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| **MINUTES** | | | | | | |
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| *Corporation No 158* | | | | | | |
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| Date: |  | *16/03/2021 (Tuesday)* |  | Time: |  | *18:00–20:00* |
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| Venue: |  | *Via Teams* |  | Committee: |  | *Corporation* |
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| Notes: |  | *The Meeting will be held via video conference.* | | | | |
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| Present: |  | *Alison Robinson (Principal), Allan Foster (Chairman), Allison Jones, Barbara Godby, Clare James, David Hall, Debbie Clayton, Jane Booker (Vice Chairman), Jenny Wilson, Kevin Burke, Rafik Adam, Robert Wallace, Robin Newton-Syms, Sue Collinge and Thomas Cocks* | | | | |
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| Attending: |  | *Joanne Sherrington (Deputy Principal), John Wherry (Deputy Principal) and Steven Downham-Clarke (Vice Principal)* | | | | |
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| Clerks: |  | *Ron Matthews (Clerk)* | | | | |
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| Apologies: |  | *Louise Bell* | | | | |
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| ***Public* Minutes** | |
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| Item number: | Item description: |
| (and category) |  |
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| **22.21** | ***Attendance of College Management Staff*** |
| ***Decision*** | Standing Order 13 states that:  *As a matter of policy all meetings of the Corporation and its Committees will be held in private. The agendas and minutes and supporting papers of its public business will be made available to the general public.However:*  *(a) The Principal shall be authorised to invite members of staff to attend in their employed capacity for both public and confidential business as appropriate and in accordance with Standing Order 25.*  *(b) The Corporation however, may exclude members of staff from attending any business that it deems necessary.*  *(c) Attendance by other persons shall be at the discretion of the Corporation following advice from the Principal or Clerk.*  **Resolved:**  **That Management attend for the public and confidential agenda items.** |
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| **23.21** | ***Apologies for Absence*** |
| ***Record*** | Apologies for absence had been received from Louise Bell and Jenny Wilson.  Kevin Burke and David Hall were not present. |
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| **24.21** | ***Public Minutes of Previous Meeting*** |
| ***Decision*** | The public minutes of meeting number 157 held on Tuesday 2 March 2021 and published on the extranet were agreed and signed as a true and correct record of the meeting. |
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| **25.21** | ***Declarations of Interest*** |
| ***Record*** | There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda. |
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| **26.21** | ***Opening Remarks of the Chair*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Chair reported that he had been kept informed of national developments by attending video conferences with the North West Principals and Chairs Group and also joining several meetings with the AoC.  The Principal also updated the Corporation on the first week of the reopening of the College.  **Resolved:**  **That the reports be received.** |
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| **27.21** | ***Reports of the Myerscough Students Union*** |
| ***Decision*** | The report provided an overview of the events held by Myerscough Students Union since the beginning of term.  These were restricted due to the Covid pandemic and subsequent lockdown.The Corporation also received a report from the Director of Student Support on Student Engagement.  **Resolved:**  **That the reports be received.** |
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| **28.21** | ***Governor Engagement Programme*** |
| ***Decision*** | Governors were invited to inform the Corporation of any events they had attended since the December meeting.  The Clerk reminded Governors of the possible events that they are entitled to attend as part of the Governor Engagement Programme.  The current list of opportunities had been circulated with the agenda.In addition, he reported that Sue Collinge had agreed to be the Governor representative on the Sustainability Strategy Group.  **Resolved:**  **That the reports be received.** |
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| **29.21** | ***Report of the Audit and Governance Committee of 2 February 2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | Corporation considered the report of the Audit and Governance Committee of 2 February 2021.  **i)       Internal Audit Report**  The Committee considered a report on the assurance review of Health and Safety. The Internal Audit report graded recommendations as operational, routine, important or urgent. The report contained three recommendations, two of which were graded important and one as routine.  The first recommendation graded as important required the policy on Health and Safety to be updated to provide more details relating to property compliance.  The second graded important recommendation required the annual Health and Safety report to include property compliance relating to Gas Safety, Water Hygiene, Electrical Safety and Asbestos Management.  The final recommendation, graded routine, required a formal system of appraising the performance of third party contractors involved in Health and Safety inspections and general property compliance to be introduced in order to enhance performance management arrangements.  Management had accepted all three recommendations.  Members welcomed the style of reporting from the recently appointed Internal Auditors and noted the report.  **ii)      Internal Audit Progress Report and Summary Report Update**  The Committee received and noted the above report which contained information detailing progress to date on all recommendations made. The Summary Report detailed the outcomes of all outstanding recommendations.  In 2017/2018 of the 21 recommendations 18 had been implemented, 2 were no longer applicable and 1, relating to data retention, had been partially completed.  In 2018/2019 of the 10 recommendations, 9 had been implemented and 1 was no longer applicable.  In 2019/2020 of the 20 recommendations 15 had been implemented and 5 partially implemented.  Governors again expressed concern that recommendations from 2017/2018 and 2019/2020 remained partially outstanding. They requested that these be reviewed and that a realistic completion date for all recommendations be added to the report for the next meeting.  **iii)      GDPR Update**  The Committee considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services which provided an update on the implementation and operation of GDPR.The report included details of six data breaches, five being of low risk and one, the cyber-attack in August 2020, being of high risk. All breaches had now been closed.  The report also included details of training, a future audit review, compliance and monitoring and the confirmed appointment of an external consultant, on an eighteen month contract, to assist with the service. It was noted that national policy on GDPR was to undergo a review in the coming year.  The Committee noted the report and it was agreed that a progress report would be circulated at future meetings.  **iv)      Strategic Risk Register**  The Committee considered the Strategic & Governance Risk Report for 2020/2021 as presented by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services. Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.  The Deputy Principal had reviewed the Register and re-ordered it to match the revised Strategic Aims of the College.  Governors welcomed and received the revised report.  **v)       Data Returns Report**  The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, on the above, which indicated that all returns for the current academic year had been submitted on time.  The Committee received the report.  **vi)      Governance Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021**  The Committee considered progress on the Governance Improvement Plan for 2020/2021. It was noted that good progress had been made on targets within the Plan.  The Principal informed Governors of the forthcoming AoC Conference to be held on 8 & 9 February, which included a number of interesting breakout sessions. The College had taken out a subscription enabling all staff and Governors to access the on-line conference. Details would be circulated to all Governors together with the programme for the staff CPD day on 12 February 2021  In relation to the proposed training needs analysis, mention was made of previous presentations, run by Heads of Areas and held prior to Corporation meetings, which had proved to be very informative. The Clerk indicated that he would look at the reintroduction of these presentations and seek preferences from Governors within the training needs analysis.  The Committee noted the report.  **vii)     Skills Audit**  The Committee considered the report on the Skills Audit which had recently been completed by Governors. The audit would be used in future Governor recruitment and training.  Fourteen Governors had completed the survey, although the results from the two staff Governors and the Principal had been excluded from the report.  Overall, the report indicated a strong Board with a good spread of skills and did not point to any one area where there was a clear deficiency.  Whilst the areas of 'Industry Knowledge of the Land-Based sector', 'Industry Knowledge of the Sports Sector and the College offer in this area' and 'Understanding of Trade Union/Staff Organisations' showed an overall satisfactory level of skill amongst Governors they were also the areas where Governors recorded the lowest level of a 'High' knowledge of the subject.  The Committee noted the report.  **viii)      Governor Recruitment**  The Clerk informed the Committee of the timetable for the recruitment of a Governor following the resignation of John Morphet.  The Committee noted the report.  **ix)      Governor Training**  The date of the Governor Away Event for 2021 was confirmed as Friday 16 April 2021. The Principal and Clerk outlined the proposed agenda for the day. Whilst it was accepted that certain elements of the day were necessary, opportunities for Governors to engage and talk would be appreciated.  The Committee received the report.  **Resolved:That the report be received.** |
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| **30.21** | ***Report of the Quality and Standards Committee of 9 February 2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation considered the report of the Quality and Standards Committee of 9 February 2021.  a**) Matters for the Information of the Corporation**  **i)     Performance data for 2020/21**  The Committee had reviewed performance data as follows:  **a)            Strategic Plan Progress Report 2020/2021.**  **b)           In Year Performance Data 2020/2021:**  **-    FE                              -    HE**                       -   Apprenticeship and Skills.  Quality & Standards Committee considered the Strategic Plan Progress report 2020/2021. Recruitment to FE was well above target. Recruitment to Apprenticeships at this mid-point period indicated targets would be challenging. Overall, numbers on Higher Education programmes should reach target following recruitment at Semester 2.  Standards of teaching on FE and HE were meeting and exceeding expectations with walkthrough observations now at 69.1%. Student responses to the induction survey indicated in the high 90% meeting targets. Retention and attendance figures were high for both Further Education and Higher Education.  In Further Education recruitment was 1866 against a target of 1707. Attendance, retention and punctuality, precursors of success, were strong with monitoring in all areas ensuring pockets of concern were identified and addressed. Overall attendance was at 93%, against a College target of 95% (including authorised absences). Punctuality was excellent across all centres at 99%.  Retention for all FE programmes (16 to 18 and 19 plus) was excellent at 93% just below the College retention target of 95%, although this was mainly due to difficulties during in lockdown. Continued high retention would remain a feature of performance. Retention for 14 to 16 year old students was 91.7% overall.  Governors expressed concern regarding the performances of English and Maths and requested that an update be included as a specific item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee.  The HE In-Year performance paper reported high levels of HE student retention 99.3% against a target of 97%, progression to year 2 at 98% and attendance 91%. The key priority was to ensure continued high levels of retention for students across both full and part time courses for the remainder of the year.  HE applications for September 2021 entry were currently up compared with the same period last year and it was important to maximise the conversion of applicants to enrolments. Emphasis remained on increasing recruitment. The report also included an NSS Action Plan.  The Committee also considered a report on the continued requirements from the Office for Students. The paper indicated that the College had continued to meet all the requirements and deadlines of the Office for Students.  Achievement was at 79.5% with a best case scenario of 82.4%, which would be above College target.  Timely was at 72.9% with a best case of 66%, again above College target. The current income forecast appeared on target to meet budget.  Retention remained high at over 95%. Observations of staff had taken place with 91.3% meeting expected standards. The recently approved Advanced Golf Greenkeeping Standard was attracting interest. Whilst apprenticeship numbers were lower than at the same period last year they were better than the national performance.  The Committee, after questions, accepted all the reports.  **ii)            Quality Performance and Standards Report**  The Quality and Standards Committee considered the report on Quality Performance and Standards. The Quality and Standards Committee considered the report on Quality Performance and Standards.  The report indicated that teachers had reacted quickly to the return to online learning in lockdown 3, having learnt much about this method of delivery during the first lockdown. Teachers were working hard to ensure that all students remained engaged and motivated throughout this period.  The Landex Peer Review took place online on 24 and 25 November 2020. It was a positive review and the suggested areas for development were being actioned. A Teaching and Learning Fair would take place on 12 February 2021.Details of all walkthrough observations were included in the report.  The Committee received the report.  **iii)        Quality Improvement Plan 2019/2020 – Update**  The Committee considered progress on the Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021. English and Maths remained high priority.  The Committee noted the report  **iv)       Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (FREDIE)**  The Committee considered the FREDIE, (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement) Action Plan for 2020/2021, which detailed all activities and improvements for the year.  **v)       Landex Peer Review Report**  The report on the Landex Peer Review, which took place on 24 and 25 November 2020, was considered by the Quality and Standards Committee. Overall the report was a positive one only highlighting a small number of areas for improvement which would be addressed.  The Committee noted the report.  **vi)          Matrix Review**  The Quality and Standards Committee considered the report on the recent Matrix Review. Whilst the Review highlighted 14 areas of strength and was the strongest report ever received at the College, it also pointed out a small number of areas for development which were included in an associated action plan.  The Committed noted the report.  **vii)          Learner Voice**  The Committee considered the report on Learner Voice, which focused on the Student Induction Surveys. Results remained strong with 98% of FE, 99% of HE and 96% of Apprenticeships & Skills students indicating that they felt welcomed during their first week in College.  Response rates for FE were 55.14% and for HE were 83.17%. There was a need to explore opportunities to seek a better response rate from FE students in the future. Other results indicated that 96% of FE learners and 96% of HE learners said that they felt safe whilst on campus. It had been explored why 4% did not, and this was mainly related to Covid. The report also detailed recent Course Representative meetings and the results of the MyStar and Golden Rose Awards.  The Committee received the report.  **viii)           Curriculum Risk Register**   Quality and Standards Committee considered the Strategic Risk Report for 2020/2021 as presented by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services. Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.  The Deputy Principal had reviewed the Register and re-ordered it to match the revised Strategic Aims of the College. Governors welcomed the revised report.  The Committee received the report.  **Resolved:  That the report be received.** |
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| **31.21** | ***Report of the Finance and Resources Committee of 9 March 2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation considered the report of the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee on the meeting held on Tuesday 9 March 2021.  **Matters for decision by the Corporation**  **i)          Financial Regulations – Annual Review**  The Financial Regulations require a review on an annual basis and a report was presented which highlighted the proposed amendments. The proposed amendments included both substantial and minor amendments.  A copy of the report was attached to the agenda.  The Committee Resolved:  **That Corporation adopt the revised Financial Regulations effective from 1 April 2021.**  **ii) HE Tuition Fees Policy and Procedure 2021/2022**  The Committee gave consideration to the proposed Higher Education Tuition Fees Policy and Procedure for 2021/2022. To ensure compliance Myerscough was required to work with UCLAN to agree the fee structure for new entrants in 2021/22 as part of the Access Agreement and also in line with the requirements of the Office for Students. The College current recommendations were based on the existing fee cap of £9,250 for full time students. The report included summary of the fees including part time and international students.  A copy of the report was attached to the agenda.  The Committee Resolved:  **That Corporation be asked to approve the Higher Education Tuition Fees Policy and Procedure for 2021/2022.**  **B)        Matters for the Information of the Corporation**  **i)**          **The Principals Strategic Plan Progress Report 2020/2021              The FE Commissioners Letter              The Finance Report**  Financial Position Statement including Income and Expenditure, Investment Funds and Interest, Capital and Revenue Cash Flow, Ventures and Capital Expenditure for Period Ended 31 January 2021.  The Committee received all of the above regular reports on the various aspects of the College finances for the period ended 31 January 2021.  It was pleasing to note that the finances of the College remained in a healthy state with the balance sheet remaining strong.  The Committee considered the Strategic Plan Progress Report for the Finance and Resources Committee. The key performance indicators related to income, the Capital Plan, Human Resources Statistics and financial performance. The report was based on the new Strategic Goals of People and Sustainability.  Staff sickness and retention were better than target but the Riddor accident rate was above a target of less than 3% for this time of year but did not raise concerns. Sustainability indicated that Myerscough Ventures contribution was behind target due to the pandemic and lockdown.  The remaining financial (surplus, cash days, cash balance, EBITTDA, borrowings as a % of income) indicators were on or above target, apart from in the 14 to 16 age group and HE part time student numbers, both of which were behind target although not by a significant amount with two terms remaining. Recruitment to FE was approximately 162 above target. The Capital Plan was anticipated to be delivered within target.  The Committee considered a termly letter from the FE Commissioner, Richard Atkins, dated 22 February 2021 in which he thanked Colleges for their support during his term of office which would end on 31 March 2021. The letter also made mention of changes to the Financial Benchmarks used by the Commissioner and attached an appendix to the letter setting out the definitions and methodology, with reference to ESFA financial templates. The Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, made mention of the changes in her monthly accounts report later on the agenda.  The finance report was presented by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, which included a statement of comprehensive income together with a detailed analysis thereof. The statements showed the actual results during the period up to 31 January 2021 together with the outturn for 2019-20, the budget for 2020-21, which was approved by the Board in July 2020, and the Forecast for 2020-21. The Balance Sheet as at the period end was also included, together with details of Cash Flow for the year to 31 July 2021 and forecast Cash Flow to July 2022.  Overall College income was £14.888m against a budget of £15.331m. Surplus of income of £992k was £29k ahead of budget. This continued the promising start to the year in the current financial climate, although this only included one month of the current lockdown with minimal residential students on campus. A reduction in income owing to limited commercial and student related activities (due to reduced footfall on campus) had been offset by cost savings. EBITDA to Income percentage had dropped slightly to 13.73% against a forecast of 13.24%, but remained healthy.  The actual payroll to income ratio was 58.2% compared to a budgeted ratio of 56.8%, a slight improvement for the month.  Cash balances at the period-end were £9.639m compared to a forecast of £8.497m. Cash days stood at 120 days. The College had also received approximately £400k of growth funding in the current year as a result of the increase in the number of FE students over those originally funded.  Ventures accounts income was down to control budget by £16k; savings of £5k in pay and a £5k adverse variance in non-pay overall. Given the turbulent conditions the result was being managed within the control budget. The current gross margin was £227k against a control budget of £244k.  The report also included full details of capital expenditure. Expenditure was currently £1.396m against a revised budget of £2.904m, which included the additional funding of £695k from the ESFA.  The Committee asked various question on the reports and sought clarification in some areas. They also welcomed the changes to the finance report with the Key Areas of Focus section now included.  The Committee received the reports.  **ii)         Farm Reports**  The Deputy Principal, Resources, presented a report on the farm up to 31 January 2021. Income from sales was slightly above budget at £548,761, whilst pay and non-pay which stood at £575,825 was 28% of the deficit budget at £27,054. Governors sought clarification regarding some of the terms used in the report to which the Deputy Principal responded. The performance of the farm would continue to be closely monitored throughout the remainder of the year. Also circulated with the report was the farm monitoring plan for 2020/2021.  The Committee received the report.  **iii)     Student Bursary Fund Allocation**  The Committee gave consideration to the review of the HE Bursary Fund Policy, Procedure for 2021-2022. Only minor amendments had been made to the Policy and Procedure from the previous year.  The Committee received the report and confirmed that the Policy and Procedure remained fit for purpose.  **iv)        Review of the Policy on Subcontracting**  The Committee considered the annual review of the Subcontracting Supply Chain Policy. The Committee noted that there were no significant changes to the policy.  The Committee agreed that the Subcontracting Supply Chain Policy - Fees and Charges, remained fit for purpose.  **v)**         **Strategic Risk Register**  The Committee considered the Strategic Risk Report for 2020/2021 as presented by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services. Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.  The Deputy Principal had reviewed the Register and re-ordered it to match the revised Strategic Aims of the College.  Governors welcomed the revised report.  The Committee noted the report.  **vi)        Human Resources for the Period Ending 31 January 2021**  The Committee considered the above report, which contained an analysis of staff turnover, breakdown analysis of leavers, staff stability index and staff sickness statistics for the year up to 31 January 2021.  The Committee noted that staff turnover was currently much lower than target at 12.7% and also lower than the AoC benchmark. This was mainly due to the Covid pandemic and the resulting economic uncertainty. Overall staff sickness was being closely monitored and was better than the target of less than 3% at 1.79%. The AoC benchmark was 3%. Long term sickness of 5 employees was just less than the target of 6.  Circulated with the HR report was a report on the Gender Pay Gap for the period 1 April 2020-31 March 2021. Gender pay was the difference between the average earnings of working men and women within an organisation; it differs from equal pay which is about differences in pay for the same work, similar work, or work which is of equal value.  The results for the College were:  Myerscough College Mean and Median Pay:  Calculation Type                    Year    Percentage  Mean Gender Pay Gap          2020    15.09%  Mean Gender Pay Gap          2019    13.8%  Median Gender Pay Gap        2020    26.27  Median Gender Pay Gap        2019    26.3%  The above information had been published on the College website as required by legislation.  The Committee received the reports.  **vii)       Health and Safety Report for the Period Ended 31 January 2019**  Members gave consideration to the Health and Safety Report for the period ended 31 January 2021, which provided an analysis of accident statistics over the period, together with other Health and Safety activities including policy updates, staff training, free health checks, auditing and inspections.  Overall, accidents had decreased by 56 compared to the same period last year mainly due to the Covid pandemic and there being a reduced number of staff and students on campus. There were no RIDDOR reportable accidents during the period.  Analysis indicated that of the 56 accidents –  12 (28%) were taken to hospital -12 students  21 (43%) received first aid treatment  14 (29%) needed no treatment  72% of accidents were either treated on site or required no treatment.  The report included details of recent audits, training and drills. Work continued on Covid training, prevent measures and testing. Lateral flow testing was continuing and during the period 278 students were tested with 2 returning positive results and 263 staff tested with no positive results. The majority of staff were tested twice a week and students once a week.  A Covid staff survey was issued in December 2020 with 270 respondents. Questions mainly covered safety and communications with positive results above 90%.  The Committee received the report.  **Resolved:  1.   That the Revised Financial Regulations be adopted with effect**  **from 1 April 2021.   2.   That the Higher Education Tuition Fees Policy and Procedures**  **for 2021/2022, as presented, be agreed.  3.   That the report on items for information be received.** |
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| **32.21** | ***Statutory Risk Register*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the Strategic & Governance Risk Report for 2020/2021 as presented by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services. Including in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.  The Deputy Principal had reviewed the Register and re-ordered it to match the revised Strategic Aims of the College.  Governors welcomed and received the revised report.  **Resolved:  That the report be received.** |
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| **33.21** | ***Student Residencies -In-Year Support*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Corporation considered a report on the support provided to students in residential accommodation at the College.  During the various lockdowns student numbers in residential accommodation had fluctuated.  The report outlined support as follows:  Care and Support Personnel Development and Progress Student Satisfaction and Complaints Management Student Views, Engagement and Enrichment Safety and Protection Student Behaviour Safeguarding  Following questions it was  **Resolved:  That the report be received.** |
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| **34.21** | ***Governors Away Event*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Clerk reported that it was now confirmed that the Governors Away Event would be held on Friday 16 April 2021 between 9.30am and 4.15pm.  He also circulated a draft programme for consideration by the Corporation.  Following discussion it was confirmed that the event would be held as a virtual meeting.  **Resolved:  That the draft programme be agreed.** |