update (Resources and Audit) – oral report refer minutes**
- **Termly Update – Student Governors - oral report – refer minutes**
- **Post 16 Qualifications Review Update**
- **Governor SARAP Visits Validation Feedback – Final Report**
- **Link Governor – termly report (oral) EDI, Safeguarding – refer minutes**

Andrew Wright, Co-Chair of the Q & C Committee, who had chaired the meeting, introduced the Q & C Committee business, including the items for noting and approval and summarised the key issues. The policies recommended by the Committee, included in policies section of meeting pack.

## **SECTION 4: RESOURCES/AUDIT/INTERNAL ASSURANCE ITEMS**

### **4.1 Resources Committee 10/03/25**

**Meeting Papers: Items for Noting (papers available on request or Governors may access the papers directly via the Resources Committee Team folder).**

**Draft Minutes of Resources Committee 10/03/25 – recording discussions held, items for noting and items recommended for approval.**

#### **Items for approval**

- a) i) **Loan Facility: Front Sheet, Report on Facility Agreement, Facility Agreement Certificate, Corporation Resolution**
- b) **Staff Pay**
- c) **Risk Register – refer minutes and audit Item 4.2c – Approved, noting assurances provided to the Committee at the meeting.**

#### **Items for Noting**

##### **Item e) Front cover for Management Accounts and Accounts**

**Other Items for noting (papers available on request or refer Committee Team folder):**

- **Principal's Update (Audit and Q & C Matters) – oral report – refer minutes**
- **Termly Update on HR Issues including Staff Satisfaction Survey analysis (refer minutes and paper available on request/Teams folder)**
- **CDP including Digital Update**
- **Premise Update – oral report – refer minutes**

Marcus Palmer, Chair of Resources Committee presented the meeting papers, together with input from Jutta Knapp and the following points were recorded:

- **Item a) Loan Facility**

Reference was made to the discussions recorded and the recommendations made in the draft minutes, noting that post the ONS reclassification of SFCs from the private to the public sector, that commercial loans were no longer allowed and hence the process involved to transfer the College's existing Lloyds Bank loans to the DfE. Jutta Knapp highlighted the differences between the commercial arrangement and that with the DfE ie better interest rate (reviewed/revised annually) and no bank covenants, but with additional requirements such as submitting management accounts (if requested), providing Corporation minutes along with other reporting obligations as set out in the facility agreement, and noting the College's lawyer (Irwin Mitchell) had provided a comparison of the 2 facility agreements to highlight the differences.

The Corporation approved the new Facility Agreement & Certificate, and Corporation resolution as drafted by Irwin Mitchell, and that the Chair of Governors should sign this and the resolution, together with the sample signatures to be signed by Co-Chairs and Governance Director, which would then be sent to Irwin Mitchell to submit to the DfE.

**ACTION: Co-Chairs/LEP/JHK**

#### **Item b) Staff Pay**

Reference was made to the email to Governors from the Principal sent on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 summarising SLT's proposal on Staff Pay, noting that there were no objections received from Governors:

*"You'll be pleased to hear that Industrial Action has ceased with the implementation of a pay award that pays staff 3.5% from September to March increasing to 5.5% from April to gain parity with academised sixth form colleges.*

*The 3.5% to March is 0.5% above what was in the budget but the additional cost is easily covered by contingency lines. The cost of implementing the additional 0.5% pay increase is £78,000. This is easily covered by the £100,000 contingency as well as the teaching staff 'rounding' contingency of £65,000 (i.e. teaching costs estimated at £10,135k and budget of £10,200k).*

*We would like to pay this for teaching staff in February payroll and back date to September. Support staff are still in negotiation and are likely to accept the same offer which will be agreed in time for March payroll.*

*Implementing any pay award needs approval from Governors, so unless there are any objections from Governors, we are planning to put the 3.5% element through the February/March payroll. Please respond asap if you have any objections to this.*

*We are not asking for approval for the 5.5% at this stage. The formal decision will be taken to March Corporation. The 5.5% from April is more contentious and we do not have the figures yet to show the affordability of this. Therefore this will receive full discussion (hopefully with the relevant figures!) at Resources for approval at Corporation."*

As recorded in the email above, the pay award of 5.5% from 1<sup>st</sup> April is only going to be partially funding by the DfE. However, the DfE have since informed Colleges that the methodology for payment has still to be agreed. The first payment of 3.65% for April to July, was due to be confirmed in March. It was noted that taking into account the figures provided at Resources Committee and included in the Corporation papers, the pay rise was affordable and had been included in the budget for next year. Accordingly, and following the recommendation by the Resources Committee, the Corporation approved the pay rise figures for both 2024/2025, together with the back pay and also the pay rise proposed for 2025/2026. **ACTION: SLT**

#### **Management Accounts – for noting.**

- £45K worse than budgeted owing to reduction in allocation of in year growth funding and late notice regarding this from DfE; Staff pay but still have a projected small surplus for next year. Other impact on the year includes national insurance contribution increase which although initially advised by the DfE that this would be funded, at present the final figures and payment date have not been advised (predicted to be announced in May) and the NI contribution will not be paid until September. It's also likely that the NI contribution will be only 80% of the increase rather than 100% as initially promised. Next year the College is not anticipating a significant increase in student numbers but noting that it had grown by approximately 200 students in the current year and the lagged funding for these students, will be received next year which will help to cover the proportion of the pay rise and NI contribution not funded by the DfE. The significant cost of examinations was noted at this point, with Governors informed that for next year the increase in

exam costs was likely to be in excess of £100K (overall budget approximately £850K).

#### **4.2 Audit Committee 13/03/25**

- a) **Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 13/03/25**
- b) **Auditors' Performance Indicators: front sheet, External Audit, Internal Audit – for approval**
- c) **Risk Register, Assurance Map and assurances from Committees – for approval**

**Meeting Papers: Items for Noting (papers available on request or refer Audit Committee Team folder).**

- **Principal's Report (Q & C, Resources' items) – oral report, refer minutes**
- **Internal Audit Reports: Safeguarding, Payroll and BHSSFC Report 16-19 Financial Support External Firms**
- **Update on Audit Recommendations**
- **Fraud Report (oral – refer minutes)**

Jo Davis, chair of Audit Committee, introduced the various papers and reported that the meeting had been held online via Teams. Documents requiring approval were endorsed by the Corporation including the performance indicators and risk documents. The various other documents listed above, including the internal audit reports were discussed and noted.

### **SECTION 5: GOVERNANCE ITEMS**

#### **5.1 Search and Governance Committee 31/03/25**

**Confidential Minutes – refer item 8.1 – minutes to follow**

Simon Porges provided a summary of the business discussed at the S & G Committee meeting, which had been held immediately prior to the Corporation meeting noting the following points and seeking Corporation approval for the various items requiring approval, as recorded below:

##### **a) Governor Membership Matters – Refer item 1.2**

**Items for Noting** – refer draft confidential minutes (to follow) together with papers (incl. reference documents available in the S & G Teams folder) – available on request or refer Committee Teams folder.

- **Outstanding Annual Returns from Governors – unavailable at the last Meeting – refer draft minutes.**
- **Skills Audit** – a broad cross section of responses was received per category, with no significant gaps in skills or experience, other than those already being sought – eg successor accountant/chair of Audit Committee  
The intention will be to simplify the questionnaire for next year.
- **EDI** – the analysis produced was as prescribed by the DfE as part of the annual workforce survey return required in respect of Staff and Governors – and submitted to the DfE in January 2025. The details were also included in the EDIMs paper presented earlier at the meeting.
- **Individual Governors' Self-Assessment** – individual Governor training needs were identified and would be followed up where options were available; timings of



meetings weren't always convenient for all Governors mainly owing to work commitments.

- **Chairs/Vice-Chair Performance Review** - The input from all Governors' returns was very positive on the new Co-Chair model and work of the Co-Chairs, together with good feedback on the work of the retiring Vice-Chair of Governors (Neil Perry).
- **Code of GG update** – noted.
- **Governance SAR AP including EBR** – noted and that action plan would be updated with target dates for the various actions.
- **AOB – update on Chair/governors' 1 to 1s** – refer minutes.

**ACTION: Chair/LEP**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **SECTION 6: POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**

The Chair informed Governors that no notifications from Members had been received requesting discussion or raising questions regarding any item included within this section and it was resolved to take all items as read and approved.

#### **6.1**

**a) Student Charges Policy for 2026/2027**

**b) Complaints Policy i) Staff, ii) website**

**c) Parent/Carer Emergency Contact Policy**

**d) Data Protection/Privacy Policy** – deferred to next meeting. **ACTION: SLT**

### **SECTION 7: OTHER MATTERS**

#### **7.1 – Any Other Business**

**Last Meeting for Mick McLean and Student Governors.**

**7.2 – Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 at 6.00 p.m. in room 538**

### **SECTION 8: Confidential Business**

#### **8.1 – Confidential Minutes and Papers**

**a) Corporation Minutes 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

The draft minutes were approved and the Chair authorised to sign these. **ACTION: Chair/LEP**

**b) Committees:**

- i) **S & G Committee 31/3/2025 – to follow**
  - **SPHs' PDRs and Remuneration** – approved

**8.2 Matters Arising** – none.

**8.3 Vice-Principal Recruitment** – Selection Panel Recommendations

## **Papers:**

### **Selection Panel Minutes: a) 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and b) 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

The Co-Chairs of Governors provided a summary of the process and recommended outcome for recruiting a successor Senior Post Holder (Vice-Principal) post following Alison Cousens decision to step down from the role.

The Corporation was reminded of process involved including the Corporation's written resolution to appoint the Corporation Selection Panel, included in the papers and the 2 day interview process, involving 5 panels (including Governors). It was noted that of the 19 applicants (internal and external candidates), 6 candidates had been shortlisted,

The Corporation endorsed the various decisions made to date and also approved the recommendation from the Selection Panel that Jess Yung be appointed as Alison Cousen's successor with effect from August 2025.

Congratulations were recorded to Jess Yung and thanks were recorded to Jo Redfern-Evans and Andrew Wright for participating in the Selection Panel, along with Simon Porges and William Baldwin.

It was agreed that William Baldwin would inform Jess Yung and the other candidates of the outcome and also noting that SLT would be organising an interview process to replace Jess Yung as a Head of Faculty.

### **ACTION: Chairs/Principal/LEP**

#### **Other Papers – written resolutions**

- a) **Corporation written resolution to appoint Corporation Selection Panel**
- b) **Corporation Selection Panel written resolution to agree arrangements for selecting applicants for interview**

### **8.5 Any Other Business (Confidential) – None.**

#### **Meeting closed:**

At this point thanks were recorded to Mick McLean as this was his last meeting, for his significant support to the College, within the digital area.

Chair .....

Date .....