



BRIGHTON HOVE AND SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION'S RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 17th JUNE 2024 AT 6.00 P.M.

IN ROOM 421, TOP FLOOR, COPPER BUILDING

Present: Kirstin Baker (Co-Chair of Governors), William Baldwin (Principal), Paul Lovegrove (Governor and Deputy Chair of Resources Committee), Mick McLean (Governor and Digital Link Governor), Jo Usher (Support Staff Governor)

In attendance: Jutta Knapp (Vice-Principal), Livvy Birney (HR Manager) – until the end of item 2.1), Mark Monahan (Assistant Principal (Digital and Communications), Simon Porges (Co-Chair of Governors and Sustainability Link Governor), Louise Pennington (Clerk),

James Tulley - Chair of Blatchington Mill School – observer

Paul Lovegrove took the chair (as deputy committee chair) – in the absence of Marcus Palmer

1.1 Apologies and Welcomes

Apologies: Marcus Palmer

Welcomes: Livvy Birney (HR Manager), Paul Lovegrove and James Tulley

It was resolved to take item 2.1 before 1.5 so that Livvy Birnie could then leave the meeting.

1.2 Minutes of the last Meeting held on March 2024

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

1.3 Matters Arising

It was agreed that matters arising detailed in the action log were included on the agenda, in progress or closed.

1.4 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations received, apart from those already disclosed in the Governors' registration and declarations of interest/and related party transactions as recorded in the Annual Report and Accounts.

1.5 Principal's Update

William Baldwin introduced his report and the following key points were recorded:

- General Election: FE Colleges have been discussing informally the likelihood of changes should Labour be elected and noted the focus on skills in the manifesto. It was also thought that there was initially likely to be minimal impact upon A Level delivery, with a greater focus upon pre-16 education. Labour's pledge to increase the number of teachers is also focused upon Schools and not Colleges. Removing barriers to education and increasing participation also ties in with the College's strategy. The intention is there but the details need work.
- Exam Season: this month has been busy but the schedule will be reducing significantly towards the end of this week. There have been a few minor but not unexpected incidents during the exam period. Using the Copper Building solely for exams this year has worked

well. Taking into account both A1 and A2 exams, in total this has resulted in approximately 15,000 sittings. The A1 Students received their examination results via Cedar on Thursday last week. This year, it's the first time in which the new procedure has been followed in respect of U grade Students, where there is no requirement to resit the exam, but a review of the Students' historical performance over the year is taking into account. 1.7% of A1 Students received a U grade and it's hoped that the new policy will support Students to move on with their studies into A2 and takes into account inclusivity. However, the new policy may impact the College's value added and retention outcomes next year.

- Admissions – next Thursday will be moving on day at which point the College will have a better idea of the enrolment figures for next year. The uncertainty regarding over-recruitment was noted and that potentially this could be an increase in Students numbers of 100, in addition to also growing intentionally by 250 Students. There are contingency arrangements, should the final numbers be more than expected.
- Governors' Strategy Event (October 2023) – the Principal updated Governors on the Eastbourne feasibility study, noting that key findings are that school performance is below average thus fewer learners are progressing on to level 3 than would be expected. Only 15% of learners from Eastbourne doing A levels actually study in Eastbourne but the demographics aren't there to develop a viable new school/college sixth form. It seems like school improvement is the long-term action and improving travel arrangements is a key short-term action. The Principal will meet with the Director of schools for ESCC to discuss further but it seems likely that there are no actions for BHASVIC to take forward.
- Quality Audit on the quality processes – clean audit with no recommendations and confirmation that good controls were in place.
- Staff Inset – recent event included AI in teaching and learning, support and assessment provided by Mark Monahan, and practical workshops were included, giving insight into the various tools available.
- ECTs (Early Career Teacher) – discussions are underway with University of Sussex and BHASVIC, Varndean College and GBMet regarding the intention to expand the number of courses where Students can teach 16-19 age group once qualified. The outcome of this should be that BHASVIC will benefit from more ITE Student placements.

Thanks were recorded to William Baldwin for this report.

2.1

a) Termly Update on HR and Related Matters

Livvy Birnie (HR Manager) provided the following report:

- **Updates on various HR Projects**
 - New post HR business Partner has been appointed.
 - Cintra HR System is in the process of being upgraded – to be implemented by the end of the next academic year. HR Team will be working with Managers to develop appropriate work flows prior to implementation.
 - Mark Monahan (Digital Director) is reviewing budgetary requests and solutions, with a meeting on Thursday to consider the Cintra HR system proposals, along with various other College projects, within the IT budget allocated for next year.
 - Applicant Tracking System to support the Staff recruitment processes, has been purchased from the TES, as one of its sub-package options. Previously, the HR Team were unable to separate names from recruitment monitoring/EDI analysis, but the new facility will enable data protection compliance, with the new system coming into effect in the overall more streamlined process, from September. The HR department will be testing the new system prior to implementation.
 - Transfer of paper filing to digital records, with some documents being scanned from the various HR files. The start date for digital filing will be 1st October 2024 so any new appointments, will have digital HR records only. Existing Staff from October, will have partial

electronic files. Reference was made to the College's Retention Policy which records when files may be deleted along with Data Protection requirements.

- Review of New Staff Induction process led by HR's Emily Andrews has been actioned, following engagement with various Departments, the Digital Director and IT, in order to focus on the core essential documents and information for new Starters. The outcome has led to a much-reduced pack of information which should reduce the time new Staff spend on this by approximately half.
- Other minor projects have also progressed to improve overall departmental efficiency.
- **Recruitment**
- very busy year for HR in this area with 51 campaigns, 71 vacancies – sometimes with 2 teachers being sought per subject area. In addition, the latter figures do not include recruitment of invigilators of evening language tutors. To date, there has only been 1 vacancy where the College has had difficulty appointing in Biology, with another maternity cover in this Department recently notified. Should it be difficult for HR to recruit certain posts, agencies may be used as a final resort.
- The College has been very pleased to date with all the new appointments, some of which have been ECTs. As previously reported, the College has the majority of its Teachers who are paid at the top of the pay spine owing to their length of service (9 years minimum service to reach top of spine), so the ECT appointment will help to provide a better balance. In response to a question from Governors, it was confirmed that the new appointments were locals already living in Brighton or other local areas within Sussex.

b) Nationally Negotiated Staff Pay Awards:

The following update was provided to the Committee:

- Teachers' pay details were issued on Friday, noting that the Unions' requested pay increase was above the RPI, with the aim of seeking pay reparation to account for real term cuts. This will be taken forward once the next Government has been elected. Hence, no further action can be taken at present by the SFCA on behalf of Colleges.
- The SFCA had issued questionnaires to all Principals to seek indications on affordability per College and the SFCA Summer Conference will enable further discussion, next week in Nottingham, including the outcome of the Principals' survey. At present, early indications are that Colleges will suggest 3% to 3.5% top end of what is affordable, bearing in mind that the ESFA funding increase for next year is only 1.89%.
- The budget for next year 24/25 has included a figure of 3% pay rise for all staff based on SFCA sector advice received to date. However, the College also includes in its staffing budget, a significant contingency budget.
- To date the College has always followed the SFCA negotiated recommendations for pay rises, so if this was higher than expected this year, the College would investigate whether the budget could be increased, but only by reducing other costs within the existing budget.

Thanks were recorded to Livvy Birnie for her report after which she left the meeting.

3.1) Management Accounts for 9 months to 30 April 2024

Jutta Knapp presented the paper to the Committee highlighting the following aspects:

Assurance was provided to the Committee that there were no specific issues of major concern apart from the level of Government funding allocated to SFCs.

Jutta Knapp advised that there was limited movement on the figures since the last meeting/6 months' position, although the figures were still slightly better than the budgeted figures; the budget was set post the additional funding pay award which intentionally had not been allocated at that time. Furthermore, additional funding had also been received in respect of the increased Teachers' Pension Scheme contributions (5% increase from 1st April), which has helped towards the small surplus.

It was also confirmed that based on the figures, the College meets the bank covenants, the cashflow position will enable the College to meet the planned capital projects, and the financial health remains good.

The Committee noted the prudent approach taken by SLT and budget holders, who would only spend their allocated budget in full for essential items.

In response to a question from the Committee, it was noted that when the Committee meets next term in November, which will include a review of the audited financial statements for the year to 31st July 2024, the Finance Director will complete a reconciliation of the 9 months management accounts together with a year end outcome and details will be included in the supporting meeting paper.

The Committee was reminded that the Management Accounts would be circulated to the Corporation at the July 2024 meeting. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp/LEP**

3.2) Budget 2024-2025

Jutta Knapp introduced the paper and budget and the following points were recorded:

- Challenging financial situation for SFCs making it more difficult than previous years to prepare the budget.
- Funding increase was agreed as part of the 3 year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) – 1.89%.
- 3% Staff pay rise included, noting the significant percentage of the budget allocated to staffing (75%)
- Cost of living crisis/inflation has generated an overall cost increase in most areas.
- Significant cost increase overall – examination fees, totalling in the region of £750k (approximately £120 per A Level) and it was noted how difficult it was to predict the future increases as the Exam Boards usually notify any increases annually in March/April and the Boards vary enormously in their increases, making it very difficult to predict outcomes. The Committee queried whether the fee aspects was regulated and it was noted that JCQ and Ofqual were regulators but that this focused principally upon terms of content and processes rather than fees charged to Colleges. In response to a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that exam fee changes per exam board weren't advised to Colleges until the invoices were issued, so there were no opportunities for planning ahead.
- A small operating surplus of £95K is given based on £20M turnover. The cash position therefore remains very tight.
- Capital expenditure proposed costing £2.3M for the piazza café extension and artificial grass pitch/netball court. The former project is essential in light of the pressure on existing Student space, plus taking into account the additional Students (250) for next year. The new pitch will provide essential facilities to the PE Department in light of losing the existing netball court for the temporary modular classrooms. Furthermore, it was noted that the Sports Centre Café would be converted into a gym space too and that also some of the works would not be completed until November this year. To partly cater for the works in progress, the College will be erecting a marquee in the Elms Building courtyard with chairs/tables for Students to use. The Committee noted that the modular classroom costs were included in the revenue section and not recorded as a capital spend, as not purchasing.
- The cash position therefore remains very tight. Detailed cashflow analysis are not yet available in respect of the works detailed above. Refer page 33 – cashflow details showing £2M capital outflow within 2 months. Jutta Knapp explained that regarding the bank covenant requirements the College, will not have the required balance in March 2025; once the detailed cashflow analysis has been done, the bank will be updated and a request for a temporary concession will be sought, based on the fact that the rest of the year breakdown is predicted to be compliant with the covenants; she assured the Committee that this was unlikely to cause a problem for the College. The cash position will improve over the next year, with increased funding revenue owing to the recruitment of additional Students.

- Staff pay – as discussed earlier under 2.1b), in response to a question from the Committee, it was indicated by SLT that the SFC negotiated pay award was unlikely to be no greater than 3.5% and if the College decide to endorse the award in full, with 3% already in the budget, the additional 0.5% equated to approximately £80K; noting the £150K contingency within the Staff budget. Page 26 typo error 4% staff salaries should be amended to read 3% (and also to be amended below in item 3.3). **ACTION: Jutta Knapp**
- Borrowing is based on 5% base rate.

Taking into accounts the various points recorded above, and noted that the detailed cashflow analysis was still to be issued, the Resources Committee recommended the draft budget to Corporation for approval. **ACTION: Chair/Jutta Knapp**

3.3) College Financial Forecasting Return

The Committee considered the ESFA Return which comprised a summary of the information provided by the College from the Management Accounts, Budget and forecast for 2025/2026 and the financial health assessment for the next 3 years, based on this information is “good”.

Other points raised/noted:

- The cash position is seen to be decreasing during 2024/2025 and then improving in 2025/2026 once the capital projects have been completed.
- Staff Pay forecasted for 25/26 is 2%, with no increase in funding project as unknown at this point.
- Turnover around £20M with a small operating surplus predicted of between £300K to £400k.
- Eastbourne proposals reported earlier – the Committee discussed the local demographics for the next few years, noting that there is an increase in numbers over the next 4 years and the College will have to continue to review the numbers it can accommodate, with a general guideline that it’s unlikely that the College could have more than 3,750 Students. After the increase, the numbers will then decline and this is already reflected in the fact that a number of local primary schools have closed recently.

The paper was recommended to Corporation for approval, prior to submission to the ESFA. **ACTION: Chair/Jutta Knapp**

3.4) Premises Update

Jutta Knapp presented the paper to the Committee, the contents of which were noted and the following points were highlighted:

- Planning application: proposals for new Student building to replace the temporary modular classrooms and the rest of the remaining estate (Student Services building) with fit for purpose permanent accommodation. A planning application has been submitted (which also includes the additional modular classrooms to be placed on the netball court to cater for the additional students due next year). Some conditions have been agreed/set out with a section 106 which was resolved last week, noting various issues raised by Sports England. The final element which still needs resolving is the ecology conditions, noting that the College is required to achieve a net gain in biodiversity aspects equate to an increase of 3% to offset the works. However, since the original Brighton and Hove Council criteria was established, the percentage requirement has now increased to 10% which equates to the College having to plant an additional 42 trees. As the site has limited space and a survey is required to ensure that planting is possible – eg to avoid drainage systems etc, the College is still working on this and may have to plant some of the trees, off site. Once this part of the overall planning process has been completed, the College’s Planning Office, will make a recommendation with the aim of achieving a decision to delegate, rather than submit for consideration to the Planning Committee. The former proposal is in light of the fact that the work is replacement of current buildings rather than a total new build. If it’s decided to take this to the Planning Committee its next meetings are on 7th August or 4th September. However, this would be further complicated re the timing, as the planning submission incorporates the temporary

modular classroom blocks on the netball court, which are essential for September to cater for the new Students. The modular classrooms have already been ordered (£600,000) owing to the timing requirements (agreed at previous Committee/Corporation meetings), but it would mean that if planning has not yet been granted, the College will be installing the modular classroom blocks “at risk”. SLT explained that owing to the deadlines for the start of term, it was not possible to delay the order and installation process, but it’s hoped that the Planning decision, whether delegated or not, will recognise the urgent need for this to accommodate students starting in September. Having spoken to the Planning Officer, SLT indicated that it was thought to be low risk. The Committee also recognised the additional risk should the College not have taken forward the modular classroom order in time and also the potential reputational risk. Account was also taken to the fact that there was only one objection to the planning proposal submitted from the local community, which should also reflect in the College’s favour.

By the time the Corporation meets on 4th July to approve the recommendation, the College should know whether the planning decision has been delegated or not.

In the circumstances should planning not be agreed, the College would appeal the decision. Regarding the second separate planning submission in respect of the Café extension, SLT and their consultants cannot see any reason for this not being approved by the planners and this will be submitted shortly, once the final designs are ready. Once approval has been given (which won’t require the involvement of the Planning Committee), the works will be underway whilst the students are on site, and the College will ensure that noise control is carefully reviewed, during lesson times. The College will seek contractors in due course, but the design team is unchanged (HNW Architects). In response to questions from the Committee Jutta Knapp confirmed that the Architects were appointed following approval by Corporation based on the estates masterplan and to ensure consistency in the overall developments. The College has not gone out to tender for the Project Manager (PM), as is intending to continue with the existing Project Manager who previously worked for Mace on the Elms Building project and as the works are small in comparison, the PM is well known to the College, very efficiently and has historically provided value for money. All other consultants have been tendered including planning aspects, sports specialists and ecology experts in line with the College’s regulations.

The third planning application in respect of the artificial pitch/netball court, the challenges from Sport England were noted and that there may also be some objections from the local community in light of flood lights etc, so this work, if/when approved, will probably not commence until later this year at the earliest. Hence there will be a time when the PE Department does not have access to an onsite netball court.

The Chair provided the following conclusion for the Committee and the proposals within the paper were recommended to Corporation for approval, in line with the conclusions below and the detailed points recorded above. **ACTION: Chair/Jutta Knapp**

- endorse temporary modulars, despite at risk scenarios.
- endorse various appointments, including the PM (without tender process, based on the fact that this is for a small project and based on previous history/value for money etc) which Jutta Knapp confirmed complies with the procurement Policy, if the Corporation approves the decision.
- Projects’ cost breakdown recommended to Corporation as set out in the proposals/budget.

Finally, it was suggested that a brief tour of the site showing where the works are due to be implemented would be useful at the start of the 4th July Corporation meeting. **ACTION: William Baldwin/Jutta Knapp**

3.5) Digital Updates: Termly Digital Update and Cyber Security Update

Mark Monahan presented his written report and highlighted the following aspects, together with providing further details and updates to the Committee:

- reference was made to the digital references within the CDP – refer above.

- There is a growing digital leadership and overall College culture, with reference to a recent AI training day including the Microsoft facility, which Staff are being encouraged to test. Other online AI training resources will be provided to Staff next year.
- HR – working underway (as mentioned earlier), to digitise certain areas and reduce hard copy/printing.
- Meetings have been held with the Admissions team to the extent that the review and updating of the online admissions processes are reaching the final phase via the online portal, including interviews, Cedar (Student Management Information System) records – with ability to enrol Students on this system, update course information and timely access by Staff to course applications and other relevant information. The overall administrative burden will reduce, with less need to seek part time staff to review/update enrolment information. Cedar is also used for registers, marking etc
- An online additional learning support interview form has also been devices.
- Work is underway on learner digital skills development, currently constructing a student digital induction facility, focusing on essential for new Students. This will focus on highlighting key systems to help new Students. Mark Monahan is due to meet with SU reps on Wednesday to seek feedback on the proposals and the Students have been asked to gain input from Student Focus Groups regarding their digital experiences and College communications, with the aim of putting together the basics for new Students.
- AI – James Moncrieff and Mark Monahan have represented BHASVIC at a number of consortium meetings, from which they have worked on establishing the College’s own framework. Sessions have been provided to date to Teaching Staff on assessment – what are risks and how mitigate these and aim to revisit this aspect in September. The College is making use of Microsoft Co-Pilot as the tool of choice as its embedded into browser, the College already have a Microsoft licence. This will therefore also have data protection embedded until for example Chat GPT. The College will also need to consider sustainability and environmental impact of utilising AI. Regarding an AI policy, understandably this will require regular review and updating to reflect the nature of this new area.
- Budget – this is kept under review and monitored carefully bearing in mind the various options and demands on digital development required including cyber security matters.
- WiFi review – this work was completed in 2023, before Mark Monahan was appointed and no further actions have been taken although IT bids have been submitted and the report is under review, with a focus going towards areas of the site with poor wifi, as need to ensure that all Students have access across the site. The College has invested in a new £7K router and the line is now in place, with a maximum of 1gbit being using per day.
- Interactive Screens project – owing to the cost, an alternative to the projector/interactive board in each classroom, will be purchased for the new temporary modular classrooms. There will be a rolling replacement of such devices in the longer term.
- Cyber security audit – a plan is in place to take forward each of the recommendations and the Cyber Security Team meet fortnightly to review progress, which includes the Digital Direction, IT Manager and a Senior Technician. The College will be moving towards using Microsoft Defender Anti-virus.
- IT Health check, being a DfE requirement for funding and costing £12K. 2 weeks ago the
- (Joint Information Systems Committee) to ensure kept up to date too. JISC ensures that its members within the sector, are kept up to date with important issues such as cyber security and critical incidents and also host various topical events. There are regular security incidents but nothing critical to date and the systems in place at BHASVIC, place it in the moderate protection category against future threat, compared to similar sized organisations.
- To improve security, in addition to Staff and Governors, with effect from September, all Students will have to go through the MFA (Multi-factor authentication).
- The team are also investigating more automated services, but any decisions will be budget drive.
- Mark Monahan continues to have regular catch-up meetings with Mick McLean (Digital Lead Governor) and are next meeting on Friday.

- Progress with CCTV project: noting the open nature and easy access on to the College site, combined with its central location in the City, the Committee was reminded that of the intention to update CCTV to enable individuals to be identified who should not be on site. The intention would be that the Estates Team would receive notifications when an unknown person comes on site during the daytime, based on a review of the Staff and Student ID photos held by the College, at which point the Estates Team would then be able to react quickly. Discussions are underway with 2 CCTV companies to review the details and costs. Legal requirements will also be taken into account and an update will be given at Corporation. In response to a request from the Committee, it was agreed that a paper should be prepared for the Governing Body to consider/approve to ensure that the action taken is legally and ethnically compliant, noting also that the College's GDPR Policy would have to be updated.

ACTION: WJB/MM

3.6) Sustainability Update – Link Governor (Simon Porges)

Reference was made to the written report presented by Simon Porges, the Link Sustainability Governor and he confirmed that assurance had been gained at his meeting with William Baldwin earlier this term, on progress with various sustainability actions and developments, all of which are monitored by SLT.

Simon Porges also informed the Committee that the net zero 2030 target remains in place but this will be challenging to meet, particularly with regard to solutions to replace boilers with heat pumps. Unless a viable plan becomes a possibility, this key strategic objective cannot be met. In light of this it was recommended that the risk in the Risk Register, should be adjusted to reflect this and notified to Audit Committee at its meeting later this week, with the final draft going to Corporation for approval.

ACTION: William Baldwin

3.7) College Development Plan (Section 4 Leadership and Management)

It was noted that this item had already been discussed within the various agenda items above and the Committee was reminded that the full CDP (Sections 1 to 4) had already been reviewed by the Q & C Committee at its meeting earlier this term.

Following a suggestion, regarding the need for a separate digital report/update agenda item in future for this Committee, bearing in mind that the CDP also provides this information, it was resolved to avoid duplication in future and continue with the CDP section 4, incorporating the Digital Update. It was also recognised that both Mark Monahan (Digital Director) and Mick McLean (Digital Link Governor) could provide the necessary assurance to the Committee, both could speak to the digital section, answer any questions and report on any other digital updates via the CDP. **ACTION:**

Principal/Digital Director/Digital Link Governor/LEP

3.8) Risk Assurance

William Baldwin introduced the paper to the Committee, the contents of which were noted.

The Committee reviewed the document and confirmed that with regard to those key risks for which the Committee was responsible, sufficient assurance had been gained, notwithstanding the revision required to the sustainability risk as recorded above. It was therefore resolved to confirm this to the Audit Committee. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp**

SECTION 4: CONSENT AGENDA

Policies and Other Documents

4.1 Policies:

a) Front Sheet

a) **The following Policies are available on request:**

i) **Data Protection Policy**

- ii) **Data Breach Notification**
- iii) **Data Retention Policy**
- iv) **Rights of Individuals Policy**

Noting the contents of the front sheets and confirmation from SLT that only some minor housekeeping changes were necessary, the policies were recommended to Corporation for endorsement. **ACTION: SLT**

4.2 Business Procedures – significant changes only

The contents of the front sheet were noted and the minor housekeeping changes were endorsed by the Committee and recommended to Corporation for approval. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp**

4.3 Financial Dashboard

This document issued by the ESFA, confirms the College’s financial health and is based on audited financial statements received and approved by Corporation in December 2023 for the year to 31/7/23. The financial health remains good.

Jutta Knapp confirmed that there was no benchmarking information available at this point and would let Governors know if any becomes available. **ACTION: Jutta Knapp**

SECTION 5: OTHER MATTERS

5.1 Any Other Business

a) Committee Annual Self-Assessment Form

The Committee considered the various questions listed on the form, but had no particular issues to raise on this occasion.

b) Review of Terms of Reference – i) Resources Committee, ii) Premises Group

It was noted that any revisions would be brought to Corporation for approval at the July Meeting, including adding references regarding the Sustainability and Digital responsibilities and reporting, together with any housekeeping updates. **ACTION: LEP**

5.2 Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 21st November 2024 at 6.00 p.m. in room 538 Elms Building - tbc

SECTION 6: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

6.1 Confidential Minutes from Last Meeting – approved.

6.2 Matters Arising – none

6.3 Any Other Business (confidential) – none.

Meeting closed: 8.03 P.M.

Chair Date