



**BRIGHTON HOVE AND SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3RD MARCH 2021 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS – VIRTUAL MEETING**

Present: William Baldwin (Principal), Gillian Hampden-Thompson (Governor and Chair of Q & C Committee), Neil Jones (Governor – Teaching Staff), Ana MacEvilly (Governor – Student), Chris Piper (Governor), Jacquie Punter (co-opted Teaching Staff Member and Digital Director), Jo Redfern (Governor), Louise Serpell (Governor – Parent), Lucas Watkin (Governor – Student), Andrew Wright (Governor)

In attendance: Sandra Prail (Chair of Governors), Simon Porges (Parent Governor and Audit Committee Member), Alison Cousens (Assistant Principal – Student Services), James Moncrieff (Deputy Principal), Louise Pennington (Governance Director/Clerk), Anton Braun and Jiayue Laing – Student Observers.

The meeting was quorate.

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

***Governors had been invited to submit questions arising from the papers, prior to the meeting via M. Teams, so that all Committee members could view these.***

The meeting commenced with a 20 minutes Safeguarding training session presented by Alison Cousens and a recording was made which would be uploaded to the Governors' VLE and shared with all Governors. It was also noted that Governors' had been asked to refer to the KCSiE September 2020 Part 1 Document (on the Governors' VLE) and also the Prevent Duty Guidance for FE (included as a link in the e mail to Committee Members circulated prior to the meeting).

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

### **1.1 Apologies and Welcomes**

Apologies: Neil Perry – HR lead Governor (attendee)

Welcomes: Louise Serpell (Governor – Parent) and Andrew Wright (Governor), both of whom had also attended the Q & C briefing in February 2021.

The two Student Union observers were also welcomed to the meeting, noting that they had applied to take over the Student Governor role, subject to the formal SU election process: Anton Braun and Jiayue Liang. It was noted that they would be present until the end of the main business.

Simon Porges (new Parent Governor) was also welcomed, noting that he was joining as an observer as part of his induction process.

Andrew Wright joined the meeting at 6.30 p.m.

### **1.2 Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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

The Minutes from Corporation Meeting (Strategic Event) held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021 which had been included for reference purposes, were also noted.

Reference was also made to the previously circulated notes from Q & C Briefing held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 together with any follow up questions submitted via the circulated padlet and reported by the Chair and Deputy Principal.

### **1.3 Matters Arising**

The contents of the actions' schedule were considered and it was agreed that the updates would be recorded in the next version, noting also that the actions which had been completed since the last meeting, would be removed from the schedule. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

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

### **1.5 Covid-19 Update**

William Baldwin gave his report to Governors with an update regarding Covid, since his last report on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (Q & C Briefing) and recording the following:

- Latest College Covid Dashboard has been included within item 2.2 CDP below.
- Plans are underway to enable Students and Staff to return on 8<sup>th</sup> March, with Covid testing facilities in place as per the Government guidelines. Face to face lessons won't start immediately in order to ensure that the necessary testing may be carried out. On days 1 and 2, Students are being invited in for a testing slot which are being held every 5 minutes, with 26 testing bays across 3 on site venues involving 100 Staff. This equates to 26 Students being invited into College every 5 minutes over the 2 day period. Testing is voluntary and SMT estimate that the College is likely to achieve a 70% turnout (*post meeting minute – 85% turnout rate achieved as reported to Resources Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> March*). The team has completed its testing and is confident that the process will operate smoothly next week.
- Lessons will commence on Wednesday based on the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> model which was in operation during the Autumn Term, pre-lockdown. During this time, testing will continue to occur, noting that a second and third test is required on site, per Student, 3-5 days apart which will then take place at 1 on site venue – the Sports Centre. After this, Students will be home testing.
- Staff are being tested on site and will also transition to home testing with effect from next week.
- It's hoped that the testing regime will provide confidence for those anxious about returning on site.
- Protocols are in place to ensure that those providing positive Covid tests, are told to isolate immediately with Students continuing their studies during the 10 day isolation period via remote learning.
- Staff and Students on site will continue to be required to wear face coverings and to maintain 2 metre distancing. There will also be hand sanitisers/wipes in classrooms and other places around the site, along with Covid Marshals in place to ensure compliance.

Other:



- Ofqual's announcement of the grade award model for this year's grade exam has been made and it was noted that examinations would not be held.
- Although Colleges are required to provide evidence to support Students' grading, to the exam boards to demonstrate Students' performance levels, the College will have to complete some assessments in addition to those which have already been completed. Currently Q & C staff are preparing methodologies and comparing these with other providers including the S7 Colleges and the SFCA etc.
- Parents and Students will be provided with details of the methodology and processes which will be distributed once these have been agreed (target date Monday 15 March).
- As per last year, there will be an appeals process.

## QUESTIONS:

- ***In response to a question from Governors regarding the Risk Assessment for the above grade assessment process which has been graded as "amber", James Moncrieff explained that this was owing to the fact that the final details from the exam board relating to the assessment material, procedures, standardisation and content, were not yet known. Likewise, failure to comply with Government Policy risk, was based on yet unknown information.***

At this point Andrew Wright joined the meeting.

- ***The Committee queried information which would be recorded from Staff and Student Covid testing and the Principal explained that they would be able to report the percentage of Students who had attended for testing and the percentage of Students with positive test results. The College will receive Government funding for all the Student results submitted via the NHS online platform.***

## 1.6 Termly Update - Student Governor Perspective

Ana MacEvilly and Lucas Watkin gave the following update to Governors based on feedback gained from Students regarding the following topics:

- SU/Ambassador Activity
  - Assessment and Grade Awarding
  - Remote Learning Experience
  - Wellbeing
- 
- Concerns from Students regarding the Summer assessments were raised particularly in respect of some Students having difficulty with on line lessons, for a number of reasons including distractions and difficult conditions at home etc, which may result in inequitable grading of such Students' subjects.
  - Student Ambassador activity has been very low as there was a limit on what could be done remotely, but the intention will be to progress this as soon as Students return on site.
  - There is some appetite for having internal examinations for assessment purposes, subject to adjustments being made in comparison to normal years, such as reduced exam content or open book exams and to ensure that only topics covered were included in such exams.

- The uncertainty regarding grade assessments has created anxiety and an increase in stress levels for Students.
- Some Students were apprehensive about returning on site, but Staff and Tutors have been reassuring Students.
- Many Students have the impression that remote working appears to have resulted in an increase in volume of work and there is an expectation that it might have been necessary to increase workload in order to ensure that the syllabus has been covered.
- Teachers have been generally very understanding towards those Students who have struggled to submit or complete work and have accommodated this, stating that Students should aim to complete what they can without undue stress.
- The introduction of the Covid testing regime for Students returning on site has been welcomed by most, providing reassurance that the College will be a safe place, not just for Students but for their family members.
- Staff and the SU are keen to ensure that Students don't assume that once they've had a negative test, they can relax the social distancing rules, whereas in reality it's essential that everyone continues to wear masks and maintain social distancing until the Government Guidelines change. It was hoped that both Staff and the Student Union/Student Ambassadors could help to convey and reinforce this message to Students.
- It was noted that A2 Students had a number of questions relating to UCAS matters such as deferring their University places, conditional offers etc and the Assistant Principal confirmed that this would be covered via tutorials over the next few weeks before the Easter holidays.

## **SECTION 2: CURRICULUM AND GUIDANCE ITEMS**

### **2.1**

#### **a) Draft Strategic Plan**

- Revised Draft circulated reflects the discussions and proposals from the January Corporation meeting, with some significant changes including the move away from the "7 Cs", which has the Staff support too.
- Headline points were highlighted to Governors.
- The focus has moved to a "contemporary, creative learning environment", with 4 key aims within each section, including the addition of "sustainability" within the "contemporary" category.
- The wording within the Student Guidance/Support key aim was crucial in order to ensure that the right balance of resources was taken into account, including other specialist providers where appropriate (also refer b below).
- 2 key points raised at the January 2021 Corporation meeting were highlighted – feasibility study has been included under "income generation" to look at expanding the educational based to adult education, together with the longer term aim to develop stakeholder engagement and associated strategy, has been included within the "community" section.
- Once all the Corporation's Committees has considered the latest draft, the final version will be presented to the March 2021 Corporation Meeting.



- Should individual Governors have further thoughts or feedback, they were invited to submit these directly to the Principal, by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at the latest (Corporation meeting papers are due out on 16<sup>th</sup> March for the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021). **ACTION: Governors**
- The revised draft strategic plan will be circulated to all Staff tomorrow.

## **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:**

- *Governors welcomed the revised and concise draft and the new focus and the involvement of Staff.*
- *With regard to the reference to “careers” it was suggested that this aspect should be widened in the document to ensure that the subject had sufficient focus. ACTION: William Baldwin/Alison Cousens*
- *The Staff Governor reported that the “contemporary, creative learning environment” was well-embedded at College for both Teaching and Support Staff.*

Subject to the points recorded above, the document was endorsed by the Committee. **ACTION: William Baldwin**

## **b) Update on Resourcing Consultation in respect of Student Services and Guidance**

William Baldwin provided an update to the Committee regarding the operational aspects of the resourcing consultation in respect of Student Services and Guidance and explained the way in which this fits with the College’s Strategy as follows:

- Reference was made to the breakout session held during the Governors’ strategic discussion, on the subject of how much support Students received and required in addition to the standard curriculum offer, and taking into account the Governors’ statutory duties which extend beyond education, to include welfare and safeguarding etc and even to primary healthcare in light of the Covid-19 testing being implemented on site.
- 5 years ago, there was a significant restructuring, with the planning for this, having taken place 6.5 years ago. Since then the College has seen a significant growth in numbers and demand placed upon Student Services and Guidance.
- Recently, at SMT it was agreed that a review of the provision in this area would be necessary and instead of imposing solutions, it was decided to have a 2 stage consultation with Staff, with HR input being invited towards the end of the first stage. All Staff within the Student Services and Guidance areas have been interviewed, based on 5 key questions, with a follow up with Staff as necessary, depending upon the responses given. Key themes will be identified by SMT post the interview process next Thursday, after which solutions would be prepared in order to improve the resourcing in this area.
- In relation to strategy, it was noted that the increasing demand for resourcing this area, could never be fully met, owing to the need to meet the needs of other operational areas, such as curriculum provision, making it difficult to resolve where to set the financial limit. At this point, Governors were also reminded of their responsibilities as employer, particularly noting that action was required based on SMT’s assessment that the demands upon the Assistant Principal/Director of Student Services and likewise for other Managers and Staff. The Principal indicated that it was likely, based on current assessments, that an increase in management

capacity in this area will be needed. Furthermore, it was recognised that the cost of doing nothing to resolve the demand and consequential issues in this area, could be significant.

- SMT are investigating various models for improving the resourcing within Student Services and Guidance at present, with consideration being given to the Curriculum Management model.
- Governors were informed that this initiative had in fact commenced in November 2019 but had been delayed owing to the pandemic and despite the fact that this was ongoing, as the mental health consequences arising from Covid have been significant, it was agreed that this matter could not be delayed any further.
- The Committee agreed that it was good to see action being taken to resolve the capacity issues which provided assurance and confidence to Governors that Management were being proactive in dealing with such an important issue, notwithstanding the funding limitations. The Committee agreed that action was essential and that it couldn't be delayed any longer.

## 2.2 College Development Plan (CDP) 2020/2021 – Spring Update including Covid Dashboard:

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

The contents of the CDP and executive summary were noted by the Committee and the additional update column was seen to be particularly helpful.

### QUESTIONS:

- ***Governors had a query relating to the first sentence of the document and wondered why the curriculum intent document was not yet available and whether it would be going to the Governors' EIF (Education Inspection Framework) Group first? In response the Deputy Principal explained that the Curriculum Intent (CI) document would follow from the final Strategic Plan and that as this wouldn't be agreed until the March 2021 Corporation Meeting, it would be made available to Governors in the Summer Term 2021. It was noted that the original Curriculum Intent document had been written 2 years ago and more recently had been on hold owing to Covid. Feedback on the latest draft, has been provided by CQT (Curriculum and Quality Team) and the Guidance Team, so that SMT is in the process of collating this, with the final version, once the Strategic Plan has been finalised, being issued to Q & C Committee at its June Committee.***
- ***It was noted that once ready, the CI document would be circulated to Governors via the Governors' EIF Group, as this will be one of the College's core documents in readiness for a future Ofsted Inspection. James Moncrieff referred to the Governors' VLE Inspection Framework folder where various Ofsted related documents and information has been uploaded. When an Ofsted Inspection is announced, Governors involved in an Inspection would be met by the Inspection Team and would need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the key College documents and James Moncrieff provided assurance that all the necessary information would be provided in sufficient time for all Governors. It was also noted that the Chair of Governors was completing some work on the Inspection framework and likely***



*questions Inspectors are likely to ask, together with suggested responses based on BHASVIC's operations.*

- *How do we mitigate the impact of Covid on social mobility, including plans in place to mitigate this? In response the Principal and Deputy Principal referred to the document headlines and added that the College had a similar number of Students in receipt of Oxbridge places this year (25/26), that progression for students who qualify for widening participation schemes was similar to the previous year, hence the College has not seen any real impact from Covid during this year within this group. Regarding other University offers and grades awarded, these also compare similarly to last year and in some cases, they are better than the previous years. It was reiterated that support from the College had reached Vulnerable Students requiring e.g. IT facilities and support and the opportunities to work on site when needed etc, which SMT hoped had mitigated some of the potential impact of Covid. The College has also developed initiatives to assist and support Students such as the Flourish Programme and the Vulnerable Learner Support initiatives. However, it was recognised that it was not possible to mitigate all of the pandemic's consequences. The Deputy Principal explained the importance of an evidenced based strategy to support disadvantaged Students and work which has gone in to develop additional tracking and support. The impact of Covid was assessed over time by monitoring Student engagement/submission of work etc to ensure that Students are not overlooked in terms of support required. Regarding the Flourish Programme, James Moncrieff reported on the first activity report to the Sussex Learning Network, who are funding this project at BHASVIC, noting that they were surprised and delighted with the quantity of activity carried out by the College, together with the quality and level of impact on Students. Alison Cousens added that a close monitoring of vulnerable Students had been implemented, with regular checks being carried out by Staff to ensure these Students (approximately 600) received the necessary support. Furthermore, and surprisingly, it's been calculated that 66% of Students have some form of vulnerability or widening participation need, requiring extra support from Staff (refer details in EDI Report below).*
- *In response to a question from Governors regarding whether there were any strategies in place to redress the balance in Staff from a minority ethnic background, the Principal confirmed that this information will be in the EDI (Equality Diversity and Inclusivity) Report.*

## 2.3 EDI SARAP (incl. EDIMS and HR aspects)

Alison Cousens presented the Report and explained that the College had moved forward significantly in terms of collating the various data sources, although advised that there were still further improvements to be made.

Thanks were recorded to Jackie Davies (EDI and Welfare Officer) and the HR Department who had combined the Staff and Student analysis in the overall Report.

### QUESTIONS:

- *Widening participation details? Alison Cousens reported that this seemed surprisingly high but explained that although many Students qualify for some form of widening participation this did not necessarily mean that they would be classified as vulnerable Students and that this extended to for example – distance travelled to College from home.*

- *The bar charts on page 62 showing the percentage application to enrolment on page 62 was queried, particularly as in 2018/2019 the applications were fairly equal between males and females, whilst last year the difference was much greater. In response SMT advised that further analysis needed to be done, but explained that the data reflected the admissions process and the number of Students applying to each course, with some courses understandably having gender differences. However, it was recognised that further work was needed to ensure that there was no preference given to a particular gender per course during the admissions process and noting also that the number of Students and popularity per course also had an impact.*
- *Referring to page 58 summary sheet, the point raised above regarding the need to address the balance in respect of minority ethnic Staff recruitment and female Teachers, was raised again? In response the Principal confirmed that the College was working on this and that HR was looking at targeting adverts on various specific platforms to ensure that a wider audience is achieved. Additionally, the application process had changes at College, and is initially carried out "blind" so that the names, gender, and age are not included in the information passed to the selection team to ensure no bias whether conscious or unconscious. Ultimately the College would like to appoint the best person for the job, but at the same time aims to improve its representation of Staff to ensure a better balance is achieved. At this point the issue relating to Corporation composition was discussed, noting that in seeking an external Governor appointment for a new Safeguarding Lead, following Lynn O'Meara's resignation, external advertising was used with the aim of improving this, noting however, that this didn't guarantee improving the diversity of the Governing Body. Regarding this, further work will be done within the Governing Body to improve diversity.*

## 2.4 Ofsted Update

James Moncrieff provided his oral update to the Committee and highlighted the following headlines:

- Ofsted Update is a standing item for the time being, until an Ofsted Inspection has been called for the College.
- No specific news has been issued yet regarding the return of routine inspections post pandemic. At present Ofsted are completing their interim visits for those Colleges graded 3 or 4 or where there are certain issues of concern which have been disclosed e.g. financial or safeguarding etc.
- Notwithstanding the above, SMT has been getting prepared for inspection since the beginning of the Autumn Term and the Corporation's Governors EIF Group also met at the end of last term so that plans could be initiated for dealing with key questions to Governors from Inspectors, sign posting for Governors to key documents and identifying the possible ways in which the College's strategy will be tested; identifying the Governors likely to be interviewed – Chair, Chair of Q & C, Designated Safeguarding lead etc.
- SMT are also considering Inspection Awareness training for Staff – during the first week of June INSET (which may need to be postponed to September INSET, due to the sheer strains of final grade awarding and continued firefighting due to covid).
- The Deputy Principal provided reassurance to the Committee that the College was preparing sufficiently early and that all key documentation and evidence would be ready and staff and Governors trained/informed before an inspection visit is called.





- ***Question from Governors: Reference was made to the recent letter (21/2/21) from Nick Gibb (School Standards Minister) which stated that full graded inspections would resume with effect from the Summer Term and James Moncrieff confirmed that the latest news from the SFCA (issued approximately 2 weeks ago) stated that there were no routine inspections due in the near future. Furthermore, it was noted that at the Regional AoC Conference held online yesterday, the HMI speaker confirmed that there was no definite timetable for reinstating inspections and that a pilot process would be followed first to ensure that the framework was applied fairly and effectively, after which further details regarding timings would be issued. However, regardless of timing, James Moncrieff reiterated that the College had already completed a lot of the Ofsted preparation groundwork and would be ready for any inspection announcement.***

## **2.5 Risk Assurance**

The contents of the executive summary and paper were noted by the Committee particularly recognising the improvements made with no “red” grading within the document, compared to the previous submission.

James Moncrieff provided further information regarding the various “amber” grades, reporting that these would remain “amber” bearing in mind the ongoing work and information/guidelines required in respect of the Student Assessment grades and Safeguarding areas.

## **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**

**3.1 Student Charges Policy (incorporating the Charges’ Schedule) – recommended to Corporation for approval.**

**3.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy – recommended to Corporation for approval.**

## **SECTION 4: OTHER ITEMS**

### **4.1 Any Other Business**

- a) Last Meeting for Neil Jones (Teaching Staff Governor, Ana MacEvilly and Lucas Watkin (Student Governors).**

Thanks were recorded to Neil Jones for his long and valuable service and support, initially as a co-opted Q & C Committee Member and more recently as a Staff Governor.

Thanks were also recorded to the Student Governors for their excellent work over the last year and to the Student Observers and Simon Porges for attending this evening’s meeting.

**4.2 Date of Next Meeting – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 6.00 p.m.**

**SECTION 5: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS – refer to confidential minutes**

- 5.1 Confidential Minutes from the Last Meeting – approved.**
- 5.2 Matters Arising - None**
- 5.3 Safeguarding Update (second part of Report, deferred from the Autumn Meeting)– refer to confidential minutes**

**PAPERS:**

- 5.3 Safeguarding Report Part 2 2020-2021 Front Sheet and Report**
  - 5.3.1 Safeguarding Data Report January – February 2021**
  - 5.3.2 Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation (Appendix to Safeguarding Policy)**
  - 5.3.3 Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan 2020-2021**
- 5.5 Any Other Business (Confidential Business) – None.**

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