



**BRIGHTON HOVE AND SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022 at 6.00 P.M. – Room 20, Main Building**

Present: Raphaella Badua (Governor – Student), William Baldwin (Governor/Principal), Gillian Hampden-Thompson (Governor and Chair of Q & C Committee), Kathryn MacVarish (Governor – Teaching Staff), Ava Peevers (Governor – Student), Chris Piper (Governor), Jacquie Punter (co-opted Teaching Staff Member and Digital Director), Jo Redfern (Governor), Andrew Wright (Governor)

Chris Piper joined the meeting virtually via Teams.

In attendance: Sandra Prail (Chair of Governors), Alison Cousens (Assistant Principal – Student Services), James Moncrieff (Deputy Principal), Louise Pennington (Governance Director/Clerk), Nikki Fabry (Guidance Manager) – for item 2.1 Student Destinations' Report

The meeting was quorate.

***NOTE: FOR EASE OF REFERENCE QUESTIONS (AND RESPONSES) AND COMMENTS FROM GOVERNORS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN BOLD ITALICS***

## **SECTION 1: ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS**

### **1.1 Apologies and Welcomes**

Apologies: Louise Serpell (owing to illness) – The Committee Chair confirmed that she had spoken to Louise earlier in the day and had received some feedback which she'd report within the relevant items during the meeting.

Welcomes: Student Governors: Raphaella Badua and Ava Peevers and Nikki Fabry – item 2.1

### **1.2 Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022**

The minutes were considered and approved by the Committee and the Chair authorised to sign them.

**ACTION: Chair**

### **1.3 Matters Arising**

The contents of the actions' schedule were considered and updates were provided as recorded below, in respect of on-going and completed actions. It was noted that the schedule would be updated for the next meeting.

- Governors' connections and Engagement Strategy: The Principal confirmed that he had updated the College's document to include contact information provided by some Governors and thanked Governors for these.
- ***Referring to item 2.2 and the question from Chris Piper, emailed before the meeting, James Moncrieff reported on a project with Godalming College was developing where the intention is to take this forward via the S7 Colleges' Quality and Curriculum Network, creating a data set for benchmarking curriculum areas; this would be particularly useful for Colleges involved in this, where there aren't already national benchmarking data available eg in attendance.*** Furthermore, this would be a useful comparator owing to the SFC

nature of those involved in this consortium. *In response to a follow up question from Governors, querying whether this would be extended to FE Sussex Colleges, James Moncrieff reported that in the first instance the SFC benchmarking analysis was the priority as the data would be more relevant when comparing similar Colleges' curriculum areas, but that thought could be given in the future to extend this, in light of the new Skills agenda.*

- Draft Social Mobility Strategy – It was noted that the Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal were progressing the draft document and that KPIs and outcome information would be available following the Summer Term. **ACTION: JAM/AMC** Additionally, a social mobility working group has been established.
- EDI SARAP – The Assistant Principal confirmed that the actions were all in progress and that the equality impact assessment document would be finalised this term, ready for roll-out from September. The EDI data required to inform next year's SARAP actions will be available after enrolment, at which point an Autumn Term update would be provided to Governors. **ACTION: AMC**
- Admissions Policy – James Moncrieff confirmed that the equality impact assessment will be completed next academic year, in time for the next policy update which would need to be published in Summer 2023. Governors were interested to see what student numbers were categorised with special considerations and/or sibling link in the Autumn Term, after this round of admissions had finished.

**1.4 Declaration of Interests** - None declared.

#### **1.5 Principal's Update – Summer Term 2022**

William Baldwin reported the following updates to Governors as summarised below, after which questions were invited from the Committee and noting that this report had been generated originally as a result of Covid 19 and the impact upon the College; the latest full Principal's Update also duplicate information provided within the CDP, but would be useful to other Governing Body Committees, which don't receive the CDP directly.

#### **Exams**

The current cohort has never sat public exams and whilst the Staff has worked hard to prepare Students, the anxiety is palpable. There has been a level of uncertainty and additional workload around exams and contingency arrangements, at all levels of college staff (from teachers to senior leaders), but there is confidence that the College has done very well to support and prepare our Students. There have been some issues with invigilators where there have been shortfalls this year (partly owing to Covid), so Staff have had to stand in where needed. Overall the examinations' experience this year has been very smooth.

#### **Skills Duty**

The Skills Act has received Royal Assent and places a duty on College Boards to ensure the curriculum contributes to meeting local skills needs. Boards have a duty to review this and Ofsted will also be looking closely at it. We are working with the AoC and the DfE to look at what this might mean for mainly academic organisations. The Principal advised that he had drafted a 'review' paper for feedback. Post-16 school and Academy providers are not required to do the same under this duty which is a further frustration.



The duty on Corporations is to ensure that Colleges meet local skills' needs, and Sixth Form Academies do not have to meet this requirement, placing more pressure of SFCs, the latter of which will be required to review their curriculum every 3 years and Ofsted Inspectors will also investigate this aspect during their inspections. SFCs are working with the DfE to ensure that the academic Sixth Form Colleges are properly understood and given concessions to reflect their academic focus.

The Principal reported that part of this duty related to collaborative working in the area and he reminded Governors of the on-going work with FE Sussex including the Strategic Development Fund and the successful first round bid (Green Skills and in particular leading on Carbon Literacy qualifications). FE Sussex second round bid has unfortunately seen the Sixth Form College element rejected; this was based on an initiative related to the digital skills gaps, with the aim to focus upon generic digital skills. The DfE have stated that they would be more interested in direct digital upskilling of digital skills related to specific roles in the local economy, so further discussions are underway.

The Committee noted the duty placed upon the Governing Body with effect from September 2022 and also that there would be an enhanced inspection framework to incorporate this aspect into the existing framework. The Chair of Governors reported that the Ofsted Preparedness Group would be meeting again in September to discuss this additional duty, requirements (how the College is meeting local/national skills needs and how this will be measured) and how Ofsted will measure this; it was also noted that Jo Redfern would be invited to join the meeting. Further guidance is awaited regarding the detail, particularly in respect of SFCs (work experience, preparing students' pathways etc).

The Principal, along with other local Principals, will be meeting with the Skills Minister next week and will raise SFC related issues.

### **Resignations and Recruitment:**

We have had very high levels of late-notice teacher resignations, as well as more than usual numbers of resignations at Easter. Coupled with the usual range of long-term absences and routine churn, some departments have had a very tricky year to be able to provide all the cover needed in-year. We are still actively recruiting beyond the teacher notice period and have five positions to fill, with potentially at least a couple more that might appear. We may have to implement some unpalatable contingencies at enrolment if we are unable to fill any of these positions – we will have solutions; they would just be far from optimal.

### **Reclassification of colleges**

ONS is reviewing whether colleges should be classified as private or public sector organisations. FE Colleges are currently classified within the private sector (re-classified since 2009). If Colleges are moved to public sector classification, it result in some positive outcomes, including claiming VAT on spend and receiving funding increases. The downside would be that public sector organisations cannot currently hold debt, take out loans etc, which could have an impact on the College's future estates' development plans eg removal of the "temporary portacabins" and replacing these with a new building.

### **1.6 Termly Update - Student Governor Perspectives**

The Student Governors gave the following update to Governors based on feedback gained from Students which included references to the following subjects: a) SU/Ambassador Activity, b) Student Wellbeing, c) Student Studies and d) Examinations:

- **Trains, Strikes and Exams** – Students' who have exams on the strike days, eg Maths, have expressed concern about getting to College and whether there was any help available or concessions which could be granted. In response, SLT advised that as in previous years,

Students across the Country will be expected to make contingency plans to ensure they can get to College on that day, with no special considerations likely to be granted, by the respective examination awarding bodies/JCQ. Any Student who will have problems with this, should contact their tutor/teacher to see if there is any support available (financial support re taxi etc – but within the confines of a very limited College budget). SLT are preparing a communication to Students explaining the situation and expectations regarding attending exams, and this will be issued once further information has been issued by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications). Input has also been made by the SFCA. The first strike day clashes with a Maths Exams in the morning, involving 499 candidates. It was noted that there would be no possibility of changing the date of the Maths (or any other exam) nationally, although unlikely, there may be some flexibility with regard to the College's own re-sit exams for first year Students, depending upon numbers. Any Student who arrives late for the examination, will be allowed to sit the examination so long as they arrive before the end of the examination. A communication regarding the above details will be issued to Students shortly. **ACTION: JAM**

The Student Governors reported that most Students were apprehensive about exams and first year students would welcome more practice in formal exam conditions, including in large venues (Hall etc) to assist Students in managing anxiety. In response to a question, it was confirmed that the year 1 examination results would be released at midday (start of lunch time) and SLT agreed to prompt Tutors to check that Students were aware of this. **ACTION: JAM**

***At this point a question from Governors was raised regarding the invigilators, querying whether there had been any issues or concerns reported. It was noted that there had been several new invigilators this year, owing to the need to have more, but all had received training and that any issues had been quickly addressed at the beginning of the examination season.***

- **Student Mental Health** – reference was made to the Student referral system to see a Counsellor and highlighted the long waiting list, querying whether there were other places to go. In response Alison Cousens confirmed that as reported at previous Governing Body meetings, there was a very high demand for this service, and although the College had employed additional Guidance and Safeguarding Staff to help improve the demand, it was not possible to extend the service any further at the moment and noting that the Counselling service had been suspended last term owing to an ever-increasing waiting list. However, she did report that external online counselling support had been initiated for Students and that sign posting information to other agencies which can provide support to Students, has also been circulated. It was noted that Students preferred face to face counselling, rather than online counselling. On the whole, despite being short staffed in the safeguarding area, the College has been able to maintain its emergency services and it was also noted that this was a national issue, but that additional resource, including a new Mental Health caseworker, is being allocated at College to this area in order to improve this.

***At this point the Principal asked the Student Governors whether A1 Students felt that they were getting a diverse College experience, other than study and examinations and both confirmed that there was a good social life, with a broad selection of enrichment activities.***

The Student Governors reported that the information shared via the College' TV Screens weren't as useful for all Students as they were not always in the right place at the right time to see the information on the screens. However, Jacquie Punter advised that the College was launching the BHASVIC App,



incorporating a news real and on request from the Student Governors, she agreed to share it with them to test this, prior to the formal launch. **ACTION: Jacquie Punter**

## SECTION 2: CURRICULUM AND GUIDANCE ITEMS

### 2.1 a) Student Destinations' Report – presented by Nikki Fabry (Guidance Manager)

Alison Cousens introduced Nikki Fabry to the Committee and made reference to the Document front sheet, in particular drawing attention to Government data on page 13. It was noted that the benchmark date listed for January 2022 was in respect of 2019 Student Leavers, being the latest available nationally at the time which shows that the College is broadly in line or above the benchmarks. The College's progression score is a "-2" which is average, having been "0" last year (a link to the calculation of the score is included in the report) and the College will be doing some further investigation into this. The College also focuses on the UCAS, HESA and our own internal data for the main destinations report, which is more up to date.

Nikki Fabry presented the Report and highlighted various aspects as follows:

- Executive Summary – page 18
- Reference was made to questions received prior to the meeting from Chris Piper and in response the following points were made: -
  - "Page 10 Destination of Male A2 Students – there is a very high level of unknowns in 2021 – what is the reason for this?" – in response Nikki Fabry explained that the figure of 25% given was a typographical error and that the actual percentage was 1.33%.
- There was a significant increase in ALS (Additional Learning Support) Students taking a gap year. It was also noted that Students classified as "widening participation" were less likely to take a gap year.
- Page 45 error offers to Cambridge and Oxford were listed the wrong way round with 32 Cambridge (29 accepted). ***In response to a question from the Committee, Nikki Fabry explained that in some instances a few Students did not accept their Oxbridge offers (preferring to accept alternative offers eg Bristol University).***
- A piece of work has been carried out within Guidance on early leavers to determine reasons behind those leaving BHASVIC early to enrol at other SFCs or School Sixth Form, to see if there are any other supporting measures which could be introduced to retain those Students. However, no obvious trends were identified.
- Further work is intended to be carried out on tracking Students' future employment paths, which is more difficult to do compared to higher education destinations (where there is UCAS data available) and for the former, the College will have to establish its own internal data set and encourage more ex-students to declare this information.
- ***Governors referred to page 5 and regarding key actions for next year including development of better data sets, in relation to the Careers Strategy Jo Redfern stated that it would be useful to see what data sets are being looked at and related information (comparisons, actions etc). In response Nikki Fabry reported that the work was being collated by the CIS team, with the intention of tracking Student intentions, changes and the consequential impact, following meetings with the Careers Advisor etc.***
- The intention to recruit an additional staff member was welcomed, to enable a greater focus to be made upon the various statistical analysis described above.
- ***In response to a question regarding the Student information collected with regard to their future aspirations, the Assistant Principal reported that the current software (Advantage)***

***was unable to track and process the information which the College is seeking and currently further investigations are underway to consider other software/commercial tools for this purpose.***

- The Committee recognised the outcomes achieved by the Students, particularly the Oxbridge (highest non-selective SFC in Country), together with the fact that disadvantaged Students also had a greater chance of receiving an offer, compared to other Colleges, reflecting the ethos at BHASVIC for all Students to achieve their best. It was also noted that once Students progress to HE, their retention rates are higher (together with degree grade awarded) compared to other SF providers. It was also noted that BHASVIC, along with other SFC, received contextual offers from good Universities such as Bristol and Exeter. SLT emphasised the focus on independent learning, study skills and IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) provided by the College, the latter of which also meant that the majority of Students chose the right courses.
- The Committee encouraged SLT to use the key aspects of the report within their marketing material

## **2.1 b) Annual Report from Careers' Lead Governor, Jo Redfern**

Jo Redfern gave her presentation informing Governors of various careers' related activities in which she'd participated over the last 6 months, including those on site and externally, such as regular meetings with Alison Cousens, Amex and other locally organised events, Coast to Capital events, engaging with the College's stakeholders, all of which provided very positive feedback about the College and its Students. Good feedback had also been received from the 2 local Universities (Brighton and Sussex).

Both Alison Cousens and Jo Redfern have been invited to speak at a local Careers Conference at Crawley College, about working with Governors and establishing a careers' strategy.

Despite the positive feedback received to date, it was recognised that there was more to be done to meet the College's Careers plans and expectations from the regulators and Ofsted.

The Committee was informed that Alison Cousens and Nigel Fisher (Head of Student Experience) would be meeting with Jo Redfern on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022, to look at the College's Careers' Strategy with a view to updating and improving this.

Future developments include the work to progress engagement with Employers, which will be progressed after the Strategy Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, noting that account will be taken of the Governor contacts and networks which had been provided by some Governors earlier in the year.

Jo Redfern was thanked for her update and it was agreed that it would be useful to have a Careers' Update from her at each termly Q & C Committee Meeting. **ACTION: Jo Redfern**

At this point, Nikki Fabry was thanked for her report and she left the meeting.

## **2.2 College Development Plan – Spring Update – the contents of the paper were taken as read.**

- a) Quality of Education**
- b) Behaviour and Attitude**
- c) Personal Development**
- d) Leadership and Management**

James Moncrieff highlighted the key points and also noted the yellow highlighted sections which indicates the targets upon which to focus.



The Committee acknowledged the useful Executive Summary which highlighted the pertinent points for this term and the contents of the full Report were taken as read.

## **a) Quality of Education**

Reference was made to the teaching staff vacancies and recruitment processes, which is not yet fully reflected in the risk assessment being an emerging issue. It was noted that recruitment was a national issue including later notice being given by Teaching Staff leaving in some instances. To date no applications have been received for the Economics' Teacher vacancy, along with various other vacancies, some of which are proving difficult to fill. HR is working with SLT to develop plans, revise job adverts etc, in order to encourage more applications. However, it was reported that there may be some vacancies at the start of the new academic which could have an impact on the curriculum offer and flexibility available to Students in enrolling on certain courses which would have an impact on this year's enrolments but also filter through to impact year 2.

***Governors queried how the Flourish programme was going and whether it was making a difference and James Moncrieff advised that Flourish Co-ordinator was working on student voice and he and they would create an outcomes report after summer exam results – including value added, retention, achievement.***

## **b) Section 2 Behaviour and Attitude:**

***The Chair raised a question from one of the Governors relating to the relaunched tutorials and Alison Cousens explained that this was in fact a relaunch of the attendance follow-up, which was done every half term as an attendance review exercise; once the review has been completed, tutors follow this up with individual Students as necessary. She explained that the original relaunch (following the suspension owing to Covid) had been due to commence in January, but had been delayed until the last half term. The reasoning behind this exercise is based on the fact that first year Students have not been faced with the College's usual focus upon attendance (on line lessons etc), and that the College wanted to raise awareness of the importance of attending and expectations from Students in preparation for their second year. Parents will also be kept informed via the new Parents information evening.***

***Regarding a question raised about the new employee engagement post, Alison Cousens confirmed that there were 2 new posts – Events and Enrichment Manager - last year the post had been a part time co-ordinator, but taking into account the need to provide the additional 40 GLH (Guided Learning Hours), including events days and work experience opportunities, a full time, full year Manager post was needed. The second role is a guidance support administrator required to support the work experience plans and careers' developments within the College; the posts are being advertised currently and the College has received 2 strong candidates for the first role, but none yet for the second.***

***The Chair referred to page 21 and the item on employability and enrichment experience and target etc, noting the significant workload and from a governance perspective, queried whether the College had sufficient resources in place for this. In response Alison Cousens confirmed that additional Staff had been appointed, although recently the Careers' Team had been short staff owing to Staff illness.***

***The Committee referenced the note on page 24 and suggested that Jo Redfern's feedback as Careers' Lead Governor, given earlier in the meeting, could be incorporated into the record. ACTION: Alison Cousens***

***Governors referenced the AoC's recent Research Action visit, with the aim of looking at the College compared to the national perspective and it was confirmed that they had been impressed with the College's activities to date, based on information and feedback provided by 2 focus groups – 1 staff and 1 students. They also met with Alison Cousens and Nigel Fisher. It was reported that specific measurable criteria had not been identified at this stage in the process, but that developments would be made to progress this into a measurable process.***

**c) Section 3 Personal Development:**

Alison Cousens reported on her work with Andrew Wright's input (Action Your Potential and Safeguarding Link Governor), on a wellbeing package for Students from enrolment until they leave the College. A Safe and Wellbeing FE Survey was issued this half term which provides some useful benchmarking data, although it has a limited input from other Colleges.

The College has been working on Staff sustainability knowledge, again via an initial survey with the intention of ensuring that all Staff are engaged in sustainability; some also completing the carbon literacy qualification (optional). Teaching Staff are particularly interested in taking forward sustainability developments via their own curriculum areas. Sustainability will be incorporated in to the SARAP exercise and will be included within Staff PDR (Professional Development Review) and the intention will be to develop this area over the next few years.

SLT acknowledged the urgent accommodation review in light of the Student numbers and additional needs arising from the provision of the 40 additional GLHs per student for next year. At this point, Katharine McVarish endorsed this, adding that there was often a lack of space as a Tutor to complete 1 to 1 Reviews with Students. SLT is planning to create new spaces over the Summer with more 1 to 1 rooms being provided.

The Principal reported on the proposal to introduce a 6 classroom temporary modular Portacabin double story block (to replaces huts 5 and 6) over the Summer term, as a stop gap to development plans and seeking funding (when bids become available), to build an urgently needed new building. A space utilisation audit has been carried out on site, which demonstrates that the College is above the average for class room utilisation in the sector. The temporary block is subject to planning permission and the intention is that the block will fit between the current Student Services and Huts 9-12. Overall this will provide a net increase of 3 classrooms, together with office accommodation.

**d) Section 4 Leadership and Management:** - the contents of this section were noted, with no questions received from Governors.

**2.3 Study Programme Enhancement (Additional 40 GLH)**

The contents of the paper were noted by the Committee and the following points recorded:

- Executive Summary points noted, including reference to the additional funding being provided by the Government – 40 hours required to be provided per Student by the College with effect from the next academic year, with 30 hours of funding received, but with strict criteria for the additional 40 GLH provided; this equates to 580 FTE hours per Student and representing approximately £1.2M additional income. There is some flexibility in how the additional funding is utilised within the criteria set and all hours must be planned and supervised etc.
- Some of the funding will be used to provide work experience options for Students.
- Regarding the flexibility within the criteria, it was noted that so long as the average Student was received 580 hours, some shortfall can be explained by the College in its submission to the funding





agency, justifying how the overall additional hours have been met and that meaningful provision has been given to Students. There will be no claw back of unused funds and the additional provision will also not be audited by the funding body/FE Commission Team.

- This additional funding will be offered for 3 years until the next spending review.
- The Student Governors queried how the timetable would change and James Moncrieff explained that within each Student's timetable there would be space to provide the additional hours including workshops (rather than additional lessons), curriculum delivery and support/guidance options. After the first year of running this, SLT will review the process and offer and revise it as necessary. The impact on teaching staff is in effect 4 additional hours per 1 teacher and the various Heads of Department will resolve the provision to be offered within their courses provided. The main limited will be on site space and it was reported that next year there will be twilight examination options but that there wouldn't be space/time for all departments to utilise this during the year – this aspect has also still to be resolved and finalised.

## 2.4 Quality and Curriculum – AoC New Network for Committee Chairs

The Chair reported that she had been invited to the new AoC network and that in her absence on this occasion, Chris Piper had attended and provided feedback, including 2 documents uploaded to the Q & C Team for all Governors to view. It was noted that 30 Committee Chairs/Vice-Chairs joined the online network meeting and discussions were held on various subjects including curriculum delivery, development, LSIP. However, the emphasis of the meeting was focuses towards GFEs rather than SFCs.

At this point the Committee raised the issue of the role of SFCs in meeting local skills' needs and it was noted that this would be one of the topics to be discussed at the next Governors' Ofsted briefing in September.

## 2.5 Risk Assurance

James Moncrieff presented the document to the Committee and the following points were recorded:

In summary, the Deputy Principal reported that all risks were below the threshold so there were no specific issues to discuss.

In response to a question from Governors regarding admissions, James Moncrieff confirmed that overall the College was oversubscribed this year and that compared to last year the category 3 numbers were lower, but more in line with previous years. In the current year the College enrolled an extra 150 Students above the original target. This year, owing to the additional Students recruited last year, there will be less flexibility and fewer A1s will be enrolled, compared to last year – the impact of this will be felt in the category 3s, with fewer offers being made.

Assurances from this Committee in respect of risks associated with Q & C, will be fed back to the next Audit Committee. **ACTION: James Moncrieff**

## SECTION 3: CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were taken as read and endorsed where necessary, subject to the questions included in the items and recorded below.

### Policies and other Documents

It was recorded that there were no policies or other documents for consideration at this meeting.

SECTION 4: OTHER ITEMS

4.1 Any Other Business

a) Committee Annual Self-Assessment and Review of Committee Terms of Reference

The questions were considered by the Committee and there were no issues arising from these and nothing further was suggested to improve the Committee’s operations, training needs etc.

The Chair invited the Committee members to feedback any further thoughts after the meeting to her or LEP. **ACTION: Committee Members**

4.2 Date of Next Meeting – to be confirmed.

**SECTION 5: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**TRANSFERED TO CONFIDENTIAL (PINK) MINUTE** – refer separate confidential record.

5.1 Confidential Minutes from the Last Meeting – approved

5.2 Matters Arising - None

5.3 Termly Safeguarding Report

Andrew Wright, the Designated Safeguarding Lead Governor, presented his report to Governors – refer appendix to the confidential Minutes.

5.4 Any Other Business (Confidential Matters) - None

Chair.....Date.....