

**SOLIHULL COLLEGE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016 AT THE WOODLANDS CAMPUS**

**PRESENT:** John Bolt (Chair)  
Stan Baldwin  
Chris Baranowski  
Scott Beasley (Student Governor)  
John Callaghan (Principal)  
Jane Coleman  
Joe Kelly  
Lucy Lee  
Nick Mapp (Staff Governor)  
Phil Mayhew  
Alex Palethorpe  
Geraldine Swanton

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Lindsey Stewart (Deputy Principal)  
Heather Evans (Vice Principal Finance)  
Pete Haynes (Vice Principal HR and Student Services)  
Beth Selwood (Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment)  
Theresa Lynch (Clerk to the Corporation)  
Patrick Geary (Director of Quality Improvement)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Lena Stockford, Keith Marriott and Summiya Khan (Student Governor).

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interests.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

**3.1 Draft QAA Report**

The Student Governor presented key information from the draft QAA report and noted that there were only 2 recommendations. A response would be sent to QAA identifying some minor amendments and the final report was likely to be available mid-May. It was noted that there would not be a further review, having received a good outcome.

Thanks were expressed to Scott Beasley for his contribution during the QAA review and to Sue McGregor and the team for achieving a good outcome.

**3.2 Pay Award Update**

The Principal explained that due to some further shifts in income and expenditure it was not possible to confirm affordability in terms of being able to pay the pay award. He explained that paying the award could have an effect on financial targets for the year and this would be

communicated to Governors at the next meeting. It was confirmed that he hoped that the pay award could be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2015 subject to affordability. It was noted that the Unions were supportive of prompt payment of the award even though there were currently discussions regarding staffing cuts taking place.

#### **4. Strategic Discussion and Plan Presentation**

##### **4.3 Demographics Presentation**

The Deputy Principal gave a presentation regarding demographic information and clarity was sought regarding the decline in 16-19 year olds during the next 3-4 years. Discussion took place regarding the importance of demographic information in planning a marketing strategy and whether it was more beneficial to market to those predicted as most likely to come to the College, rather than those who are more likely to stay at school or go to the sixth form centre.

Q. Would there be adequate numbers if marketing to known-markets only?

A. The majority would probably come from known-markets, however, it would also be necessary to market other targeted groups to maintain student numbers/income. It was also noted that it was useful to use heat maps to identify skills and job opportunities for students to link appropriate courses and routes into work.

The Deputy Principal explained that there would be a range of strategies to attract students and a variety of tools and techniques used to try to maintain numbers.

The Principal noted that the 'University Centre' provided an excellent marketing tool for the College.

Q. Is there adequate collaboration with schools and are schools promoting colleges?

A. There are differing patterns, with some schools engaging well with colleges and others choosing not to do so. Schools can be relatively selective at sixth form, often refusing to take students without GCSE English and/or maths. Further, students who don't necessarily do well at AS level often move to colleges too, so intake at 17 at the College has increased – this has funding implications, however, as these students are 19+ in their second year.

##### **4.1 Draft Strategic Plan 2016-19 and Strategic Discussion**

The Principal provided an update regarding the strategic direction of the College in relation to local competitor colleges, financial and quality challenges and potential opportunities.

Detailed discussion took place regarding local competitor colleges, their financial position and their likely impact on Solihull College, including the potential impact of schools and the Sixth Form College, as well as, the UTC in north Solihull.

The Principal confirmed that the short term priority for the College was a successful Ofsted. The longer term opportunities were discussed including the development of the IoT and the apprenticeship organisation, as well as, shared services and locality developments, ie, UK Central, via SMBC.

*Collaborative opportunities were discussed, but this item was deemed confidential, due to commercial sensitivity.*

##### **4.2 Treasury Management Strategy Report**

The Vice Principal Finance presented the Treasury Management Strategy and explained that the proposals presented had been discussed in detail at two meetings of the Treasury Management Expert Group that took place in February/March 2016.

She explained that it was proposed to maintain a £6m cash reserve in the College's current account. This would provide about 20 days payments. She explained that a number of potential uses of the cash reserves had been explored, including capital investment, planned maintenance programme, repayment of the College's loans, reduction of the pension fund deficit and potential mergers, however, at the current time it was recommended to maintain a cautious position and keep the reserves in bank accounts to aim to earn interest, whilst also being able to access the reserves and ensure minimum risk. It was noted that none of the fixed term accounts extended beyond 12 months and they allowed access on a rolling basis.

Q. Will there be enough for IT investment?

A. Yes, there was a rolling programme, which had higher investment periodically to respond to changes in the wider IT environment.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Treasury Management Strategy, specifically in relation to:

- the maintenance of a minimum cash balance of £6million (Barclays Bank); and,
- delegate authority to the Vice Principal Finance to place deposits (£3-4m) with each Santander and Lloyds.

#### **4.4 Curriculum Planning**

*Discussion of this item was deemed confidential.*

Framework and Procedure for the Terminating of Contracts of Employment by Agreement – the Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Framework and Procedure.

#### Section 5. Reporting

The second paragraph to be removed and replaced by:

*'In the case of other employees, the outcome of negotiations will be reported to the Corporation.'*

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Framework and Procedure for the Terminating of Contracts of Employment by Agreement, subject to amendments regarding reporting arrangements (section 5).

### **5. Curriculum and Quality**

#### **5.1 Ofsted Expert Group Feedback**

The Chair of the Expert Group, Jane Coleman, provided a verbal update on the work of the Group. She explained that each member of the Group had been meeting with senior managers to explore specific areas of the Action Plan/QIP. The Assistant Principals had attended the Expert Group meetings and this had been a useful insight into progress. It was noted that Russell Jordan, HMI, had provided positive feedback. It was confirmed that a final report of the Group would be presented to the June 2016 Corporation meeting.

#### **5.2 Preparation for Ofsted Inspection and Issues Emerging from Other Inspections**

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment provided an update on planning towards the re-inspection, anticipated to take place in Autumn Term 2016. She explained that a number of inspectors were now practitioners in FE. It was noted that the College SAR/position statements would be uploaded to the Gateway for use by the inspectors. These would also be shared with Governors, as appropriate.

Discussion took place regarding a Governor Development Session, relating to Ofsted preparation, early in the Autumn Term and it was **agreed** to hold it on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

### **5.3 Destinations 2014/15**

The Deputy Principal presented the report and confirmed that the data was positive in light of the imminent re-inspection. Discussion took place regarding the difference between white and BAME students progressing to HE and clarity was sought regarding whether there was a difference between the two campuses. The differences tend to be more related to subjects, ie more BAME students take engineering courses, whilst more white students take construction. Further work was to be done to determine motivations by different groups of students in taking specific subjects and/or qualifications.

### **5.4 Dashboard 2015/16 Update**

#### **5.4.1 Quality, including the QIP**

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment presented the updated QIP. She explained that courses in 'intensive care' were improving and final MOT meetings were currently taking place

She explained that a Head of Maths would be appointed in 2016/17 to really focus on improving the delivery of and outcomes for maths.

Detailed discussion took place regarding progress against the Action Plan/QIP:

- Apprenticeships – overstayers – a review regarding the definition of overstayers may be useful, as + 3 months affects timely success;
- Observations – 321 had taken place and the embedding of English was now a strength;
- Work placements – reporting tended to be on external placements, however, there was a range of employability opportunities;
- Focussed review currently taking place regarding adult learners with dyslexia;
- Attendance reward scheme seemed to have been positively received by students;
- Audit of target-setting had taken place and this was now a focus for improvement – stretch and challenge continued to be an area for improvement, although the number of observations identifying this had reduced from a third to a quarter;
- Ofsted-ready "walk-throughs" would be taking place throughout May 2016 – this would reflect how the inspection would work;
- Use of Pro-SAR to support course reviews during May/June and this would then be followed by production of School SARs;
- Observations – 33 staff were identified as requiring re-observations. Of these staff 23 were now out of coaching and had improved, 6 had left the College and 4 remained in coaching towards re-observation.

#### **5.4.2 Staffing**

The Vice Principal Human Resources and Student Services provided an update on the dashboard. It was noted that there were now only 15 appraisals outstanding for teaching staff. This related largely to an area where the manager had left, so appraisals had not been completed.

Discussion took place regarding the appropriateness of the staff sickness target (3.3%). It was noted that it had been reduced when the previous target (3.5%) had been achieved.

## 6. Equality and Diversity Report and Briefing Update

### 6.1 QAR Data – Equality & Diversity Focus and Discussion

The Vice Principal presented QAR data relating to College success rates in relation to national averages and it was noted that the trend in the sector was that the national averages had reduced. This data would be used by Ofsted during re-inspection. She explained that data was now being presented in ethnic groupings that allowed trends to be identified more clearly.

It was noted that 16-18 white students were generally performing less well than BAME students. Research was underway to identify why this was the case. It was noted that poor student performance often linked to courses that were in intensive care. As these issues were resolved performance improved. Gender performance was generally comparable. The national incidence of white males performing less well, was not apparent at the College.

It was noted that 89% of apprentices were white.

### 6.2 Equality Policy

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Equality Policy and noted that only minor amendments to titles, etc had been made.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Equality Policy.

## 7. Finance and Resource Matters

### 7.1 Health, Safety and Safeguarding Report

The Vice Principal Finance presented the Report and it was **agreed** that it be discussed at the next meeting, due to the new sentencing guidelines that had been presented and this would give time for discussion.

### 7.2 Bids and Projects Update

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and explained that approval from the LEP had now been received to fund the Aviation Engineering Training Centre project and the Advanced Science Labs project. It was noted that given the environment had not changed since original approval, approval for both projects was confirmed. It was noted that the Aviation Project had been funded by £20k extra by the LEP. The College was match funding the projects and would, therefore, have to match the additional £20k.

The projects relating to a HE bid and BBC apprenticeships were noted and it was confirmed that an update would be provided at a future meeting.

### 7.3 Sub-contracting Update

The Deputy Principal presented the report.

**RESOLVED:** to approve entering into a further contract with McDermott Building and Civil Engineering Ltd for a cohort starting May 2016.

## 8. Governance

### 8.1 Staff Governor Election

The Clerk explained that the Staff Governor election process was underway.

The Chair noted that this may be the Staff Governor's last meeting, dependant on the outcome of the election, and thanked him and confirmed that he would be attending the celebration meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

## **8.2 Governance Quality Improvement Plan**

The Governance Quality Improvement Plan had been distributed for comments. It was confirmed that this would considered at a future meeting. **ACTION.**

### **9. Proposed Dates for 2016/17**

The proposed dates for 2016/17 were confirmed.

### **10. Regular Updates for Information**

#### **10.1 Tender Update**

There were no updates.

#### **10.2 Membership and Declaration of Interest Update**

The membership and declarations of interest report was noted.

#### **10.3 Use of the College Seal**

The College Seal had not been used since the last meeting.

### **11. Dates of meetings in the summer term 2016**

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 6pm**

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at 7.00pm** please note the slightly later start time, due to an extended Audit Committee meeting (5.30-7.00 pm)

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at 6pm** (note the annual celebration is scheduled for 7.15pm)

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

Signed                     JRB                    

Date                     16 May 2016