

**SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**held on 25 March 2021 at 9.00 pm**  
**via videoconference**

**<sup>1</sup>PRESENT:** Z Carter (E); J Emm (SCS); T Floyd (E); N Hopkins (E, Chair); J Lander (E); M Lauder (E); J Milburn (P); N Moody (E); S Morgan (E); A Neal (E); S Ormes (St); A Owen (E); R Palmer (E); H Perry (S); J Plenderleith (St); C Wilson (E, Vice Chair) (to min 104)

In attendance: J Baker – Vice Principal Curriculum (Sparsholt College)  
D Carrig – Health & Safety Officer (mins 114 to 120)  
C James – Dean of Higher Education (mins 46 to 53)  
S Grant – Deputy Principal  
S Hermiston – Data Protection Officer (mins 88 to 89)  
B Stokes – Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover College)  
A Whitworth, Director of Finance  
S Willson, Clerk to the Corporation

#### **APOLOGIES**

28. Apologies were received from O Wilson.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

29. There were no new interests to declare. The Board's Register of Interests records Members who hold (unremunerated) directorships of the College's subsidiary companies.

#### **MINUTES**

30. **Resolved** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2020 (Parts I and II) and 21 January 2021 with minor corrections be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of Governors.

#### Risk Management (Minutes 419)

31. The Director of Finance confirmed that, having evaluated options, risks and costs, the SLT had determined that it was in the interests of the College to purchase terrorism insurance at a cost of £25k pa (plus Insurance Premium Tax).

#### Strategic Plan & Finance (Minutes 432, 439, 506, 512)

32. The Deputy Principal confirmed that investment in digital infrastructure funded by the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) collaborative digital funding was on track to be fully spent by the following week.

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<sup>1</sup> (E) = External; (P) = Principal; (S) = Staff; (SCS) = Sparsholt College Services Staff Governor; (St) = Student

33. It was noted that a response to the first stage application for an Institute of Technology was expected within a month.
34. The Director of Finance confirmed that the application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS), delivered by Salix (a government finance public body), for LED Lighting Upgrade Works had been successful and installation was due to start after Easter.
35. The Deputy Principal noted that the Office for Students had provided further funds for student hardship in 2020-21 and therefore the full amount of additional budget approved by the Board at the December meeting for HE student hardship bursaries would not now be required.
36. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **CHAIR OF GOVERNORS' REPORT**

37. The Board had received and noted the report of the Chair which summarised activities he had undertaken since the December 2020 meeting of the Board and forthcoming events and matters requiring his consideration.

#### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN**

38. The Board had received the report of the Principal summarising key strategic developments and progress against the strategic plan, together with the latest College Group Covid-19 risk assessment.
39. The Principal highlighted a number of key points in relation to Teaching and Support (Priority 1), Financial Strength and Efficiency (Priority 2) and Strategic Alliances (Priority 3).
40. The Board noted that good progress had been made against the majority of the annual milestones for 2021/21, although there continued to be significant challenges in the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Principal confirmed that it was the intention to deliver face-to-face teaching for the remainder of the academic year.
41. Members discussed the impact of lockdown on students and the strategies in place for delivery of English and maths and to support the students to raise attainment. More information about the measures taken and the progress made would be reported to the Quality & Standards Committee.
42. The Board also noted that good progress had been made with a number of projects in the property strategy, enabled by additional grant funding from the DfE and the EM3 LEP.
43. The Principal confirmed that, following the approval of the Board by written resolution to the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund bid, the application had been submitted. The deadline for the T Level Capital Fund application had been extended slightly and would be submitted shortly. The Principal commended the efforts of the teams involved in bringing the application information together.
44. The Board discussed the positive trends in applications to both FE and HE, noting the examples of the actions undertaken by management to support this.
45. The Board had received the updated College Group Covid-19 risk assessment and was assured that the SLT continued to revisit and update risk assessments in line with DfE

guidance. The Principal noted that in-person fire drills were to be restarted on campus shortly.

### **FE AND HE QUALIFICATION ARRANGEMENTS**

46. The Board had received the report of the Vice Principals and Dean of Higher Education on FE and HE qualification arrangements this year to provide assurance that appropriate preparations and processes were in place.
47. The Vice Principal and Dean of Higher Education gave some detailed examples of the how students had been supported in preparation for assessments and of the measures in place to award grades.
48. Both Student Governors present gave positive feedback about their experiences to date.
49. The Board noted that management were confident that the processes in place were robust and that suitable progress had been made during periods of remote learning to ensure that learners were suitable prepared to meet the requirements of the qualifications and that competence training and assessments were continuing for apprenticeships where required.
50. It was also noted that all FE qualifications would have an internal panel which was not involved in the assessments to review the grades and evidence would be submitted to the exam boards. The (Academic) Staff Governor added that there might also be some external moderation from exam boards of specific courses, such as Art.
51. Responding to a member's question about the confidence that employers could have that students going on work placements in agriculture would have the appropriate level of skills to be safe, the Vice Principal Curriculum (Sparsholt) confirmed that the focus after Easter would be on enhancing practical experience as much as possible, in addition to supporting achievement in English and maths. Health and safety units would be completed before a work placement commenced.
52. For HE, the Board noted that the 'no detriments practices' implemented by the University of Portsmouth in 2019/20 had been carried forward to 2021/22 and extenuating circumstances adjusted to include Covid-19 and IT related issues. Exams had been replaced with time constrained assessments. A full student consultation process had been completed to ensure that adjustments to the assessments met Consumer Marketing legislation. Separate exam processes were in place for FdSc Veterinary Nursing to comply with Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) requirements.
53. The Dean of HE highlighted that industry experience for HE students had been impacted somewhat by the pandemic restrictions but that HE teaching staff had sought to provide a range of alternative experiences and the deadline for completing hours of industry experience had been extended where necessary.

### **HEALTHCHECK REPORT**

54. The Board had received and noted the latest College Healthcheck report (2021/02).
55. The Deputy Principal provided an update on the ESFA's position regarding AEB funding, explaining that the ESFA had lowered the threshold rate for under-delivery of adult education allocations from 100% to 90% but that was a higher threshold than the previous year. There was general agreement in the sector that this failed to recognise the full impact of the pandemic, including in relation to land-based colleges. The SLT

planning assumption had been around 80%. The position of the land-based sector had been represented to the ESFA by Landex and the AOC was also discussing the issue with the DfE on behalf of colleges.

56. It was noted that the uncertainty over AEB funding also featured in the sensitivity analysis in the management accounts.
57. Responding to a member's question about how the outcome of the Online Learning Reviews were triangulated with student views, the Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover) explained the results of a learner survey undertaken in lockdown had informed the ongoing CPD to support academic staff and that any learning points would also be discussed with the Student Councils.
58. The FE Student Governor confirmed that her teachers had delivered online learning effectively but that her preference was for face-to-face teaching.

## **FINANCE**

### Management Accounts

59. The Board had received the latest monthly management accounts (to 29 February 2021), including an update on the in-year financial position 2020/21 and cash flow forecast to July 2022.
60. The Director of Finance highlighted key points from the management accounts, noting that the forecast outturn had been adjusted to reflect the majority of the year to date variances. The latest forecast outturn took on board points discussed at the Resources Committee meeting and provided more detailed explanation. There were still some sensitivities in relation to HE funding, for example if there were student withdrawals.
61. The Director of Finance confirmed that she believed the outturn would be better than budget and the bank loan covenants met, providing there were no further lockdowns. The College remained a going concern with a healthy cashflow.
62. Asked about the position of the student transport bus companies, the Director of Finance confirmed that there was regular liaison with the companies about their financial situation and the College was ensuring invoices were paid promptly to support their cash position. The SLT was keeping under review the potential student transport provision and whether further measures might be required.

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE.**

63. The Board had received the unconfirmed minutes of the meetings of the Audit Committee held on 4 and 12 March 2021, together with the College's Risk Register Dashboard for information.
64. The Committee Chair confirmed that the committee had reviewed and was satisfied with the performance of the external auditors.
65. **Resolved** – that Buzzacott LLP be confirmed as the external auditors for Sparsholt College Hampshire for the statutory accounts for the financial year ending 31 July 2021 under the terms of the current contract.
66. The Committee Chair summarised the tender of the internal audit service and discussion which the committee had asked the Director of Finance to have with the recommended internal auditors about the number of audit days and the cost of the service.

67. Noting that the outcome of the tender process was to recommend reappointment of the current internal auditors, members queried the length of time the auditors had worked with the College and whether there were any issues arising in relation to their independence and ability to challenge robustly. It was noted that this had been carefully considered by the Audit Committee and discussed with RSM as the interview.
68. The Committee Chair undertook to report the points raised by Board members to RSM in order that the committee could see further assurance and report to the Board.
69. **Resolved** – that RSM Risk Assurance Services LLP be appointed as the internal auditors for Sparsholt College Hampshire on a five-year contract at the terms set out in the tender documentation and to provide an annual audit opinion based on 35 days.
70. The Board noted that both internal audit reports presented to the committee had given substantial assurance that the appropriate controls and processes were in place.
71. The Committee Chair highlighted the discussion at the committee about risks to the organisation associated with the rise in student safeguarding cases and mental health concerns. The Board agreed that this was matter which required ongoing careful management and monitoring.
72. With reference to the cybersecurity activities reported in the committee minutes, the Chair noted a cyber attack which had taken place on another college and the Deputy Principal confirmed that management had reviewed the learning points from that attack and were satisfied that the College had the appropriate protections in place. Further enhancements were being implemented as part of the Cyber Essentials accreditation.

#### **CURRICULUM, EMPLOYERS & MARKET REQUIREMENTS COMMITTEE**

73. The Board had received the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum, Employers Market Requirements Committee (CEMR) held on 25 February 2021, together with the College Three Year Curriculum Plan and the Careers Strategy.
74. The Committee Chair drew the attention of the Board to the reports on FE students' destinations, noting that the committee had been assured by the positive outcomes with nearly all students progressing in education or to employment.
75. The Committee Chair also noted the discussion of HE student outcomes where a new survey process had been implemented by the Office for Students (OfS) which had highlighted the risks to University Centre Sparsholt (UCS) about the ways that highly skilled employment was defined and measured. The Deputy Principal reported discussions with University of Portsmouth about highlighting to government that the professionalism and positive career opportunities in the land-based sector were not recognised.
76. The Board noted that the committee had confirmed good progress with delivery of the Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020-21 to 2024-25 and had reviewed expenditure against the preceding 2019/20 plan.
77. The Board also noted that the committee had endorsed the scope and ambition of the 3 Year Curriculum Plan as being fit for purpose as a work plan to deliver the College's strategic ambitions, particularly in relation to student progression, future employability, professional development of the employed and to meeting the needs of employees.

The plan included the new T Levels and the committee had received a progress report on preparations for the T Levels at Andover College from September 2022.

78. The committee had received the annual report on implementation and review of the three-year Careers Strategy, including a detailed analysis of the progress towards fully achieving the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, and recommended to the Board the updated Careers Strategy.
79. **Resolved** – that Careers Strategy 2021-2025 be approved.

#### **QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

80. The Board had received the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Quality & Standards Committee (Q&S) held on 10 February 2021, together the updated SEND Policy, FE Student Charter and HE Student Charter.
81. The Committee Chair drew the Board's attention to key points in the minutes, highlighting the good performance of HE against key in-year measures, the updated on the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) accreditation process, and review of FE performance, including in relation to online delivery and English and maths.
82. The Committee Chair noted that he had attended the HE Board of Studies in March, as had the HE Student Governor, to review the HE programmes.
83. The Board noted that, under authority delegated by the Board, the committee had received the review of compliance and consumer law to provide assurance of ongoing compliance with Condition C1 of the OfS regulatory framework. The committee had been satisfied that the College had met its obligations to the student population, with frequent and extensive communication about the delivery of teaching and assessment. It was noted that the adjustments to teaching and assessment would enable students to complete and progress to the next year of their programme.
84. In response to a member's question about student consultation as part of the review of the Student Charters, the Principal confirmed that the Charters had been discussed by Student Councils.
85. It was noted that the revised SEND Policy now included in appendices the full details of the local offer.
86. **Resolved** – that the revised SEND Policy, FE Student Charter and HE Student Charter be approved.

#### **RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

87. The Board had received the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 11 March 2021 (Parts I and II).
88. The Board was joined by the Data Protection Officer and considered the updated Data Protection Policy recommended by the committee.
89. **Resolved** – that the updated Data Protection Policy be approved.
90. The Chair of Governors drew the Board's attention to other key points from the meeting and members considered the recommendations regarding staff remuneration.
91. The Director of Finance explained that the proposal of a two stage process in order to ensure that payments were affordable, with the staff pay budget increase split between

a pay award in April and a possible one off payment in July depending on the College's end of year forecast when reviewed in the Summer term.

92. The committee had given careful consideration to the justification for making a pay award in a deficit budget year and noted that it had been the objective of the Board and SLT over several years to address the fact that a cost of living pay award had not been given for over 10 years and that careful financial and strategic management had enabled the inclusion of a provision for an award in this year's budget. The cost of living pay award was planned against the backdrop of an improving position regarding the pandemic, an upward trajectory for applications in 2021/22 and prudent proposals which would not put the bank covenants at risk.
93. **Resolved** – that the following be approved from 1 April 2021:
- a) a c2% uplift on all salaries which were £22,508 or below commencing at business support scale 3. This would incorporate business support Scales 3 to 6 (points 9 to 23) and the first 2 points on the Lecturer ATL scale (ATL 1 and ATL2);
  - b) a 1.5% uplift on all salaries between £22,518 to £26,939. This would incorporate business support Scales Scale 7 and 8 (points 24 to 29) and points ATL3, Lec 1 and Lec 2 on the Lecturer scale;
  - c) a 1% uplift on all salaries above £26,939. This would incorporate business support Scales 9 to 12 (points 30 to 41), all remaining points on the Lecturer pay scale) Lec 3 to Lec 6 and SP1 to SP6 and all scales on the management scale (points 01 to 29);
  - d) that any golden hello payments and contractual overtime payments would be recalculated as a result of the increases as these payments are calculated using scale point;
  - e) that market supplement payments and fixed amount allowances would remain unchanged;
  - f) to on a permanent basis extend business support Scale 3 to include points 13 and 14. This will result in a cross over between Scale 3 and Scale 4;
  - g) to amend point 03 (currently £6.45 per hour) on the business support scale to £6.56 per hour;
  - h) to amend the hourly rate for Year 1 Apprentices from £4.32 per hour to £4.45 per hour for level 2 Apprentices and from £5.00 per hour to £ 5.15 per hour for Level 3 Apprentices. Apprentices in Year 2 to be paid the National Minimum Wage for their age;
  - i) that the affordability of an additional one-off payment to staff is considered in the Summer term.
94. In addition to the recommendation of the committee in relation to an update to the Treasury Management section of the College Group Financial Regulations, the Director of Finance introduced proposed updates in relation to credit cards which had been circulated in the Board papers with the agreement of the Chair of Governors. It was proposed to enable the SLT (collectively) to approve issue of credit cards to College Group staff and the limit of the card's use providing that was within the authorities and limits set out in the Financial Regulations.

95. The Director of Finance confirmed that all credit card payments were reconciled and reviewed every month.
96. **Resolved** – that the revised Financial Regulations, including the updated treasury policy and regulations for College credit cards, be approved.
97. The Board noted the update on Covid-19 and the discussion about vaccinations.
98. **Resolved** – that the SLT’s position of supporting, but not requiring, staff to have a Covid-19 vaccination be approved.
99. The Board noted the annual update on pension schemes.
100. **Resolved** – that the College Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretions Policy be approved.

## **WELLBEING AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

### Wellbeing Committee

101. The Board had received the unconfirmed minutes of the Wellbeing Committee held on 2 March 2021, which covered equality & diversity, health & safety, and safeguarding (including Prevent). The minutes included a summary of activity reported through the Safeguarding Working Group.
102. The Board had also received the new Self-Harm & Suicidal Behaviour procedures and that the updated Use of Reasonable Force Policy which were recommended by the committee.
103. A member sought information and assurance about the approach to awareness raising and implementation of College policies, with reference to the reported feedback from a Landex review of Equine in relation to students’ awareness of safeguarding contacts and understanding of Prevent in a subject specific context and the actions taken by management.
104. The Principal explained the general approach to engaging students in matters covered by College policies through building knowledge as part of tutorial programmes and use of (online learning platform) Moodle badges and student contract. Additionally, the Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover) gave examples of the actions in place with curriculum teams and progress coaches to help students understand Prevent in a subject relevant context and through the tutorial programme, and how this builds on the foundation of knowledge about Prevent which learners have from schools.
105. There followed a discussion about the use of Moodle badges as part of tutorial programmes, the transition of Moodle to MS Teams as the College’s online learning platform and the development of a learner certificate which would recognise the achievement of the overall learner experience at the College.
106. In terms of policy awareness raising and implementation for staff, the Principal explained the role of the induction programme and updates communicated through internal communications and training.
107. The Board considered the minutes in relation to safeguarding as a whole, discussing the considerable increase in student safeguarding and mental health concerns and the resulting requirements for resources and support both within the college and from

- external agencies. As reported earlier in the meeting, this increased risk has been recognised and discussed at the Audit Committee meeting.
108. The Principal confirmed that the number of safeguarding cases at the end of January was 103 and that safeguarding cases at the mid-point of 2020/21 were double those at the end point of 2019/20. The Vice Principal Curriculum (Designated Safeguarding Lead) further provided a summary of key data from the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSPC) which showed a significant increase in referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and of child protection plans resulting from parent’s mental health. The College was aware that CAMHS waiting lists were increasing and that GPs appeared to be directing students to the College for support.
109. It was noted that the College had invested additional resources the previous year, appointing a new Wellbeing practitioner for each campus and taking a number of actions to support students, and that CAMHS had been given additional funding for 18-24 months to recruit new posts.
110. Responding to a question from the Staff Governor (SCS), the Principal confirmed that the College had in place an effective ‘cause for concern’ database and kept developments to this under review, including in comparison to external software packages.
111. The Staff Governor (SCS) welcomed the report of the development of monthly Wellbeing newsletters and that these would be available to all College Group staff.
112. Asked by a member about any correlation between SEN learners and safeguarding cases, the Principal explained various processes which the College had in place to identify and support students with learning and other needs to succeed. This included the ‘risk of NEET (Not in Education, Training or Employment) indicators’ (RONI) system for identifying learners with underlying risk factors. The Principal also highlighted the support for young carers and ‘Children Looked After’, both of which groups of learners had improved in-year retention from the previous year.
113. **Resolved** – that the new Self-Harm & Suicidal Behaviour procedures be included in the Safeguarding Learners Policy & Procedures and that the updated Use of Reasonable Force Policy be approved.

#### Health & Safety Annual Report

114. The Board had received the annual College Group Health and Safety Report for the year 2019-20. It was noted that the report had been postponed from the Autumn term due to the appointment of a new Health and Safety Officer and included an update on current health and safety management.
115. The Board noted that the report confirmed that a good underlying health and safety culture existed at the College Group due to the overarching requirements in the specialist teaching areas, because health and safety is taught in the curriculum, training of staff occurs, and management are committed to their health and safety obligations.
116. The Health and Safety Office drew the Board’s attention to the small number of reports to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013), some of which were COVID related.

117. The Health and Safety Manager summarised the headlines from accident data and highlighted a number of actions to enhance health and safety management, including in relation to record-keeping, updates to policies and codes and specialist training.
118. Asked about a report of an accident whether an existing injury was exacerbated in a College vehicle, the Health and Safety Officer confirmed that other vehicles had been inspected as a result.
119. Members also discussed with the Health and Safety Officer the report on fire drills and were assured by the actions taken, including in relation to fire risk assessment.
120. The Board recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic had had a substantial impact on the management of health and safety and commended the Health and Safety Office and College Group staff for their hard work and dedication in keeping Covid-19 infections to a very low level, enabling the provision of education to continue.

#### Wellbeing Strategy Annual Report

121. The Board had received the annual report of the Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover) on progress with the College Group Health & Wellbeing Strategy and action plan.
122. The Vice Principal confirmed that the implementation of the strategy had continued across both campuses, including undertaking student and staff wellbeing surveys. Progress in some areas, such as launching new physical activities, had been slowed by the lockdowns and Covid-19 restrictions. However, there had been considerable successes, including in relation to improving the management of internal referrals and provision of targeted skills sessions for students.
123. The Board noted the growing significance of wellbeing and mental health for both the staff and learner communities and that management continued to review its strategies for providing support to help promote positive wellbeing. In particular, it was reported that the most recent lockdown had led to an increase in associated issues and support needs for students.
124. This had resulted in the SLT reporting an increase in the level of risk associated with mental health and wellbeing, the causes and impact of which had been deliberated and acknowledged at the Audit Committee meeting. Governors discussed the role of the Wellbeing Hub at Andover College (and the planned introduction of a similar physical resource at Sparsholt College) in helping learners to develop self-help strategies and improved resilience and self-esteem was highlighted.
125. Following the staff wellbeing survey, it was noted that an action plan was being developed to embed the importance of positive mental wellbeing in the wider College Group culture.
126. The Board also noted the annual review of progress against the AOC's Mental Health Charter and that follow-up actions had been incorporated into the wider Wellbeing Strategy action plan.
127. The Vice Principal highlighted the recent announcement of £79m investment by the government to improve the mental health of children and young people, with the expectation of the roll out of mental support teams working with schools and colleges.
128. The Board noted growing impact of wellbeing and mental health on the progress of both staff and learners and that the College continued to review its strategy so that it is

proactive in its approach and, where possible, provide members of the College Group community with strategies to help promote positive wellbeing.

## **COLLEGE GROUP REPORTS**

### Andover Town Football Club

129. The Board had received and noted the minutes of the meeting of the Andover Town Football Club Ltd (ATFC) Board of Directors held on 5 March 2021.
130. The Principal (and Chair of ATFC) highlighted that the league matches had been curtailed by the lockdown and that decisions were awaiting on whether the results to date would stand. The Principal also noted the intention to confirm the appointment of a director at the May meeting of the Board, within the composition of the board agreed by the Board of Governors.

### Sparsholt College Services

131. The Board had received the minutes of the Sparsholt College Services Limited (SCS) Board of Directors meetings held on 9 March 2021.
132. The Chair of Governors (and Chair of the SCS Board) confirmed that the matters considered by the SCS Board were in line with the normal business calendar and consistent with reporting to the Board of Governors and Resources Committee on the College Group.

## **GOVERNANCE**

### Written Resolutions and Chair of Governors' Approvals

133. The Board had received the report of the Clerk to the Corporation on written resolutions by the Board and approvals by the Chair of Governors since the December meeting.
134. The Board had resolved by written resolution to approve the following capital funding applications and related in-year updates to the Property Strategy:
- a) a Further Education Capital Transformation Fund First Stage application for an Agri-Tech Centre (total estimated project costs c£2-2.2m) and a Central Teaching Facility (total estimated project costs c£10m);
  - b) a T Level Capital Fund application for an extension to the Andover Future Skills Centre to deliver T Levels in Construction (total project costs c£1.7m)
135. The Clerk to the Corporation confirmed that 14 members had responded to confirm their approval by the deadline and that 2 further members had confirmed their support after the deadline. A response had not been received from one member.
136. The Board noted two updated policies which had been approved by the Chair of Governors:
- a) HE Academic Performance Policy
  - b) Work Placement Policy
137. There were no questions or comments arising from the report.

### College Group

138. The Board had received the notes of the bi-annual review of the provision of services by Sparsholt College Services Limited.

139. The Principal reported that there continued to be an excellent level of services provided to the College and that teams had dealt effectively with the changing requirements of the pandemic and the latest lockdown.
140. The Principal also explained that the changes to practices required by the pandemic restrictions had further highlighted the value of electronic/digital systems, both to support remote working and for office working, and that the SLT had agreed that impact on efficiency would be included as a key criteria for assessment of capital expenditure bids going forward.
141. The Chair of Governors reminded the Board of the rationale for setting up SCS, noting the annual savings to the College Group.

#### Governance Report

142. The Board had received the report of the Clerk to the Corporation updating on governance matters, including in relation to recent developments in the FE and HE regulatory environment and the Board's operations.
143. The Board noted the key developments to FE governance set out in the FE white paper 'Skills for Jobs' and confirmation that the ESFA would require an annual strategic conversation with colleges, including governors, from April 2021 onwards. More detail on the white paper plans was expected in due course and the proposals would follow to the Board and relevant committees.
144. The Board also noted that a statement of expectation and the outcomes of several consultations were expected from the Office for Students (OfS) shortly.
145. The Clerk provided updates on a number of areas of the Board's operations and activities, including terms of reference for the Committee Chairs Group, and it was noted that the possible return to face-to-face meetings after the 21 June Covid-19 roadmap milestone would be kept under review.
146. The Board confirmed that monitoring of preparedness for T-Levels should be undertaken within the existing committee structure, with a leading role for the CEMR Committee, and did not require the appointment of a separate lead governor. The Board also noted that the Chair or another governor would act as 'lead governor' for an application by the College to a Combined Cadet Force Partnership.
147. Confidential matters were recorded separately. The meeting ended at 12.45 pm.