

SOLIHULL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CENTRE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29th NOVEMBER 2017 AT THE BLOSSOMFIELD CAMPUS

PRESENT: John Bolt (Chair)
Stan Baldwin
John Callaghan (Principal)
Jane Coleman
Mark Hayes
Barbara Hughes
Joe Kelly
Paul Large
Lucy Lee
Sukhy Nijjar
Geraldine Swanton
Sally Tomlinson

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)

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November 2017 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2017 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair

3.1 Matters Arising

Hourly Paid Contracts – the Vice Principal HR and Student Services explained that the issue about holiday pay for hourly paid contracts had been raised by Eversheds, but that the College had decided to keep the holiday pay rolled up into the hourly rate paid. Advice had been received and, as long as it was clear in the contract that holiday pay was included in the hourly rate this could be done and unions were satisfied with the arrangement.

4. Strategic Partnerships: Merger with Stratford upon Avon College Update

The Principal provided a verbal update relating to the merger with Stratford upon Avon College. He explained that negotiations were on-going with Lloyds Bank and the pension funds. It was hoped that a Heads of Terms Agreement would be produced between the Pension Funds before merger and that this would provide an explanation about the data checking process as well as an indication of the re-valuation in 2019.

An update was provided regarding the voluntary severance scheme being offered at Stratford upon Avon College. Requests were currently being reviewed in relation to role and reliance on staff by the College.

It was noted that negotiations were on-going with Sanctuary Housing. Although there was a risk in relation to the £496k, advice from Eversheds and Irwin Mitchell had rated it as relatively low risk. Discussions were on-going.

The Principal explained that the unions had provided some very positive letters regarding the merger, even though early communications had been negative. Work with the unions would be on-going in relation to curriculum developments.

The Vice Principal Finance explained that Associate Architects had reviewed the estate and were working on a plan for the Stratford campus.

5. Health and Safety Update

5.1 Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17 – Assurance Presentation

The Vice Principal Finance presented the annual report for 2016/17 and explained that it provided good assurance in relation to health and safety procedures at the College. Discussion took place regarding online health and safety training for staff and it was suggested that it be made clear what % of staff had undertaken the training.

It was noted that the Vice Principal Teaching, Learning and Assessment was reviewing risk assessment paperwork for educational visits.

5.2 Health, Safety and Safeguarding Autumn 2017 Report

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report for the Autumn term 2017 and discussion took place regarding the on-going work to reduce the number of incidents for staff and students.

Discussion took place regarding the boundary between the College and Tudor Grange Park and the use of the car park by external people using the astro-turf in the evening. Liaison was taking place with the police and local authority and arrangements to secure the site further were being explored. It was noted that the recent incidents on the College site had not been random incidents, as originally believed and police were very supportive in working with the management to ensure a secure site.

6. Dashboard

6.1 Funding

The Deputy Principal presented the student numbers for 2017/18. She noted that apprenticeship numbers were down by c21%, but that this would not necessarily mean that level of reduced funding. Bids were being submitted.

It was noted that there had been a decline in level 2 apprenticeships, although at the recent open day, apprenticeships had been the most popular area for prospective students.

Q. Is the reduction in 24+ reflected nationwide?

A. It is reflected nationwide and it is very difficult for colleges to meet their budgets. A bid with BMet had been submitted to explore how to increase adult engagement. The funding methodology had become very complex and it was increasingly difficult to fund adult learners.

There was a huge interest in apprenticeships and the College was looking at pre-apprenticeships at level 1 – short courses, with work experience with a qualification that would provide opportunities with employers. It would also provide an opportunity to focus on maths and English for these students. The College was working with the Chamber of Commerce in relation to pre-apprenticeships, trying to engage students who tend to struggle with the

traditional offer.

Q. As HE is a key focus for the College – what are the implications of a reduction in numbers?

A. There are about the same level of HE students at 2016, however they are on different qualifications, for example higher apprenticeships or degree apprenticeships. HE is still a key area for the College.

A report on apprenticeships was requested at a future meeting. **ACTION.**

6.2 Finance – PMR September 2017

The Vice Principal Finance presented the finance quadrant and September 2017 PMR. It was noted that the October PMR would provide a clearer picture following enrolment of students for 2017/18. Work would be taking place with each department to review income and expenditure in detail.

Discussion took place regarding the forecast surplus for 2016/17 and it was agreed that the EBITDA figure should be included on the dashboard, as well as, the yearend figure that would be included in the accounts. **ACTION.**

7. Pay Award

The Principal explained that 1% pay award had been included in the budget and was affordable.

RESOLVED to approve a 1% pay award for all staff including senior postholders and the Clerk to the Corporation.

8. Date of the next meeting:

Monday 11th December 2017 at 5.30pm

Governors' Development Session: Saturday 20th January 2018 9.30-1pm – it was agreed that the January development session be changed to an induction session for new governors and a further strategy development session be arranged for later in the Spring term. **ACTION.**

REGULAR UPDATES FOR INFORMATION

9. Solihull College Foundation Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statement for year ended 31st July 2017

The contents of the Solihull College Foundation Trust Trustees' Report and Financial Statement for year ended 31st July 2017 were noted and clarity was sought regarding the purpose of the Foundation Trust. The Vice Principal Finance explained that it had been a legacy trust to deal with VAT that would be charged on books. VAT was not charged on books, but the Trust had a surplus, and has been making donations to the College for specific projects in recent years. It now had no funds and would now be closed down.

Thanks were expressed to Michael Evans who had acted as a Trustee for a number of years.

10. Register for Gifts and Hospitality Report

The contents of the Gifts and Hospitality Register were noted.

11. Regular Reports

11.1 Bids and Projects Update

The contents of the Bids and Projects Update report were noted for information and the Vice

Principal Finance provided an update.

11.2 Property Report

The contents of the Property Update report were noted for information and the Vice Principal Finance provided an update.

11.3 Tender Group Updates

The contents of the Tender Group Update report were noted for information and the Vice Principal Finance provided an update.

11.4 Use of the College Seal

The Seal had not been used since the last meeting.

12. Governance Standing Items

12.1 Membership

The contents of the Membership Report were noted for information and the Clerk noted that Student Governor interviews would be taking place shortly.

12.2 Register of Interest for Governors and EMT

The contents of the Register of Interest report were noted for information.

The meeting ended at 7.45pm.

Signed: J.R. Bolt Date: 19th Dec 2017.