

## BRIGHTON HOVE & SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2020 AT 6.00 P.M. VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

Present: Louise Askew (Governor – Parent), William Baldwin (Principal), Gillian Hampden-Thompson (Governor), Julia Holgate Turner (Governor – Support Staff), Amanda Law (Governor – Parent), Mick McLean (Governor), Lynn O’Meara (Governor), Neil Perry (Vice-Chair of Governors), Chris Piper (Governor), Sandra Prail (Chair of Governors), Tom Wolfenden (Vice-Chair of Governors)

In attendance: Alison Cousens (Assistant Principal), Jutta Knapp (Assistant Principal), James Moncrieff (Deputy Principal), Louise Pennington (Clerk)

The meeting was quorate.

Owing to the meeting being held via telephone conferencing, questions on the papers, had been invited from Governors prior to the meeting, which the Principal agreed to answer within his report.

Note: *Questions and Comments from Governors have been included in bold italics for ease of identification.*

#### SECTION 1: ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

Before the main business of the meeting commenced, the Chair explained the protocols for the telephone conferencing meeting, together with housekeeping matters including the following:

- Thanks were recorded to all Governors and SMT for joining the meeting via telephone conferencing.
- House-keeping points: - Governors to put phones on mute when not speaking to reduce background noise, say name before speaking, no repetition from meeting papers and Governors not to feel obliged to speak;
- if the connection fails for the Chair, Tom Wolfenden has agreed to continue to Chair the meeting.
- Consent agenda items to be noted/approved as listed.
- Other items to be taken as read unless there are any questions.
- Questions on the papers were invited to be submitted by Governors prior to the meeting and the Principal will provide answers to these during his report.
- Meeting will focus on priorities with update to be given by the Principal under item 2.1
- Following 2.1, the Chair will make proposals regarding future governance arrangements and provide the various options for Governors to consider and approve.

##### 1.1 Apologies and Welcomes

**Apologies:** Philip Anderson (Governor), Jo Davis (Governor), Ben Franklin (Governor – Student), Neil Jones (Governor – Teaching Staff), John MacLeod (Governor – Student), Chris Newson (Governor), Marcus Palmer (Governor), Jo Redfern (Governor)

##### 1.2 Membership Matters

Nothing further to add since report made at 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

##### 1.3 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020

The minutes were approved by the Corporation and the Chair authorised to sign them as a correct record of the meeting. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

##### 1.4 Matters Arising

All the items on the schedule had been completed or would be completed in due course.

##### 1.5 Declaration of Interest

None.

#### SECTION 2: STRATEGIC ITEMS

- Note provisional date in diary **30<sup>th</sup> April 6.00 p.m.** – as already advised, may not go ahead.

At this point, the Chair invited the Principal to present his Report and update on current issues and developments and recorded the Corporation's thanks to SMT for their superb leadership over the last few weeks and to staff and students for their resilience in adapting to rapidly changing circumstances. Governors noted that the Chair and Principal had been in contact most days to discuss the various issues and operational decisions being made.

## 2.1 Principal's Report

The Principal referred to his report and made the following additional comments:

- Reassurance provided to Governors that the Principal and Chair were liaising regularly via the telephone.
- Principal is in isolation currently owing to cough/cold symptoms in line with Government advice, but continues to work remotely with SMT.
- Thanks recorded to rest of SMT and all Staff for their continued work on site during the Principal's isolation.
- The College started its preparations as early as possible and set in place remote learning information via the Coronavirus page on the website from 10<sup>th</sup> March, with remote working officially commencing on 18<sup>th</sup> March.
- Stakeholders are kept informed via daily notifications on the website, highlighted as a specific link.
- The collapsed timetable to facilitate A2 one to ones provided time for Management to consider options prior to the decision to move to remote learning from Tuesday afternoon last week. This decision was made ahead of the Government's schedule, as there had been some conflicting advice regarding social distancing, but took into account that as a post-16 provider the earlier advice to remain open had to be balanced against risk. The move to remote learning more quickly than other institutions, has been well-received. Two days later all institutions were advised to close with effect from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March and that Summer external examinations would be cancelled.
- BHASVIC has established provision for vulnerable Students (College has approximately 54 Students with EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans) or who have a Social Worker), but the College will not be open for other Students including those who have parents classified as key workers as the Government's advice is to stay at home where possible. The College is refining the provision for vulnerable learners and since Wednesday (following a deep clean of the site), the ground floor of Student Services is being used for 3 hours per day and has been staffed by Deputy and Assistant Principal, with a deep clean of the area at the end of the day. So far only 3 Students have attended. The College will continue to recommend that if it's safe, Students should stay at home, but utilise the College's provision if not. This provision will remain under review and will be stopped if the country moves to a lockdown phase.
- Despite the College being closed, Students (both A1 and A2) are completing their courses via remote learning (live learning, static work and back up) and supported by their Teachers and Tutors. The challenge will be to keep Students engaged until the end of the year.
- Regarding external examinations, advice is awaited from the various Examination Boards in respect of the basis for calculating grade outcomes which will include Teaching judgements plus examination board statistical analysis. Some course specifications have already been completed, so the focus has been on consolidating work, other courses need to complete the syllabus. Staff are working hard to ensure Students remain engaged, but further work needs to be done, once the details have been released by the Examination Boards, so that systems and expectations can be set out with regard to awarding final grades.
- Grade outcomes – overall predictions will be in line with last year's headline results and Teaching Departments will be asked to predict grades in line with last year's headline results - so the grade profile will be the same and the institution's value added will also be recognised.
- Not all Support Staff are able to work remotely.
- Key operational risks include admissions, particularly in light of the fact the following: no first year A1 exams, so the second year enrolments will be bigger than usual (normally lose 2.5%); new first year Student intake is also likely to be greater, with a larger conversion rate, as no GCSE results – consequential issues will be accommodation and teaching capacity. SMT has already held initial discussions to discuss how best to manage this, also taking into account the fact that the new building will almost certainly not be ready in light of Covid-19; SMT has a conference call with the Project Manager and contractors, scheduled for tomorrow morning. Another risk area includes Teacher recruitment – currently 5-6 appointments have been advertised and these will be processing via video conferencing rather than face to face interviews. SMT aim to have all posts filled by September.
- College finances – assurance has been provided by the Government that 16-19 allocation income will be protected for the remainder of this academic year. Regarding income and expenditure, catering income will be reduced, whilst the College won't be spending its expected examination board fees; adjustments will be made in due course, respect of the year end position.

At this point the Principal answered the questions submitted by Governors prior to the meeting, recorded as follows:

QUESTION: welfare and impact on learning – do we have any data on number of people (staff, teachers, students) who are/have self-isolated and/or have been diagnosed with Covid-19?

- ANSWER: Staff – as at Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 44 Staff were self-isolating, which helped support the decision to close the College. Student data on self-isolation was also gathered but only for 1 day, to provide an indicator of the issue to aid SMT decision making regarding College closure. Currently there is no direct diagnosis of anyone in the BHASVIC community, having Covid-19, although the College is aware of a parent who has been diagnosed. Staff and Students have been asked to report illness/self-isolation.

QUESTION: What support/approaches are we able to provide Learners and Teachers on dealing with being more isolated than normal (including helping Managers manage remotely from their Staff)?

- ANSWER: Details have been provided on the website via updates from James Barton (Guidance Manager) with links included in 1 of the daily updates, which is directed towards Students' wellbeing and also formulating advice for Managers on remote working.

QUESTION: Strike days?

- ANSWER: All strike days have now been completed totalling 6 this academic year. A ballot for further strike days was proposed, but in the circumstances, this may not be progressed.

QUESTION: What is BHASVIC's requirement to provide a safe space and how are we planning to meet that?

- ANSWER: Refer above minute in respect of vulnerable learners.

QUESTION: Examinations – Have seen initial advice on how results will be awarded, with extra work required by Teachers – are there any views on the impact upon Teachers and what control framework is likely to be introduced to ensure fair and consistent outcomes across the College?

- ANSWER: Refer above minute on examination information.

QUESTION: IT – with remote working is there any additional pressure on the IT infrastructure? Any indications of areas of pressure? How are Staff getting on with the IT? Are there any actions to take?

- ANSWER: Management's view is that the College's IT has held up well over the last 3-4 days, with no issues aware of regarding access etc. However, there were some risk areas identified e.g. some IT Staff unable to access site to re-set servers and as a consequence, solutions have been established to cater for this i.e. doubling up of access rights. Governors were also given assurance that during lockdown, IT staff could access the building and re-start equipment where necessary.

QUESTION: arising from Principal's report – additional member of CIS to provide in year data.

- assume Capita will not be developing Advantage?.
- ANSWER: SMT has assumed that Capita will not be developing Advantage to suit the College's requirements, and the College is currently seeking to appoint a new member of CIS staff – to date no applications have been received, so this will be reviewed in due course.

At this point the Chair invited further questions arising from the Corporation business and there were no further questions.

Thanks were recorded to the Principal for his report and update and as advised at the start of the meeting, the Chair reported on options for interim governance arrangements, during the Coronavirus crisis, including routine business and decision making, as reported below:

- 1) Continue with telephone or video conferencing meetings which would mean that all Governors would be involved but requiring a quoracy of 8. The limitations of this were also noted regarding the numbers involved in a single conference call.
- 2) E mailed written resolutions which are normally used for single item approval of decisions with yes/no answers – 10 governors required as a minimum, representing a simple majority.
- 3) Delegate decision making and routine discussion and create a focal point for governance and SMT reports by establishing a small group of Governors to meet virtually. Post the meeting, updates would be circulated by e mail to all Governors and should important decision making be required, papers could be circulated prior to meetings, to enable questions to be submitted by Governors pre-meeting; proposed Group size – Chair, Vice-Chairs, Principal and Chair of Q & C Committee; with option to substitute members with other Governors, should the designated Members be incapacitated.

Governors were invited to comment on the proposals and it was unanimously agreed to support the Chair's recommendation to establish an interim Committee as detailed in item 3) above, with terms of reference to be prepared. **ACTION: Sandra Prail/Louise Pennington**

Furthermore, it was also resolved unanimously, on the recommendation of the Chair with reference to the Premises item on the agenda, that the Premises Group (Sandra Prail (Chair), William Baldwin (Principal and Governor), Tom

Wolfenden (Vice-Chair of Governors) and Mark Snape (co-opted Member) should continue to act on behalf of the Governing Body in reviewing and considering issues and be delegated with decision making powers in respect of the Capital Project, including the bank loan agreements in relation to the Project. As agreed in point 3) above, the option to substitute members with other Governors would also be applied, should those designated Members be incapacitated.

**ACTION: Sandra Prail/Jutta Knapp**

## **2.2 Student Governors' Report**

As no Student Governors had joined the meeting, no formal report was given, but it was noted that the outcome from the SU Election process, was awaited.

Thanks were recorded to Ben Franklin and John MacLeod for their excellent work over the last year.

## **2.3 College Development Plan 2019/2020 – sections 1-4**

## **2.4 BHASVIC Annual Report 2018/2019**

Both items 2.3 and 2.4 were taken as read and no further questions were received from Governors

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

Refer section 2 above.

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

### **4.1 Management Accounts**

Nothing further to add or update prepared since the version presented to the Special Corporation meeting via Resources Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020. noted

### **4.2 Premises Update**

#### **a) Bank Loan Resolutions**

Governors were informed that a virtual Premises Group Meeting may be convened later in the week, with a detailed update due to be issued to Governors following the meeting; alternatively the Premises Group members will continue to receive regular updates via email and convene a virtual meeting as necessary.

### **4.3 Risk Management**

**Risk Register (Risk Assurance Map included in Principal's Report) - approved**

## **SECTION 5: GOVERNANCE ITEMS**

Refer Search and Governance Committee item below 6.2 and 8.1 bi

## **SECTION 6: CONSENT AGENDA**

The items listed within the consent agenda requiring approval were endorsed by the Corporation, noting that no issues had been raised by Governors prior to the meeting. No further issues were raised at the meeting, on the invitation of the Chair. The papers approved were as follows:

### **POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**

**6.1 Student Charges Schedule – approved.**

### **COMMITTEE MINUTES AND OTHER MATTERS FOR NOTING – all noted**

**6.2 Search and Governance Committee 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

The items considered at the meeting were noted and reference was also made to the confidential draft minutes included in item 8 bi below.

**6.3 Quality and Curriculum Draft Minutes 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The contents of the draft minutes and Committee business were noted.

**6.4 Resources Committee Draft Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

Reference was made to the business conducted at the Committee meeting held earlier in the evening of 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020, to which all Governors had been present and to the draft minutes which recorded the detail.

**6.5 Audit Committee Draft Minutes**

It was recorded that the Audit Committee meeting had been cancelled.

**SECTION 7: OTHER MATTERS**

**7.1 Any Other Business**

The Corporation recorded its thanks to SMT and Staff for their hard work and commitment over the last 10 days or so.

The Chair invited Governors to telephone her, should they have any questions or want to talk about the current situation.

**7.2 Date of Next Meeting**

**To be confirmed – MONDAY 6TH JULY 2020 at 6.00 p.m.**

**SECTION 8: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS – refer to separate minutes. - noted**

- a) **Corporation Special Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 – included in main business minutes, refer item 1.3**
- b) **Committees: - Noted**
  - i) **Search and Governance Committee 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020**
  - ii) **Resources Committee 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020**
  - iii) **Quality and Curriculum Committee 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The meeting ended at 6.34 p.m.

CHAIR.....

Date.....