

The Henley College Corporation

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporation Committee**

**held on Monday 23rd March 2015**

**Members present:** Louise Adams (Vice-Chair)

Jayne Davis (Principal)

Stephen Forward

Keith Heron

Mohammed Khaliel

Peter Le Conte

Jasminder Love (Chair)

Ian McGaw

Tony Sanderson

Nic Saunders

Mia Tritton

Robyn Vitty

Jeni Wood

**In attendance** Sue Bishop – Director of Finance

Julian Brinsford – Quality Manager/Head of School of Study

Simon Cuthbert - Deputy Principal

Beryl Richardson – Director of HR & Professional Development

Claire Harris – Corporation Secretary

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| **Agenda item** | **Minute** | | **Action by:** |
| **5.1 14/15** | **Opening of meeting** | |  |
|  | The meeting opened at 6.05 pm. | |  |
| **5.2 14/15** | **Apologies for absence** | |  |
|  | Apologies for absence were received from Rick Holroyd, Sam Jethani, Simon White and Jacqui Williams. Louise Adams and Robyn Vitty had given notification that they would arrive late.  All other committee members were present. | |  |
| **5.3 14/15** | **Declaration of interests** | |  |
|  | No interests were declared. | |  |
| **5.4 14/15** | **Minutes of the meeting of 29th January 2015 and 26th February 2015** | |  |
|  | *The committee agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting of 29th January 2015 and the minutes were signed by the Chair.*  *The committee agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting of 23rd February 2015 and the minutes were signed by the Vice-Chair, Louise Adams.* | |  |
| **5.5 14/15** | **MATTERS ARISING** | |  |
|  | Meeting of the 29thJanuary, 2015 – all items action points had been undertaken, or were covered by following agenda items.  The Corporation Self-Assessment will be discussed at the next meeting of the Governance and Search Committee and the subsequent Corporation meeting.  Page 3 – amend the word efficiencies to inefficiencies.  Meeting of 23rd February 2015 – All action points had been undertaken, or were covered by following agenda items.  1.5 JDav reported that any report the previous Principal might have made, of his visit to Itchen College, could not be located. JDav was aware that in order to help with students’ health Itchen College had a Mental Health Nurse on site.  1.12 JDav reported the next step would be to agree a new dashboard and training on this, in conjunction with the Governor ‘A Team’. | |  |
| **5.6 14/15** | **STUDENT LEADERSHIP** | |  |
|  | At the Principal’s invitation, a first-year and second-year student from the Student Leadership Group gave a presentation on what they enjoyed, and what they thought could be improved, about the Henley College.  Amy (a second-year) began by stating that the independence students were offered at the College had pushed her in several positive ways. Having come from a girls’ grammar school, she had quickly had to learn to manage her own college timetable and travel some distance by bus. She found the taster days and visits by the Principal had served as a useful introduction to the College.  Both students “loved being at the College”. Amy is an A-Level student and Erin is in her first year of a BTec. Both students felt the wide range of subjects available, was a “massive draw” for pupils. The opportunity to meet so many people from different schools was another unique advantage. Erin really enjoyed the sports enrichment and felt there was so much choice compared to other schools.  The students then went on to discuss aspects of the College they felt could be improved upon or would benefit from further thought and student input.  The two eating areas become very over-crowded, particularly in the winter. An extra communal area was suggested, with a teacher patrolling the area to manage any litter dropping. A photograph was displayed, showing a lunchtime eating area, which had been left very tidy by the students who had used it.  There are not many areas suitable for group work. The library is not appropriate as it is too quiet for joint working.  The impression that students smoking outside the College give was also seen as harmful to the College. Some students find it intimidating to walk through crowds of smokers. The use of e-cigarettes is also prevalent, with a pupil seen smoking in class the previous week.  Better integration between first and second years would be helpful and help prevent it feeling like a split college. Some of the enrichments had been stopped, which diminished the opportunity to mix with other years.  Amy felt that following the change to the Music Department staff at Christmas, there were much fewer opportunities to take part in extra-curricular musical activities. Amy had herself taken part in the recent Henley Youth Festival with her jazz band, without any input from the Music Teachers. In the first year, there had been many events that they had been given an opportunity to participate in. Amy felt the students were willing, but needed help from the staff to conduct and organise similar events. Erin reported that some of the sport enrichment activities she had enjoyed had stopped and not been replaced, such as the spinning and rowing. This had been disappointing. The presentation was then closed and the students took questions from the Corporation Members.  JWo asked if a buddy system would be helpful. It was felt that in addition to the buddy system between first-years and the feeder schools, it would be helpful if this could be continued when the first-years start. PLC suggested a University-style Fresher’s Week.  MK asked how effective the transport system was. It was reported that the bus service was regular and punctual. Use of public transport was more complicated, but travel to and from the college was generally well-linked.  JDav explained that regarding smoking, there was a balance to be made between accepting that smoking happens, and getting it off the streets. The decision had been made to put in a smoking shelter and smoking will be prohibited anywhere else on campus. NSau clarified whether students should be challenged if smoking on the pavement outside and JDav confirmed that they should be asked to move to the shelter. E-cigarettes come under the same no-smoking policy.  SF then asked the Student Leadership representatives what swayed their decision to choose the Henley College. Erin’s brother had attended and had a positive experience and Amy was drawn by the music opportunities and freedom of expression in the ‘A’- Level course and extra-curricular activities.  JL asked what brings other students to the College. Feeder schools play a big part, other family members who have already attended, the range of subjects, use of enrichment and sports on Wednesday afternoons were all cited.  Returning to the subject of group working, KH asked how much time was available for group working. The students confirmed that there was sufficient time; the difficulty lay in finding a location.  The students were then thanked unanimously for their informative and well-presented reporting and ideas. JWo then asked if they had been told why the enrichment activities had been stopped. The spinning coach had left and not been replaced. The rowing had also stopped. The students then left the meeting  NSau updated the Corporation, by informing members that he was now Department Head for Music. Following a change of personnel, enrichment was now being phased back in. JDav will look into rowing availability. There was a possibility that the casual rowing had been a taster course; club rowing was still taking place.  Regarding group working, KH asked if small, standing area pods had been considered. JDav reported that Rotherfield was being considered for student use as there was more room, and that the Student Leadership was going to receive a small pot of money and the opportunity to choose how to spend it. | | **The Principal** |
| **5.7 14/15** | **PRINCIPAL’S REPORT** | |  |
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|  | JDav explained that the following report would update Governors on the actions taken, following her ‘First 19Days’ Report. JDav circulated the Improvement Strategy, of which the over-riding objective was Consistency and Excellence.  Processes and procedures The Process Improvement Group had been formed, to ensure policies across the College were being applied consistently. The group was made up of volunteers, both teachers and support staff, to help identify areas of inconsistency. Members of the team were asked to help suggest solutions for identified problems and champion any revised policies.  The aim was to create a rigorous, consistent quality system, based on quality control and continuous improvement. Several ideas were to be implemented including:   * A quality calendar to be piloted in April. This aims to improve quality as quickly as possible. SCut and JBri are working on this jointly. * New SAR style and process, which will enable Governor proposals to be incorporated after SAR meetings * Evaluation of the tutorial system and introduction of new software * Reconstruct lessons observation scheme to remove grading, focussing on improvements and coaching * New appraisal policy   KH was pleased that grading was to be removed from lesson observations and that improvements would be focussed on instead.  SF commented that it was a very good idea to have deadlines for SAR, but felt the deadlines were still too late. PLC concurred with this and was unsure that the way Governors interact with their Area Teachers was effective. JDav commented that it would depend on what Governors were trying to get out of the process and it was a good way for Governors to get to know the subjects. However, JL added that several Governors feel that they want an input that has an impact. TS commented that the link system does provide a source of information, a safety valve and strengthens management. JDav agreed to look at the timetable.  KH reported that he meets with his link once a term but often discusses items not covered by SAR. JDav asked if there should be another method of feeding back, as SAR is quite a rigid reporting mechanism. KH felt the process was not quite right as is stands.  Internal Communication. JDav continues to operate her open door policy. The Trade Unions have been met with and JDav is trying to meet with as many staff as possible. Along with SCut and BRic, the Principal has started attending team meetings. There is a staff briefing every Monday, on both sites, to encourage better communication. The Principal’s PA, Sarah Martin, has started running Support Staff meetings. Jacqui Williams has agreed to run a Parents Forum. There are weekly surgeries for students and the Principal is meeting with the Student Leadership.  Governance and Leadership. JL attended training on Quality Improvement which will need to be ‘drilled down’. The guidance is now to put on hold adoption of the Carver model (the process cannot deal with sufficient levels of detail) and instead adopt a Quality and Improvement Committee to facilitate this.  Staff. JDav has held positive meetings with Programme Leaders to evaluate and maximise effectiveness. The use of external staff to conduct interviews is to be reviewed. There is also to be an increase in staff training, in the areas of IT and time-management (areas of need identified by staff).  Finance. A three-year financial plan has been produced by SBis. EFA controls are to be reinstated into the plan.  The Principal was thanked for her presentation. TS commented that the Improvement Strategy was driven by what the College wants to achieve, rather than responding to external requirements, ie Ofsted.  **Chair and Principal feedback on sector and election impact.**  JDav and JL had recently attended a dinner and conference at the Houses of Parliament. At the dinner, time had been spent with the local MP, John Howell. At the conference for Tertiary Colleges, attendees were also given a briefing on what might happen after the election. There was also the opportunity to talk to colleagues and other MPs. JL raised the issue of colleges claiming VAT. | | **The Principal** |
| **5.8 14/15** | **MARKETING STRATEGY** | |  |
|  | This item was discussed later on the agenda, as the Head of Marketing was unable to attend at the commencement of the meeting. | |  |
| **5.9 14/15** | **ALL COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OTHER RELATED CORPORATION BUSINESS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE CORPORATION**  **ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY COMMITTEE**  **Committee Report – Spring Term 2015**  Appendix 5.9 A/i gave an update of the most recent business of the Accommodation Strategy. Minor changes had been agreed to the strategy and were attached for approval by the Corporation.  The changes were proposed by LA and seconded by MT.  **AUDIT COMMITTEE**  **Committee Report – Spring Term 2015**  In lieu of a summary report, notes of the most recent meeting were considered. The committee had failed to meet its quorum so the notes were for information only.  IMG did report that he had discussed the possibility of Charles Wiggin, co-opted member of the Audit Committee, becoming Chair. As Charles had previously indicated that he was not able to attend Corporation meetings, a discussion followed on whether he would be able to act as Chair of Audit. The Corporation Secretary was asked to look into the matter further and report back to Committee.  Referring to ‘smoking and reputational risk’ SF asked why cameras would be pointed at the smoking shelter, once installed. JDav reported that this was to diminish the risk of drug dealing taking place there. Smokers are often targeted by drug dealers, as potential customers. The CCTV cameras are already in position; the proposed bus shelter location will come under their existing viewing area.  **Risk Register**  A revised Risk Register had been reviewed by the Audit Committee and was now forwarded to Corporation for consideration. JDav had consolidated the most serious risks and changed the categorisations to ‘Very Low to Certain’ and ‘Impact/Severity of the event on College’. JDav listed the current top five risks and confirmed that the Action Plan was currently being worked on to tie in with the risks.  The revised register was generally well-received with the following comments and queries:  TS felt that under the likelihood of an event happening, the jump from 25 to 50% was too big. The wording “more likely than not to happen” was discussed. The previous register had separated reputational and financial risks. JDav offered to review the wording to make it more helpful.  PLC noted that the openness of the campus had come off the list, and expressed concern that this wasn’t on the list, it wouldn’t be looked at.  JWo asked about the social media risk and how the College handles the problem. JDav felt education was the best way. Some students leave their names in comments and twitter and these have been picked up. It was however, impossible to geo-fence references to the College on sites such as YikYak. Students get a lot of information on how to deal with bullying and the Head of Student Services is responsible for this area. NSau asked if the site, Rate My Teacher was monitored and JDav confirmed it was monitored by RVit. KH asked whether students are told/asked not to devalue the College – JDav felt that it was part of growing up.  **FINANCE COMMITTEE**  **Committee Report – Spring Term 2015**  TS reported that SMT had decided to view the drop in student numbers as temporary and that the marketing drive will improve the situation. The budget was therefore being prepared on the basis of showing a loss, but finances were in place to cover this. This move may drop the finance rating to Good from Outstanding, but the College would be no worse off than its peers. The difficult time would be next year and the College will have to draw on its reserves.  JWo sought further information on the voluntary contributions. First years are asked to pay a contribution in addition to their book payment. Not all first-years pay and even less second years pay. It was agreed that setting up a direct debit instruction was a good idea, particularly as several Governors did not remember being requested to make a payment in the second year.  The reserves currently held by College were discussed. JL reported that this was discussed at the HOP conference and flagged up as an area of concern and being given guidance to use these reserves before they were taken. TS confirmed that it is not possible to ring-fence money as is possible in local government and that it might be worth adding re-appropriation to the risk register. LA asked why it was not possible to spend any reserves on current students, but this is not possible as every year the College would be running a deficit. SBis expounded that reserves can be converted to capital projects and previously the reserves were earmarked for big projects, which had not come to fruition.  **REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**  **Committee Report – Spring Term 2015**  LA reported that the main concern of the committee, which had met the previous week, was to ensure thorough paperwork for Senior Post Holders for the future. Appraisals would be tied down and paperwork improved.  **EMPLOYMENT POLICY COMMITTEE**  **Committee Report – Spring Term 2015 Report**  Colleges 46 personnel policies  BRic circulated a list of the College’s personnel policies, which had been considered by Employment Policy Committee. Simon White had asked that it was brought to Corporation for information. BRic explained that the policies were ranked in order of priority, and explained the review cycle and process. It was noted that Policies 1-21 were reviewed annually, and Policies 22-46 were reviewed every three years, sooner if required subject to Case Law or new legislation. BRic informed the Committee that she and MK had met and he had offered to lead training on extremism and radicalisation with staff, and to help with the development of related policies and procedures.  Synopsis of staff absence review  BRic had taken a paper to Employment Policy which looked at type and length of absence. Statistical analysis of non-certified absences to long-term sickness was made. Unplanned, short and continuous absence was the main issue for the college to manage, particularly the need to put in to place consistent and quality cover. There were four options available:   * The best option is for colleagues to cover the work * An alternative is for management to provide cover, but this takes a manager away from their role * Agency cover is immediate and DBS certified * Finally, the option of recruiting a member of staff to cover the absence, although there are recruitment costs attached to this.   BRic informed Governors that benchmarking material and absence trends will be brought to Committee in June.  MT also informed the Committee that a decision had been made to revise the start time of Employment Policy, from 5.00 pm to 4.30 pm. This change was decided upon, to make attendance by the Trade Union representatives easier.  **COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE**  **Committee Report – Spring Term 2015**  The committee had met on 19th January 2015. Due to a change in Personnel, the minutes of the meeting had not been approved. The minutes to be approved and forwarded to the next meeting of the Corporation.  **Request to all Chairs**  JL reminded all Chairs to provide a summary report of their committee’s activities and to discuss with the Corporation Secretary whether their reports were for discussion and/or approval.  **GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE**  JL reported that Governance and Search had been cancelled as it was not quorate and a revised date of Wednesday 15th April, 1.30 – 3.30 pm was proposed. | | **Corporation Secretary**  **Principal**  **Director of HR and Professional Development**  **All Chairs of Committees** |
| **5.8** | **MARKETING STRATEGY** | |  |
|  | As RVit had arrived, the agenda item of marketing strategy was then taken.  JDav circulated a report, explaining that it was a short-term marketing strategy from March to August 2015. JDav then highlighted several of the action points as follows:  Enhance links with 4 main partner schools –   * An information leaflet titled “Did you Know?” has been produced, listing possible college course such as forensic science. A direct mail company has been appointed to carry out a targeted mail shot of the leaflet to the feeder school localities. * The aim is to ‘keep the issue warm’ over the summer, so the possibility of Summer Open Days is under discussion. * The prospectus will be updated and companies were in the process of tendering. Examples of their proposals were on display for Governors to view. Staff, students and PLC had reviewed the proposals. * The website will be more active, to relay the excitement that students have and a virtual tour of the college will be produced. * A video booth will be set up in Deanfield reception on 25th March. Students will be encouraged to answer prompted questions about the college. As part of the process, they will be asked which school they came from, so videos can be targeted to the relevant schools. * A photographer is also coming on 25th March, to take high quality photos of students, for use in updated marketing material. * College tours are getting fuller, but 40% of booked visitors are not turning up, so the decision has been made to over-book the tours.   SF queried how student permission for publicity was obtained. RVit reported that in addition to the Publicity Consent Form students sign when starting, a separate form will be in place for all users of the video booth.  Promote positive links with the Local Enterprise Partnership’s Skills Boards – JDav was hoping to meet with LEPS as soon as possible.  Evaluate the curriculum to ensure the College is supportive of the Government’s NEET priorities – The Principal and Deputy-Principal will carry out an audit of the curriculum on 16th April 2015. This will be done annually in the future.  Ensure that the college demonstrates excellence and outstanding leadership – Further marketing of the EDI in Leadership Gold Award will take place. Further middle management training will take place, via the Tertiary College Group.  Virtual Tour and Virtual Open Day  RVit reported that several other institutions are now adopting virtual tours. A photographer has been commissioned to take a series of overlapping photographs to create a virtual tour. This will form part of a virtual open day, which is aimed as students unable to attend the evening open events. It will be possible to quality control what people see and will help build up familiarity for students when they start. It will also be possible to capture the data of any potential students, who register for the virtual tour. The virtual open day will be separate to the actual open days and there will be a live Q and A session.  In addition to all the other marketing activities listed, RVit is looking at different forms of advertising, icluding outdoor advertising.  LA commented that students are currently receiving their offers from other institutions. JDav reported that students are being told on the day of the interview and the Easter holidays are earmarked to finalise the process.  NSau commented that a virtual tour had been made previously without staff involvement. Staff needed to be given time to set up their work areas to look their best. NSau was assured that the photographer appointed had the skills to produce work that will reflect the college at its best.  JL congratulated JDav and RVit on the work they had carried out. | |  |
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| **5.10 14/15** | **GOVERNORS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT HENLEY COLLEGE** | |  |
|  | JL reported that there were several developments in the field of Governance. JL and JDAV discsussed this as a development for the college. Several colleges run these to great effect.  A Governor’s Conference can assist us around the areas that we don’t get a chance to cover in committees, bring in speakers such as representatives from the Association of Colleges (AOC), give latest sector updates and so on.  JDav added that the conference would include key staff as well as Governors and it would enable difficult-to-hold strategy discussion and make this more of a two-way process, so Governors have more input before a strategy comes to committee. This would also enable the use of Governors’ skills.  SF asked that provisional dates be circulated as quickly as possible.  Governors were asked to forward any holiday dates, or dates they were unable to attend to the Corporation Secretary. | **All Govs/Corp Sec** | |
| **5.11 14/15** | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** | |  |
|  | LA asked for clarification as to whether a Grade B Maths GCSE was required to study ‘A’ Level PE. LA had been informed that there was some confusion over the matter. The prospectus was checked and it was confirmed that a Maths GCSE was not required. | |  |
| **5.12 14/15** | **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS** | |  |
|  | Confidential items are minuted separately. | |  |
| **5.13 14/15** | **ITEMS TO BE TAKEN FORWARD TO NEXT CORPORATION MEETING** | |  |
| **5.14 14/15** | **Date and Time of Next Meeting** | |  |
|  | * Corporation Meeting Ofsted Training for ‘A’ Team only - 30th April 6.00 pm * Corporation Meeting (SSC) – Thursday 21st May 2015 at 6.00 pm * Corporation Meeting – Monday 29th June at 6.00 pm | |  |
| **5.15 14/15** | **MEETING CLOSURE** | |  |
|  | The meeting closed at 9.10 pm | |  |

MINUTES of the meeting held on 23rd March 2015 were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair

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