

SOLIHULL COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16TH MAY 2016 AT THE BLOSSOMFIELD CAMPUS

PRESENT: John Bolt (Chair)
Stan Baldwin
Chris Baranowski
Scott Beasley (Student Governor)
John Callaghan (Principal)
Jane Coleman
Joe Kelly
Lucy Lee
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)

Student Presentations:

Emma Scothern – Public Services (PS) Lecturer and Teaching and Learning Coach

- Vicky Jones

Gary Rhodes – Computing (Comp) Lecturer and Teaching and Learning Coach

- Gursevak Singh
- Fariah Choudhury
- Saharr Kaid

Student Presentations:

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment introduced the staff and students that were in attendance to present information about Pro Monitor and the use of Vision Boards in target-setting.

Pro Monitor

The Public Services Lecturer and student gave a demonstration of Pro Monitor and explained how it was used for target-setting for students.

Q. What difference has Pro Monitor made for students this year?

The PS student explained that it made it easier to track progression and attendance and gave an overview throughout the year.

The PS lecturer explained that it provided an excellent tool for checking attendance and ensured that all monitoring information was in one place to give a clear view of how the student is progressing. Through the career planning element it is possible to see what students are planning and therefore advise about what skills and qualities they will need.

Q. How much is Pro Monitor being used by staff across the College?

A. With any change it takes time for all staff to embrace. Some areas are fully conversant with Pro Monitor, some less so. However, regular audits take place to identify gaps and then support is given to staff and all are encouraged to learn and use the system.

Q. Is it possible for students to access the information after they leave the College – it may useful for

applications etc?

A. No the information is not currently available. It would be useful to provide a one-off download for leaving students so they have access to their College record.

The PS student explained that she had joined the College to undertake an Animal Care course, however, after the first year she decided to move to Public Services, with a goal of joining the police force. She hopes to undertake a degree, so that she can progress in the force to a high rank.

Visionboards

The Computing Lecturer introduced three Computing students and each provided a presentation on their visionboards and explained how this had helped them to focus on short, medium and long term targets for their future.

Q. How often do you revise your visionboard?

A. Could be every day, but depends on whether the target is short or long term. Shorter term targets change more often

Q. Do you use Pro Monitor too?

A. We tend to use Pro Monitor for tutorials, using it mainly to keep track of progression rather than for target setting. It is a good way of keeping in contact with teachers and sharing information about progression. Different types of learners engage differently with ways of target setting – visionboards are good for visual learners.

It was noted that the students seemed very motivated by their visionboards and they seemed to therefore connect with what they wanted to achieve, therefore making their studies relevant and important.

The Computing Lecturer explained that the students had made a video to share the process with other teams in the College and promote the idea of creating a visionboard to identify aspirations.

Q. Where did the idea of visionboards originate?

A. A Sunday magazine article - seemed like an innovative approach to target setting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Lena Stockford and Keith Marriott.

It was suggested that a card be sent to Lena Stockford from all governors and noted that flowers had been sent, when she first broke her ankle.

2. Declarations of Interest

Existing declarations of interest were noted in relation to this agenda:

- *Lucy Lee as an employee of Solihull MBC, in relation to Item 5.1 Property Report – Simon Digby land;*
- *Joe Kelly as Governor of BCU, in relation to Item 5.4 HE Report.*

A new declaration of interest was noted for Joe Kelly as a member of the EEF (West Midlands Advisory Board) from October 2010.

There were no other new declarations.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th April 2016 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2016 were **agreed** as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

3.1 Pay Award Update

The Principal explained that the final financial position for 2015/16 was still being completed and that a report relating to the affordability of the 2015 pay award would be provided to the next meeting. **ACTION.**

4. Update Reports

4.1 Health, Safety and Safeguarding Report

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report. Discussion took place regarding the increase in the number of accidents being reported and it was noted that this was reviewed regularly internally and there did not seem to be any trends or specific changes that related to this increase. It was noted that security incidents were included for information. Discussion took place regarding the new HSE sentencing guidelines. It was noted that fines were large and unlimited and just underpinned the on-going cautious approach to health and safety in the College.

Q. What is the College's strategy for addressing anti-social behaviour off-campus?

A. There was a no-tolerance approach. Any issues reported to the College about students were dealt with in accordance with College internal procedures. Incidents were infrequent and often related to students from other colleges. It was noted that student activity outside College was important in terms of maintaining the good reputation of the College.

Q. Could the increase in accidents relate to the appointment of a College Nurse?

A. It was very likely that having a College Nurse meant that more people were reporting accidents than previously.

Q. In terms of the new HSE sentencing guidelines – have there been any incidents in recent years that could have resulted in the application of the guidelines?

No, there had been no incidences that would invoke the sentencing guidelines.

4.2 Bids and Projects Update

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report. It was noted that the LEP had approved the Life Science project and additional funding for Aviation equipment. It was noted that this related to an additional £37k, and it was confirmed that this was affordable.

The Deputy Principal provided an update on the ESF/HE Project with Birmingham colleges, which would provide funding of £7m, which would be match funded. It was noted that it was only a bid at this stage and should the bid be successful, viability would be confirmed prior to seeking approval from the Corporation. This would include clarity from PWC about what would be fundable. The College was leading the bid in collaboration with BMet & South & City.

RESOLVED to approve the increased budget for Aviation equipment, with additional funding of £37k.

4.3 Apprenticeship Organisation and Institute of Technology

The Principal explained that he had been working with the Birmingham college Principals. It was noted that the development of the Institute of Technology was difficult due to the nature of HE provision.

It was noted that Solihull College would be leading on the Apprenticeship Organisation. The Principal explained that he would be visiting Nick Boles, Minister of State for Education & Skills, with Andy Street, Chair of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership, to discuss the Apprenticeship Organisation.

Monthly meetings would take place between the Birmingham and Solihull colleges to continue to

develop the Apprenticeship Organisation and Institute of Technology. The meetings would be facilitated by BMET.

5. **Strategic Development 2016/17**

5.1 Property Report 2015/16 and Strategy 2016/17

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and provided an update on TGH, Simon Digby land and the Halls of Residences.

TGH – it was noted that the written report would remain confidential due to commercial sensitivity. It was noted that the College would be working with GVA to develop the sale details, but that it had been stressed to GVA that whilst value for money was extremely important the community value and requirements also needed to be considered when proposals were being explored. It was noted that GVA would work with SMBC planners to explore possible proposals, including in any proposal the restrictions of the listing status of the house.

Halls of Residence – it was noted that it was now necessary to revisit what was required, with regard to the Halls of Residence, and to review the level of demand, given the cessation of international marketing. It was noted that there were currently only 50 students in the Halls and 120 places available. There were some additional tenants. The Halls, however, were being used for a range of activities, but it was now necessary to review the strategy for the future.

The Vice Principal Finance explained that the College had leased some accommodation at the Airport that was used infrequently. Notice had, therefore, been given to cease the lease.

5.2 Sub-Contracting Report 2015/16 and Strategy 2016/17

The Deputy Principal presented the report and explained that the Plan remained the same as previously presented. She explained that future strategy included the possibility that sub-contracting would cease to bring income through apprenticeships, due to the impact of levies.

The Deputy Principal requested clarity about the information in the Sub-contracting report and level of detail required by full Corporation. It was agreed that the summary report be circulated for Corporation meetings, with exception reports where quality issues arose, whilst the detailed visits information in the appendix could be shared with the Sub-contracting Governor on a regular basis. It was noted that reputational, quality and health and safety issues were important and where there were concerns, it would be expected that these would be included in the summary report.

The Deputy Principal explained that the Supply-Chain Fees and Charges Policy for 2016/17 would be reviewed following the receipt of the SFA contract in July and requested that the Chair be delegated authority to approve this, subject to ratification by Corporation, so that the Policy could be put on the website from 1st August 2016.

RESOLVED to approve delegated authority to the Chair to approve the Supply-Chain Fees and Charges Policy for 2016/17, subject to ratification by the Corporation, so that it can be placed on the College's website from 1st August 2016.

5.3 Tuition Fees 2016/17 and Policy Review

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and explained that the Policy had been updated. She explained that it would be made explicit in the Policy that fees for courses longer than one year would not increase during the course. It was noted that the differential between HND & degree fees was being brought more in line. Fees for full time HE students would remain at £5,500 for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The Vice Principal Finance explained that community learning fees would be further reviewed and reported to Corporation.

It was noted that all fee information complied with guidance from the Competition and Marketing Authority, with all additional costs being clearly identified in course materials.

Any fee changes would be made prior to marketing the course and the Principal has the power to set and change fees. Any fee waivers for hardship would be considered by the Deputy Principal and applied at the Principal's discretion.

It was suggested that the wording around refunds be reviewed and clarified further.

RESOLVED to approve the Tuition Fee Policy, subject to clarification of the wording about refunds (section 4).

5.4 Higher Education Annual Report 2015/16 and Strategy 2016/17

The Deputy Principal presented the report and explained that the government white paper, Success as a Knowledge Economy, had been published. The Strategy for 2016/17 would be reviewed in light of this publication. Currently it was planned to have growth in franchise programmes and a decline in HNDs. Further enhancement of the HE centre was planned.

Q. Why are part time HE courses so successful?

A. Part time courses seem to really meet the needs of employers, particularly in Engineering. Employers were paying fees for students to work and study part time.

Q. Is it over-ambitious to plan to grow by 10%? Surely if demographics decline, won't HE?

A. Quite a lot of the planned growth relates to progression from year 1 to year 2. Further it is expected there will be more of shift between full time and part time. Growth is predicted to be mainly through further franchising.

The financial implication of failing to meet targets was discussed. It was noted that employers were likely to pay more fees in the future and that the College was well positioned in terms of HE and being active in the sector.

Competition with other organisations was discussed. It was noted that BCU was doing a lot of development work and that although all local colleges and universities presented some level of competition, it was not currently in direct competition with Solihull. It was further noted that private providers presented a threat, although they were more likely to provide classroom-based provision, than niche and STEM courses.

6. Dashboard 2015/16 Update

6.1 Finance, including PMR for March

The Vice Principal Finance presented the finance quadrant of the dashboard. She explained why some of the lines with a red indicator did not present a problem and had been managed and resolved. It was noted that income was lower than budgeted, however, finance targets were being maintained through reduction in expenditure. Discussion took place regarding the sensitivity analysis and the issues that could arise before the year end in July 2016. It was anticipated that the surplus and financial targets would be met.

6.2 Student Numbers

The Deputy Principal presented the student numbers quadrant of the dashboard and explained that at this point in the year there would be little change in the figures.

7. Value Added Presentation

The Deputy Principal presented the value added data. She explained that the target setting process, as described in the Student Presentation, underpinned the College's approach to ensuring value added, through setting challenging targets with students to ensure they achieve the very best they can. It was noted that the Data Governor had reviewed the detailed VA data.

The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment explained that on Pro Monitor students set 'stretch' targets

Q. Why was there a dip in Value Added in 2012/13?

A. There had been curriculum changes and quite a lot of organisational change. Then it was very much a retrospective indicator, so it was not possible to make an impact if it was poor. Now value added is proactively predicted and managed through Pro Monitor.

8. Staff Governor Election Update

The Clerk explained that the Staff Governor Election process was underway and there had been 3 nominations. Voting would take place from 20th to 27th May 2016.

9. Governance Quality Improvement Plan

The Clerk presented the final Governance QIP and it was approved. It was noted that the next steps were to consider impact and to manage the QIP through the Search and Governance Committee. The next self-assessment exercise would also be considered in due course.

REGULAR UPDATES FOR INFORMATION

10. International Provision Update

The Deputy Principal explained that 4 students were still to be placed with Oxford Brookes or an alternative provider. It was agreed that an update be provided at the next meeting. ACTION.

Q. Is it an issue to have the High-Trusted Status Licence evoked?

A. This is becoming very common for colleges as visa restrictions are becoming more stringent with whole countries being black-listed by the UKVI. The licence could be re-instated after a 2 year period.

11. Update Reports

11.1 Tender Update

The contents of the Tender Update Report were noted for information.

11.2 Membership and Declarations of Interest Update

The contents of the Membership and Declarations of Interest Report were noted for information.

11.3 Use of the College Seal

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

12. Dates of Meetings in the Summer Term:

Tuesday 14th June 2016 at 7.00pm, preceded by Audit Committee from 5.30 to 7pm

Tuesday 5th July 2016 at 6pm (note the annual celebration is scheduled for 7.15pm)

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.

Signed

J. Snow

Date

14 June 2016.