



## MidKent College

### GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 3 June 2020 at 17.15hrs via Skype due to the College closure (Covid-19).

Present: (100% attendance)

Mr A Start	Chair	Mr S Cook	Principal CEO	Prof E Sallis	
Mr R Aggarwal		Mrs B Jossi	Staff Governor	Mr J White	Student Governor
Mrs P Baxter		Mr C Reeves		Mr J Williams	
Mr M Blanning	Vice Chair	Mr C Reynolds		Mrs A Woodhouse	
Mr N Baveystock	MKCTS Chair	Mrs C Richardson		Mrs M Woolston	

In attendance:

Ms C Burkin	Clerk to the Governing Body
Mr C Hare	Executive Director of Employers & Corporate Services
Mr M Garrod	Managing Director of MKCTS
Mr M Peat	Executive Director of Finance and Estates
Mrs J Watt	Executive Director for Curriculum & Quality
<b>Observer</b>	
Mrs A Tithecott	MIS Manager

#### 1 Declaration of Interests

*Mr A Start* as CEO of Capita who are involved in the education sector and defence training. *Mr S Cook* declared an interest as a Trustee of Rivermead Trust, a Board member of the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership and Chair of Medway Place Board, Trustee of Royal Engineers Vocational Education and Training Trust (REVETT) and a member of MKCTS Board. *Mr M Peat* declared an interest as the Company Secretary for MKCTS and Lower Lines Trust. *Mr C Reynolds* declared an interest as a Trustee of the Sir John Hawkins Trust and a co-opted member of the South Eastern Veteran Advice and Pensions Committee MOD. *Mr C Reeves* declared an interest as a Trustee for the Hackney Free and Parochial Schools Educational Trust, Trustee of Hackney Lighthouse and Non-Exec Director of MKCTS. *Mr M Garrod*

Chairman .....*signed digitally by the Chairman*.....

Date 15 July 2020

declared an interest as a shareholder in British Security and Defence contractor, Foundation Trust Member of Frimley Park Hospital/ Member of Royal Aeronautical Society and he is married to the FD at QinetQ Group. *Prof Ed Sallis* declared an interest as Education and Training Foundation T level Professional Development External Assurance Group/Trustee of the Education Support Partnership/ The Association of Accounting Technicians Licensing and Monitoring Group/currently being consulted by the DfE as part of their review of Level 2 qualifications, particularly in relationship to qualifications in childcare. *Mrs A Woodhouse* is employed by Maidstone Borough Council & declared membership of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives.

## 2 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

The Chairman welcomed new Governors, Claire Richardson and Marie Woolston to the meeting. He also welcomed observer Angela Tithecott, MIS.

## 3 Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 25 March 2020

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 March 2020 and confidential minutes were accepted as a true record and signed digitally by the Chairman. *These will be physically signed when the College re-opens.*

## 4 Matters Arising Document – Paper SGB19/1524

The outstanding matters were:

1. Visits are suspended but all Link Governors have been asked to make contact with their link areas for an update, if they have not done so already. **Ongoing.**
2. College SAR - J Watt confirmed the publication of the College SAR as required. **Complete.**
3. Governors are encouraged to use the College social media channels and re-share the content. Instructions are available on request. **Complete.**
4. MKC/MKCTS Relationship and proposal – the Principal suggested a timeline for this, July/October meetings. **Ongoing.**

## MAIN UPDATE

### 5 Principal's Report – Paper SGB19/1525

Simon Cook Principal/CEO presented his report to members for strategic discussion and agreement.

The report is set out in the following sections:

1. Strategy Development - Update on timelines and content. This suggested the main themes for future Governing Body meetings to ensure that Strategy remains at the forefront of the Board meetings. Members **agreed** the timeline.

2. Digital Strategy - Update regarding the opportunities provided by the current ways of working and the transformed use of technology that will provide the foundation of the Strategy. The recruitment of a Digital Transformation Director is due to commence.
3. Stakeholder Research – This project has now started and will continue in phases looking at local stakeholders, students, parents etc. Members will be updated as this progresses.

**Action: S Cook**

4. Covid19 update - The main section of the report updated Governors regarding the return to work actions and daily challenges:
  - 4.1 Relevant Government Guidance and advice included those relating to administering results for students and the key documents informing decisions for the return to College. The focus remains on those students who need to access the College to complete assessments.
  - 4.2 Return to work / training plans. This section summarised actions taking place to prepare a return to work and study at the College. Members discussed the possible anxieties of staff and students around returning and were assured by the transition plans. The Business Continuity Group meet three times a week to monitor actions and plan the return.

Each Executive Team member gave Governors a verbal update:

Jackie Watt – updated members on the various guidance from Awarding Bodies and other organisations regarding grading and assessments. The curriculum teams are ensuring a fair and honest assessment to predict grades. Governors were assured that the process was rigorous and fair and included evidence to justify each grade awarded. They noted some assessments were ‘delayed’ until safe access to the College is possible. The curriculum teams are also business planning for 2020/21 and for the start of term. M Blanning reminded members that this will be discussed fully at the QTL Committee on 25 June 2020 and an update will be reported at the next Governing Body meeting.

Martin Peat – updated members on the focus in the facilities team to make the College Covid secure and as safe as possible for staff and students to return. He acknowledge the anxieties around this and the College has done all possible to ensure it feels safe for all users. He assured Governors that adequate PPE was available where required and additional cleaning and signage were in place. Health & Safety risk assessments have been completed as required and testing is available. The Business Continuity Group meetings monitor the actions being taken and agree new actions as required. The Business Continuity Action Plan is an addition to the Risk Register and is being presented to the next R&A Committee meeting. This includes a detailed oversight and assurance.

It was proposed that the Link Governor for H&S, who is also the R&A Committee Chair, joins the Business Continuity Group to provide governance and risk oversight. He will report any concerns to the Chair and Vice Chair and update the Board as necessary. This was **agreed** with no objections. The vote was noted via hands raised and the chat facility within Skype.

Chris Hare - updated members on each of his areas of responsibility:

HR – the team are working well remotely to support the establishment, ensuring good communication with staff regarding any concerns via sources such as the extensive list of FAQ on SharePoint or in conversations with the Staff Forum and Union. Members were informed that the relationship with the local and regional Union is healthy and the College is in regular communications with them. HR also monitor the ‘pulse surveys’ which test how staff are feeling at any one time. Members were assured to know that the response rate is high. The College is also piloting ‘Doc u sign’ to assist with electronic signatures. This is being used in HR for contracts and will be rolled out to other areas of the College.

Members were concerned with the welfare of staff and students and were assured that managers are checking in regularly with staff and tutors with their students. The slow transition back into College will address anxieties and ensure they are recognised and well managed.

ICT – the team continue to support staff and students. There are plans to propose investment in line with curriculum needs and access to devices for all students especially during this time. As home working becomes a more permanent feature for some, support and equipment may be required. The Team continues to consider how they can ensure the needs of the customer are met. The College has adapted well to the use of apps for remote meetings whilst working within the rules of GDPR. A solution has been agreed with Zoom to allow for secure use for meetings. The Student Governor was assured that devices will not be recalled in the holidays to allow for students to continue to work and catch up.

Governing Body members thanked The Exec for the update and **accepted** the report.

## 6 Covid Update - Paper SGB19/1526

The Chairman introduced the paper which summarised external information for Governors to encourage questions to challenge and support the Executive. The current landscape is constantly changing due to the pandemic with guidance available from many sources. This paper aimed to collate the relevant information to assist Governors understanding and provoke questions and debate.

Members agreed that many of the issues had been raised and resolved in the previous item. Therefore they requested the paper is re-issued with the conclusions and agreements added.

**Action: Clerk**

They reiterated the agreement for H&S Link Governor to attend the Business Continuity Group meetings weekly. It was agreed that any Governor can observe the meeting remotely, by request.

Members agreed an update on progress would be useful in August and agreed the proposed call date of 26 August 2020 at 5pm which will include updates from each Exec member on progress for September 2020.

**Action: Clerk**

It was agreed an early update would be available at the 15 July 2020 Governing Body meeting and included in the Principal's report. In the meantime, if Governors have any questions or concerns they can email the Chair, Principal and/or Clerk.

## SCRUTINY FOR APPROVAL

### 7 GB/Quality, Teaching and Learning Call (QTL) - Paper SGB19/1527

Michael Blanning introduced the notes of the QTL call.

Members were reminded that many Governors attended the call to gain assurance from the actions of the College to the current pandemic specifically around teaching and learning but also a wider update from Executive Team. The following updates were noted:

1. Year-end/Awarding Organisation assessment of students
2. Continuing Provision for Students
3. Other Provision
4. Apprenticeships
5. Key new Risks in QTL due to Covid-19 particularly for 2020/21

Members noted that the Link Governor for HE had conducted a remote visit and his findings would be included in the net QTL Committee meeting.

Members **accepted** the minutes.

### 8 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meetings held on 13 May 2020 and confidential minutes - Paper SGB19/1528.

Chris Reeves introduced the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and highlighted the following points:-

The Board is requested to note that:

- Progress against the ICT Strategy was reviewed. No concerns were raised.
- Management accounts for the year to March 2020 were presented and accepted. Members noted that Covid has had limited impact on the finances of the College and gave reassurance of financial management.
- MKC Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2020/21- updated for approval.
- The Financial Regulations, Procedures & Anti-Fraud Policy was presented but further amendments are required before recommendation. To be brought forward to the July 2020 meeting.
- The annual Gifts & Gratuities register was presented and agreed with no concerns raised.
- Contracted out provision was reviewed and accepted.
- The Estates & Facilities update included MLPs were noted.

- The HR report and MLP's was presented and agreed at the meeting. These included the initial positive findings of the Staff Survey.
- Following a recommendation from the Risk and Audit Committee the current financial risks were reviewed during the meeting and it was noted that these were recorded in the Risk Register.

**Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:**

- MKC Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2020/21

Governing Body members **accepted** the minutes and **approved** the recommendation of the Committee by either indicating agreement on screen or via the Skype chat option. Members were given sufficient time to record any disagreement with the recommendations.

**9 Minutes of the Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 5 May 2020 - Paper SGB19/1529.**

Pim Baxter introduced the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee (S&G). The Committee considered:-

- Update re Peridot Partners - Chair & Finance Governor recruitment.
- Mentors for new Governors – agreed.
- Skills Audit update – complete.
- Training Update – no concerns.
- GIV update reported.
- Third Year Evaluations – complete - no concerns.
- Risk Register – Governance – currently scored medium whilst recruitment continues with no concerns.
- Confidential Minutes for 2019/20 were reviewed and two agreed for disclosure. Any minutes containing salary/personal or commercially sensitive information, remain confidential.
- Prospective Governor Nikki Swain did not have the financial qualifications requested but because of her finance experience it is recommend that she becomes a co-opted member of the F&GP Committee.

S&G had interviewed a prospective Governor and felt she would be a good addition to the F&GP Committee as a co-opted member, due to her financial experience.

**Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:**

- Confidential minutes for disclosure – members **agreed** these for disclosure.
- Self-assessment/Improvement plan – **approved**.

Committee membership:

- R&A Committee – B Jossi and J Williams
- QTL Committee – M Woolston
- S&G Committee – A Woodhouse
- S&G Chairman – Andy Start after Dec 2020

- F&GP Committee – Nikki Swain – co-opted
- Rem Com – C Reeves as F&GP Chair

Governing Body members **accepted** the minutes and **approved** the recommendations of the Committee by either indicating agreement on screen or via the Skype chat option. Members were given sufficient time to record any disagreement with the recommendations.

Members thanked the S&G Committee and especially the Chair, for the continued recruitment work which will strengthen the Board membership and structure.

### Break

## GOVERNANCE

### 10 Update from Chairman of MidKent College Training Services Ltd (MKCTS) - Paper SGB19/1530

Nick Baveystock introduced the update from the Chairman of MKCTS Ltd. regarding the performance of MKCTS since the last meeting.

*This item was minuted as confidential due to the commercial sensitivity.*

Governing Body members **accepted** the report.

### 11 Safeguarding Update – paper SGB19/1531

Pim Baxter introduced the paper as Safeguarding Governor and gave assurance on the following:

- Ensure vulnerable young people, Looked After Children (LAC), Care Leavers and those with an EHCP are safe and supported at this time.
- Ensure relevant MKC policies and procedures are up to date and reflect current ways of working. An annex has been added to the Safeguarding Policy and was presented for approval.
- Ensure Staff and Students are safe and aware of protocols when engaging in Online and EMeetings. The Protocol was presented for approval.
- Updated Governors on current Safeguarding practices and statistics.
- Informed Governors of the new Student/Staff Bereavement Policy and seek approval.

Members noted the update and **approved** the documents.

### 12 Draft Meeting Schedule for 2020/21 – Paper SGB19/1532

The meeting dates for Governing Body and Committee meetings were presented. Members noted that the Away Day will include an Extraordinary meeting to agree the IFMC. All meetings had been scheduled, where possible, in line with previous years with Committee meetings set to allow time to report to the Governing Body. Chairs/Exec member of the Committee have

had an opportunity to amend and agree the dates.

Members **approved** the dates and agreed to inform the Clerk of any absences.

**Action: Members**

### 13 Any Other Business

The Chair asked each Governor in turn for AOB and the following was noted:

Members felt that due to the current pandemic, students may be facing high unemployment in the future and wanted the College to consider how to manage this. They were assured that the Exec Team have similar concerns and the Principal was asked to reflect on this and the potential impact on the future economy and bring forward to the next meeting in his Principal's Report.

**Action: Exec Team**

Concerns were raised regarding unemployment for students but also for the local community who may lose their employment due to the pandemic. They felt this could be an opportunity for the College to support the community in retraining with possible curriculum changes to meet the new needs of the local economy. The Exec Team were asked to consider and report back as above.

**Action: Exec Team**

The College was asked to consider the impact on the wellbeing of the staff if there is a second wave of the pandemic. They were assured that lessons have been learnt and there is significant support for the wellbeing of staff and students. It was also noted that extra support is available locally re wellbeing through Medway Council available on the website. J Williams agreed to liaise with the College regarding a targeted approach to isolation.

Members thanked the Exec Team for the detailed papers and assurance given during the meeting.

### 14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be remotely on **Wednesday 15 July 2020** at 17.15hrs via Zoom.

Members noted that if they do not have a College device, they must ensure the Zoom app installed before the meeting.

### 15 Review of the meeting

Members agreed a useful meeting where all had an opportunity to speak. They thanked all staff at MKC and MKCTS for managing well in difficult circumstances.

Members has noted they wished to thank all staff for their hard work during this time and discussed some suggestions. It was agreed that Governors could record a message of thanks to be circulated to staff in the same way as the Staff Briefings. S Cook agreed to take this forward with Marketing and inform Governors. The Chair agreed to record a vote of thanks.

**Action: Clerk to organise**

The Observer thanked the Board for the opportunity to listen to the support and challenge given to the Exec Team. She stated it was reassuring to hear the depth of knowledge and understanding Governors have, and gain from the meeting, to influence the development of the business.

*All Staff & Student Governors and members of staff left the meeting.*

**Confidential Item**

**16 Minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 25 March 2020 – Paper SGB19/1533**

Michael Blanning introduced the minutes of the Remuneration Committee for note only as verbal update had already been given.

**17 S&G Recommendation**

Pim Baxter informed the Governing Body of a recommendation made by the S&G Committee.

*This item was minuted as confidential.*

The meeting closed at 19.50hrs