



GRIMSBY INSTITUTE GROUP

Policy on Access to Governance Information

Change Control

Version:	V4
New or Replacement:	Replacement
Approved by:	Governance Committee
Date approved:	8 July 2014
Name of author:	Clerk to the Corporation
Name of responsible committee:	N/A
Name of Corporation committee:	Governance
Date issued:	11 July 2014
Review date:	July 2017
Document Reference:	GIG-Corp-Gov-Gov-Inf01

Revision History

Version	Type	Date	History
V1	New	27/09/2011	New Policy
V3.1	Replacement	02/09/2013	Changes to incorporate the Framework for the Development of Strategies, Policies and Procedures.
V4	Replacement	07/04/2014	Change of title, incorporating the policy on public access to meetings, access to corporate information, governance information.

Contents

1 Introduction4

2 General Access to Governance Information4

3. Confidentiality of Governance Information Policy5

4. Public Access to Meetings of the Corporation and its Committees.....6

5. Policy Review7

1 Introduction

- 1.1. It is the policy of the Board to comply with the Instrument of Government of the College and, in so doing, to provide information to the public regarding the work of the Governing Body.
- 1.2. Our Mission Statement is to enrich the lives of all by providing high quality responsive education and training.

2 General Access to Governance Information

- 2.1 The Corporation recognises that it has a duty under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Nolan Principles and the Instrument and Articles of the GIFHE to be open and transparent in all its business. To that end, Governors will not make any matter confidential without good reason and such confidential matters will be kept to an absolute minimum. Information will be made available to the public in accordance with the principles of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In particular:
 - a) The College will publish as much governance information as possible on its website www.grimsby.ac.uk/governors;
 - b) There will be no charge for documents that are already freely available as documents contained in the governance section of the College website;
 - c) Copies may be requested by email to the Clerk to the Corporation for which there will be no charge for electronic transfer of such documents;
 - d) The cost of providing up to 10 sheets (twenty sides) of paper copies will be borne by the College provided that a stamped addressed envelope is provided for return. A scale of charges may apply for more than 10 sheets to cover staff time, photocopying, post and packing;
 - e) If any request for information is turned down on the grounds of confidentiality, the College will give the reasons for denying access in line with this policy;
 - f) The College will list on its website the documentation available for inspection during normal office hours via the Clerk of the Corporation's office.
- 2.2 Reports and documents circulated to Governors, co-optees and relevant members of College staff in relation to governance should be treated as confidential and not circulated, unless the information is already published on the College's website and therefore in the public domain.

- 2.3 All enquiries regarding circulation, access to, or obtaining copies of governance papers or information should be directed to the Clerk in the first instance by Governors, College staff and members of the public.

3. Confidentiality of Governance Information Policy

- 3.1 This is a statutory policy on the publication and access to meeting papers used by Governors, levels of confidentiality that can be applied to Governors' information as well as public access to Governors' meetings.
- 3.2 The Instrument and Articles of Government of the College, which control how the Corporation will act, state the following about confidentiality and access to papers:

- 16.—(1)** The Corporation shall ensure that a copy of -
- (a) the agenda and the signed minutes for every meeting of the Corporation and its Committees; and
 - (d) any report, document or other paper considered at any such meetings, will as soon as possible be made available during normal office hours at the Institution to any person wishing to inspect them.
- (2) There shall be excluded from any item made available for inspection any material relating to -
- (a) a named person employed at or proposed to be employed at the Institution;
 - (b) a named student at, or candidate for admission to, the Institution;
 - (c) the Clerk; or
 - (d) any matter which, by reason of its nature, the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.
- (3) The Corporation shall ensure that a copy of the signed minutes of every meeting of the Corporation and its Committees, under paragraph (1), shall be placed on the Institution's website, and shall, despite any rules the Corporation may make regarding the archiving of such material, remain on its website for a minimum period of 12 months.
- (4) The Corporation shall review every two years all material excluded from inspection under paragraph (2)(d) and make any such material available for inspection where it is satisfied that the reason for dealing with the matter on a confidential basis no longer applies, or where it considers that the public interest in disclosure outweighs that reason.

Article 8 - Access to committees by non-members and publication of minutes
The Corporation will ensure that the policy governing access to Committees by non-governors and the minutes of all Committee Meetings, with the exception of the Remuneration Committee and Special Committees are published on the Institute's Website and made available for inspection at the College by any person, during normal office hours.

The publication of Committee Minutes on the Institute's Website will take place once the Committee has formally approved them.

3.3 Under this Instrument and Article, the College is therefore obliged to do the following:

- Make available the agenda and final minutes and reports from each Corporation meeting available for inspection; subject to confidentiality;
- Publish the final minutes of each Corporation and Committee meeting on its website and maintain their availability for at least 12 months;
- Regularly review any excluded material on a two yearly cycle;
- Publish a policy regarding attendance at meetings;

3.4 In order to respond to these requirements, this policy document shall detail how the College will meet these obligations, as follows:

- The Clerk will ensure that required documentation is available for inspection from Corporation meetings; subject to confidentiality
- The Clerk will ensure that the final minutes from Corporation and its Committee meetings on the College website are published and remain available for at least 12 months;
- This policy will be published on the Institute's website as the written statement on availability of governance information as well as attendance at governance meetings.

3.5 Matters discussed by the Corporation and its Committees will, from time to time, will be of a confidential nature. In such instances or where the discussion relates to a Corporation report agreed as confidential, there will be a version of the minutes publicly available to demonstrate the College's decision-making processes, which will be as detailed as possible within the restriction of confidentiality, in order that the College remains open and accountable for its actions. A more detailed set of minutes will be reserved to the Corporation.

4. Public Access to Meetings of the Corporation and its Committees

4.1 In accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government of the College, the Corporation has the absolute right to determine who shall be allowed to attend Corporation and Committee meetings.

- 4.2 Committee meetings and other meetings relating to the Corporation's work will not be open to the public.
- 4.3 The members of the Corporation and the Clerk to the Corporation are entitled to attend all meetings of the Corporation, its committees and working groups, subject to restrictions under the Instrument and Articles of Government of the College.
- 4.4 Members of the Senior Management Team may be invited to attend meetings of the Corporation and appropriate Committee Meetings, by the Chair of the Corporation or Committee.
- 4.5 The dates of meetings of the Corporation and its committees will be published by the Clerk on the website.
- 4.6 Co-opted Members of Committees:**
 - 4.6.1 may be invited to attend Corporation by the Clerk to the Corporation, at which they may speak (on invitation from the Chair) but not vote.
 - 4.6.2 may be provided with a set of non-confidential papers at the Corporation meeting but not sent these in advance.
 - 4.6.3 would be expected to raise with the Clerk any matters of concern before the meeting so that the Chair might consider inviting them to speak.
- 4.7 The Clerk shall be in attendance at any meeting of or the Corporation, its committees and working groups, as per the provisions and restrictions of the Instrument and Articles of Government of the College.
- 4.8 The Clerk to the Corporation may, with the approval of the Chair of the Meeting, arrange for a minute secretary to be in attendance.
- 4.9 Photography (still or video/ film) or the recording by electronic means of the proceedings of the Corporation and its committees will be forbidden except by the expressed permission of the Chair of the meeting; those present at the meeting retain the right to refuse for their image to be captured against their wishes.

5. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis by the Governance Committee.