

SOLIHULL COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2016 AT THE BLOSSOMFIELD CAMPUS

PRESENT: John Bolt (Chair)
Stan Baldwin
Chris Baranowski
John Callaghan (Principal)
Jane Coleman
Joe Kelly
Summiya Khan (Student Governor)
Lucy Lee
Nick Mapp
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)
Sue McGregor (Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Scott Beasley (Student Governor), Keith Marriott, Phil Mayhew and Lena Stockford.

2. Declarations of Interest

A declaration was made by Lucy Lee, as an employee of SMBC, in relation to the Simon Digby site.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2015 were **agreed** as a correct record and, subject to a minor amendment, would be signed by the Chair.

3.1 Simon Digby Update

This item was deemed confidential due to commercial sensitivity.

4. Principal's Briefing

4.1 QAA Update

The Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation gave a presentation about how preparation was going in relation to QAA that would be taking place on 23rd February 2016. She explained that a lot of evidence had been submitted and explained what subsequent lines of enquiry had been indicated by the assessors.

Q. Will a grade be given?

A. No, the College would either meet academic standards or would not. If not, then an action plan would be devised and a period of time given for improvement. Specific comments could be given

regarding areas like employability.

It was noted that a letter would be received by the College outlining the key findings by 7th March and this would be shared with the Corporation for their meeting on 14th March 2016. **ACTION.**

The Deputy Principal explained that a document had been provided to the assessors relating to governance and this was available to governors on Boardpacks.

The QAA visit would include an opportunity for the assessors to test the information they had previously received by talking to staff and students to ensure assertions and statements made in the evidence were accurate.

4.2 Health, Safety and Safeguarding Report

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and explained that the accidents shown had been reviewed and there were no areas of concern.

Discussion took place regarding a RIDDOR accident that had taken place in the car park, where a student had fallen in icy conditions and broken her arm. It was confirmed that the car park had been gritted, but that the students footwear may not have been adequate for the conditions.

4.3 Bids and Projects Update

The Bids and Projects update was received for information.

Advanced Aviation – LEP Project: The Vice Principal Finance presented the report, explaining that the planned equipment expenditure for the Advanced Aviation project had been increased by £305,286 following discussion with the LEP and this would be split 50% from the College and 50% from the LEP (transferred from the Life Sciences project). It was noted that this was affordable, as the expenditure had been identified as match funding for the Life Sciences project and was being reassigned. It was noted that overall expenditure would be slightly less than original budgets.

RESOLVED to approve the additional bid for equipment expenditure of £1,330,286 (an additional £305,286) for the Advanced Aviation project.

4.4 PMR November 2015

The Vice Principal Finance presented the PMR for November 2015. She explained that the re-forecast was taking place and would be shown in the December 2015 PMR. It was noted that income levels had reduced, although the outturn position had been maintained and the cash figure was good. She explained that apprenticeships, tuition fees and HE had reduced. In response a reduction had been made on pay and non-pay expenditure.

Q. As HE is a big part of the College's strategy, are there any concerns about not meeting targets?

A. The target has been missed by about £35k on a budget of £4m, so not overly significant. Discussion took place regarding the positive recruitment and success of HE given the range of uncertainties in recent years and it was noted that 2015/16 was the first year that the university cap had been removed and yet recruitment had still been good.

Q. Is there enough focus on apprenticeships – is there a need for a termly report?

A. It was **agreed** that a termly report would be received to ensure apprenticeships were given a higher profile, as they are a key priority area and proving difficult to secure. **ACTION.** Different models of apprenticeship companies were discussed, in relation to the proposals coming out of the Area Review.

4.5 Dashboard: Human Resources and Quality Quadrants

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the HR section of the dashboard and explained that sickness levels had been amber, but were now improving.

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services explained that appraisals were now being done and the number completed was improving against the target set. He explained that there had been a slight delay at the beginning of the academic year due to revision of the paperwork and Head of School training both of which were completed by the end of November 2015. Since that time staff had been conducting appraisals to meet targets and it was noted that the Spring term was the main period for completing them.

Q. Appraisals have been a concern for some time – what is being done to remedy this?

A. Managers carry out appraisals and tend to space them out during the academic year, often carrying out most towards the latter part of the year, so that there is more data to discuss based on the current year. It was noted that Ofsted could raise this as an issue if teaching staff had not had appraisals. The Vice Principal HR and Student Services explained that he and the Principal would communicate the importance of this to managers and review the situation. **ACTION.**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services explained that both quantity of appraisals and the quality of those appraisals was important and although there needed to be a focus on the number of appraisals complete, the quality of those completed was believed to be good.

Q. Is there value in having an indicator of how overdue appraisals are?

A. The dashboard at the managers level does have that information.

Q. How many appraisals had been done in STEM?

A. By the end of December it was 19%. There are about 90 members of staff and 3 Heads of School, so getting through all of them can take a period of time.

The Director of Quality Improvement presented the Quality Quadrant and it was noted that data was live.

5. Strategic Update

5.1 Area Review Update

This item was deemed confidential.

RESOLVED to approve Recommendation 3 that Solihull College remain an independent GFE, working in collaboration with other colleges, in particular in developing shared services, apprenticeships and an Institute of Technology.

5.2 Strategic development Session Feedback: 30th January 2016

This item was deemed confidential.

6. Ofsted Action Plan and Quality Improvement Plan Update

6.1 Notes of the Ofsted Action Plan Expert Group and Terms

The Chair of the Group presented the notes of the Group's meeting on 18th January 2016 and the suggested terms of reference. She explained that the Group had assigned sections of the Action Plan to each member of the Group who would meet with senior staff to monitor and explore

progress. It was noted that there were concerns about the removal of the iGCSE, which was due to be replaced by the more traditional English GCSE.

RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Ofsted Action Plan Expert Group.

6.2 Ofsted Action Plan and Quality Improvement Plan – February 2016

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment presented the updated Action Plan and QIP and explained that course reviews were taking place and courses in intensive care were being closely monitored. It was noted that in terms of apprenticeships horticulture, hair, construction and warehousing were being closely monitored.

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment explained that about 30% of students had secured a work placement at the current time. She described different ways of presenting work experience data, which highlighted the high levels at Level 3. The development of employability skills was strong.

Discussion took place regarding attendance and it was noted that it tended to be higher in vocational subjects, than in maths and English. This was an on-going challenge, with low attendance having an impact on outcomes. Pro-monitor currently provided outcome predictions for GCSE A*-C, English 45% and maths 42%, which were both improvements on previous years.

The Deputy Principal explained that comparable data for the sector would be available towards the end of February 2016 and would be considered at the April Corporation meeting. **ACTION.** She explained that Ofsted would use historical data prior to the visit to obtain an overview of the organisation, but their visit would relate much more to the current students, including target-setting, attendance etc. It was noted that the Pro-monitor system was a very useful tool for tutors and students to work through and monitor targets and that this was being used widely across the College to support current student progress. The Student Governor confirmed that Pro-monitor provided a very useful tool for monitoring and reviewing her progress with her tutor. She explained that it gave students a clear indication of how they were performing and the actions required to improve. It also underpins UCAS applications.

The Deputy Principal explained that it was possible to monitor how many times students had logged in and which courses were using the system consistently. Most areas were using the system extensively, although there still some courses that needed to engage more with it.

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment explained that a target-setting audit had taken place. Compliance and quality of target-setting was good. There had been a lot of work to develop strategies for staff in supporting students to set appropriate and stretching targets.

7. Evaluation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report

The Director of Quality Improvement presented the report and described the strengths identified through lesson observations. Clarity was sought about the team of observers and it was noted that they comprised of Assistant Principals, managers and teaching and learning coaches.

8. Student Progression within College

The Deputy Principal presented the report and explained that an area for improvement related to students progressing to apprenticeships. It seemed that there were employment opportunities, but often in sectors that students did not readily choose: retail, hospitality and care. There was a need to get the message over to students that there could be future potential opportunities in management by taking these options.

9. Annual Complaints Report

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment presented the report and explained that it provided a summary for complaints in 2014/15 and to date for 2015/16.

Q. Why were there a number of complaints in Hair and Beauty in 2015/16 relating to course offer?
A. This related to a specific situation where 2 groups were merged in September 2015, one from the Blossomfield campus and one from Woodlands. The Woodlands students were particularly upset at having to travel to Blossomfield. The complaints were investigated and upheld and the group at Woodlands was reinstated. The students concerned are engaged and doing well.

10. **Governors' Self-Assessment Report and QIP**

The Clerk presented the draft Self-Assessment Report and explained that it incorporated feedback from individual governors through the questionnaire and 1:1 meetings with the Chair. It also provided a response to the Code of Good Governance in terms of compliance. The Action column would be used to create the Quality Improvement Plan for Governance. **ACTION.**

It was noted that the SAR had been sent to Russell Jordan, HMI for his view on how Ofsted would judge the format and content. When his response was received and the SAR updated further the Clerk would distribute it to all governors for a final opportunity to add further comments and suggestions. **ACTION.**

John Bolt, Jane Coleman, Stan Baldwin and Geraldine Swanton each left the meeting during consideration of their appointments to each Committee.

11. **Membership Report**

The Clerk presented the Membership Report.

RESOLVED to approve the following appointments:

- Membership of the Remuneration Committee: Lena Stockford (Chair), Stan Baldwin, John Bolt and Jane Coleman to the end of each member's term of office;
- Geraldine Swanton as a member of the Search and Governance Committee to the end of her term of office, December 2019.

12. **Date of the Next Meeting: Monday 14th March 2016 at 6pm**

The date of the next meeting was noted as Monday 14th March 2016 at 6pm.

13. **Tendering Update**

The contents of the Tendering Update were noted.

14. **Use of the College Seal**

The contents of the Use of the College Seal report were noted.

The meeting ended at 8.15pm.

Signed: Alister Ford

Date: 14 March 2016