Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 5 February 2018, in Room 017, Orient House.

PRESENT: Alex Jackson (Chair); Gill Burbridge (Principal); Elizabeth Crump; Helen Davenport; Hannah Eaton; Taiyyabah Ijaz; Paula Imafidon; Joga Kabra; Emily Martin; Mirna Peach and Christine Quigley.

In Attendance: Dawn Hamilton-Barrett (VP, Staffing, Resources & Infrastructure); Mike Gallagher (VP, Teaching & Learning); Chris Price (VP, Wider Student Experience) and Alan Leak (Director of Finance).

Clerk to the Corporation: Michael Wood

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No Governor declared an interest.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Mirna Peach, Support Staff Governor, and Christine Quigley, Independent Governor, to their first meeting of the Corporation.

MINUTES

30.17 The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2017 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

31.17 There were no matters arising.

TEACHING & LEARNING REPORTS

a) Adding Value: In-year Monitoring & Interventions

32.17 The Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching) made a presentation to Governors on the College’s plans for adding value in terms of in-year monitoring and interventions. The following key points being noted:

i) that the learning and teaching experience was sometimes difficult to manage, but intervention logs had now been sent out to all staff to monitor student performance, including attendance;

ii) that 56 high-performing first year students had been identified who would receive additional focused support and encouragement during the year as part of the ‘Aim High’ programme. In this regard, the involvement of Governors as mentors would be welcome.
b) DfE Performance Data, 2016/17

33.17 The Principal presented a report on the College’s Performance Data, 2016/17. Arising out of discussion it was noted that:

i) the College had improved its numerical point score marginally in respect of A level performance, the average grade being C-, but the target for the current session was to increase this to grade C;

ii) in respect of applied general performance, despite improvements in vocational high grades from 61% to 71%, the College’s APLS rating had changed from ‘excellent’ to ‘very good’. Particular focus would centre on Science, Music, Sport and Performing Arts in order to improve added value scores;

iii) performance on technical vocational qualifications had improved with the College out-performing other local colleges, particularly Waltham Forest;

iv) improvements in GCSE English and Maths results placed the College significantly above Borough and national averages;

v) with regard to the new performance measure related to Destinations, the College had achieved an 88% rating for students remaining in education or employment, which compares favourably with other local providers.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

a) Appointment of Co-Opted Member

34.17 The Corporation approved a recommendation from the Search Committee to appoint Priya Sinha as a Co-Opted Member of the Audit Committee with immediate effect, for an initial one-year period.

b) Governor Induction Process

35.17 The Corporation received a verbal report on the recent half-day new Governor induction event, held on 1 February. It was noted that all participants had found the session informative and helpful in understanding their role as Governors. Details of external governor training events would be circulated to Members as they arose.

c) Financial Rules & Regulations

36.17 The Director of Finance presented a report in connection with the review of Financial Rules and Regulations which recommended the minor amendment of current Regulations (last approved in 2013). The Corporation approved the proposed changes to the Financial Rules & Regulations, it being noted that the next formal review would take place in June 2019.
ITEMS TO NOTE

a) Principal’s Report

37.17 The Principal presented her report to the Corporation, the following key points being noted:
   
i) a student Accountability Assembly would be held on 24 April coinciding with the forthcoming local elections, with local politicians visiting the College. A meeting between students and the Leader of the Council would also be held on 3 April;

   ii) all local secondary school head teachers in the south of the Borough had now been visited by the Principal which had helped to forge valuable links. The College was now formally represented on a number of community fora and the Principal was to become part of the Learning Development Board at Borough level;

   iii) in terms of the wider operating climate, eight Sixth Form Colleges nationally had recently academised, including Hereford and Kings Edward’s, Nuneaton, which was resulting in a smaller sector. A detailed paper on the strategic options for the College would be presented at the next Corporation meeting.

b) Management Accounts to 31 December 2017

38.17 The Director of Finance presented Management Accounts for the period ended 31 December 2017 which showed an estimated surplus on operations of £131k (£96k higher than the projected surplus approved in July 2017). The Corporation noted the Management Accounts.

c) Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee

39.17 The Corporation noted the unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 23 November 2017.

d) Partnership Update

40.17 The Corporation received an update on the London Sixth Form Partnership prepared by the Partnership Director. It was noted that the next meeting of the Governors’ Liaison Group would take place on 16 May, the topic for discussion being learning and teaching.

e) College News/Forthcoming Events

41.17 It was reported that College Expressive Arts students would be performing a piece on the refugee crisis in the Speaker’s Chamber, House of Commons, on 6 February, which was a notable accolade. Governors received a detailed schedule of forthcoming student enrichment events by Department, for information.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

42.17 The Principal reported that the College would be visited by the Director of Strategy & Social Mobility from the Department for Education on 20 February.

43.17 There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.20pm.