

SOLIHULL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CENTRE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17TH MAY 2017 AT THE WOODLANDS CAMPUS

PRESENT: John Bolt (Chair)
Stan Baldwin
Scott Beasley
John Callaghan (Principal)
Jane Coleman
Mark Hayes
Barbara Hughes
Joe Kelly
Paul Large
Lucy Lee
Keith Marriott
Phil Mayhew
Sukhdeep Nijjar
Geraldine Swanton (*joined meeting at 7pm*)
Sally Tomlinson
Liz Watson

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)
Rosa Wells (Senior Director of Employment and Skills)
Theresa Lynch (Clerk to the Corporation)

Liz Watson and Sally Tomlinson, new governors, were welcomed to their first Corporation meeting and introductions were made.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Alex Palethorpe and Summiya Khan.

2. **Declarations of Interest regarding this Agenda**

Geraldine Swanton declared an interest in Item 4, the discussion regarding Stratford upon Avon College, and she did not take part in this item. There were no other new declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th March 2017 and matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2017 were **agreed** as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

3.1 West Midlands Pension Fund – the Vice Principal Finance confirmed that an email had been circulated to governors on 23rd March 2017 confirming the agreement with the Pensions Fund relating to the fixed payment against the deficit (attracting a discount of £100k) and stepped contributions that would start in August 2017. No written confirmation of these arrangements had yet been received from the Pension Fund.

3.2 Capability Procedure – the Vice Principal HR and Student Services confirmed that the unions were satisfied with the contents of the Capability Procedure.

3.3 Health and safety – the Vice Principal Finance confirmed that the overhead barriers had

now been installed and that whilst the Residences were occupied there would be a security presence on site overnight.

4. Strategic Partnerships – Stratford upon Avon College Merger Process

This item was deemed confidential, due to commercial sensitivity.

Development	<p>Development: Apprenticeships – update regarding strategy for apprenticeships with levy and non-levy employers</p> <p>The Director of Employment and Skills provided an overview of the strategy in relation to apprenticeships working with levy and non-levy employers. She confirmed that the College was now on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP).</p> <p>Q. What will happen next with the AppOrg? A. It was noted that Solihull College was taking the lead on the project and would be focussing on levy paying, public sector employers in Greater Birmingham and Solihull. Staff were already doing joint bids with BMet. It was noted that it would be a good offer for employers, as they could work with the Birmingham/Solihull colleges without having to approve all 3 and that together the colleges could offer a vast range of curriculum areas and levels, that other providers or in-house training often could not.</p> <p>Q. What links does the College have with the health sector? A. The NHS is generally aiming to deliver apprenticeships in-house, however, there do seem to be some areas that they are realising would be more effectively delivered by the colleges.</p>
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5. Bids and Projects

5.1 Bids and Projects Report

The Vice Principal Finance presented the Bids and Projects Report and provided a verbal update on key bids. It was noted that the report now also included a section on contracts that had been agreed and signed – this had previously been in the PMR, however, this was more appropriate in this report.

5.2 Business Elevator ESF Project

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and explained that final details of the award differed from those approved by Corporation in November 2016. The project was therefore presented for approval again to ensure accuracy.

Q. Why were both bids not successful?

A. ESF believed one project was better for the College to focus on and only approved award of one.

RESOLVED to approve the final position of the ESF Project – Business Elevator approved by Corporation on 2nd November 2016 with a total project cost of £2,518,593, subject to ESF funding of £1,259,297. This is a joint bid with South & City College and Birmingham Metropolitan College.

5.3 Business Elevator ESF Risk Register

The Vice Principal Finance explained that the project had a risk register due to the higher risk

levels attributed to ESF projects. It was noted that professional advice was being sought prior to signing the SLA and that European funding would continue until 2022.

6. Tuition Fees Report and Policy

The Vice Principal Finance presented the Tuition Fees Report and Policies

Q. If the College is planning on year on year increases of 7-9% is this sustainable?

A. The increases have occurred due to a change in the HE mix of programmes being offered. Previously mainly HNDs were offered, but now there are a range of validated degrees that require more infrastructure and resources. It is not envisaged that this level of increase will be year on year, but it does bring us in line with our partner institutions. Fees will be reviewed annually, taking into account the wider HE environment and competition. Further, it is likely that the College will diversify the offer further into degree level apprenticeships. The College's success relates very much to the level of support for students and having a good reputation.

RESOLVED to approve the Tuition Fee Policies for FE and HE students, subject to clarification of wording regarding refunds.

7. Code of Conduct for Staff and Governors

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Code of Conduct for Staff and Governors and noted the recommended changes. Clarity was sought regarding the definition for fundamental British Values. It was noted that consultation had taken place with the unions and that UCU had suggested inclusion of relationships outside of College too and this had been incorporated.

RESOLVED to approve the Code of Conduct for Staff and Governors.

8. Sub-contracting Termly Report

The Deputy Principal presented the report and provided an update in relation to Adult Education Budget income and the award of contracts for £250k for each The Skills Network and Learning Curve, as agreed in December 2016. To achieve target it is suggested that a further contract be given to the Skills Network for a further £400k for work undertaken in 2016/17 and 2017/18. The College will continue to review the AEB budget and performance of each provider to ensure the AEB target is achieved.

RESOLVED to approve award of a contract to the The Skills Network for up to £400k of income in total with up to £200k rolling into next year.

9. Dashboard 2016/17 Update

The Deputy Principal presented the student numbers quadrant of the Dashboard for 2016/17.

Q. Why are timely success rates going down?

A. They are being tracked more carefully all the time – information on the dashboard is more accurate. It is not anticipated that timely success rates will be below target.

The Vice Principal Finance presented the finance quadrant of the Dashboard for 2016/17 and confirmed that overall income should meet targets, as long as SFA income was achieved.

Q. Is it anticipated that there will be increased income in 16-18 Apprenticeships?

A. This will depend on whether over-delivery is funded. It had been for 2015/16.

It was noted that non-levy apprenticeship funding had been provided from 1st May to 31st December 2017 – this situation would be carefully monitored.

10. **Membership Report**

The Chair presented the Report and discussion took place regarding special interest areas. It was noted that there was not a need for community and reputation as a special interest area. Discussion took place regarding the potential governance arrangements following the decision by Stratford upon Avon College in June 2017.

RESOLVED to approve the following appointments::

- **Paul Large** as a member of the Audit Committee with effect from 1st May 2017.
- **Liz Watson** as a member of the Audit Committee with effect from 1st August 2017.
- **Lucy Lee** be appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee with effect from 1st August 2017.
- **Joan Smith** as an external member of the Search and Governance Committee for a 4 year term of office to May 2021.

Extend **Barbara Hughes'** role as an external member of the Corporation to 31st July, with her taking a full governor role with effect from 1st August 2017.

11. **Whistleblowing Policy Review**

The Chair presented the Policy and noted the minor changes that had been approved via Chair's Action. The Policy was ratified.

UPDATES FOR INFORMATION

12. **Property Report 2016/17 and Strategy 2017/18**

The contents of the Property Report for 2016/17 were noted and the Vice Principal provided a verbal update.

Discussion took place regarding a student that had lived in the Halls of Residences for a long period of time and the level of support being provided to find alternative accommodation.

13. **Curriculum Planning 2017/18**

The contents of the Curriculum Planning 2017/18 Report were noted and the Deputy Principal provided a verbal commentary.

14. **14.1 Health, Safety and Safeguarding Report**

The contents of the Health, Safety and Safeguarding Report were noted.

Q. Is there some mandatory training for all staff?

A. Yes, for example, fire awareness and PREVENT/safeguarding training.

Q. Is mandatory training identified for specific roles and mapped across the College?

A. Yes, it is possible to identify specific requirements across the College and to demonstrate that this training has taken place. When update training is required it will be triggered, as appropriate, although the online process has only recently been introduced across the College, so this situation has not yet arisen.

Q. Issues around PREVENT – it would be useful to have referrals identified in this report?

A. There are not very many referrals, but the information can be included in future. **ACTION.**

14.2 Tender Update

The contents of the Tender Update Report were noted.

14.3 Use of College Seal Report

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

15. Equality and Diversity Assurance Report

The contents of the Equality and Diversity Assurance Report were noted. The Vice Principal HR and Student Services noted that the full report was available at <http://www.solihull.ac.uk/about-us/equality-diversity/> and the link would be circulated to all governors for information. **ACTION.**

16. Correspondence

The contents of the following letters were noted:

- HEFCE letter dated 8th February 2017 providing feedback on the provider review preliminary assessment;
- SFA/EFA letter dated 10th March 2017 providing feedback on the financial statements for 2015/16.

17. Dates of the future meetings:

Audit Committee – Monday 12th June 2017 at 6pm

Corporation – Wednesday 21st June 2017 at 6pm

Corporation and end of year dinner Celebration – Tuesday 4th July 2017 at 5.30pm for Corporation and 7.15pm for dinner

18. Register of Interests for Governors and members of EMT

The contents of the Register of Interest were noted and governors were asked to notify the Clerk if any changes were required.

The Chair noted that this would be Phil Mayhew's last Corporation meeting – he was thanked for his contribution to the College.

It was also noted, with regret, that 19th May 2017 would be the first anniversary of Lena Stockford's passing.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm.

Signed: J. R. Best Date: 21 June 2017