

SOLIHULL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CENTRE

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 11TH DECEMBER 2019 AT THE STRATFORD UPON AVON CAMPUS, starting at 17.30pm

PRESENT: Barbara Hughes (Chair)
Paul Assinder
Stan Baldwin
Dr Peter Bebbington
John Bolt
John Callaghan (Principal)
Mark Hayes (Staff Governor)
Katie Higgins (Student Governor)
Paul Large
Lucy Lee
Tony Lucas

IN ATTENDANCE: Lindsey Stewart (Deputy Principal and Stratford Chief Operating Officer)
Heather Evans (Vice Principal Finance)
Rebecca Gater (Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum)
Pete Haynes (Vice Principal HR and Student Services)
Theresa Lynch (Clerk)

Ben Dodd (Head of Vocational Studies, including Apprenticeships and Distance Learning) – Item 4 only
Nicky Brooks (Head of School Creative Arts and Maths and English) – Item 4 only

Students from the Performing Arts department at the Stratford upon Avon Campus performed Christmas carols, which were very much appreciated by Governors.

The Chair welcomed all and presented gifts to John Bolt, Stevie Gray, Pat Knauff and the Student Governor, Katie Higgins to thank them for their commitment and contribution to the College. She explained that the main elements of the agenda were the curriculum intent presentations regarding Stratford upon Avon College provision and the annual presentation of the College Self-Assessment Report.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Badri Gargeshnari, Sukhdeep Nijjar, Geraldine Swanton and Sally Tomlinson.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest in relation to the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters arising**

3.1 Audit Committee Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th November 2019

The Audit Committee minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2019 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record.



3.2 Corporation Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th November 2019

The Corporation minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2019 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record.

3.3 Institute of Technology (IoT)

The Vice Principal Finance explained that the Executive Director Employment and Skills & IoT was still working hard to get the IoT documentation finalised and approved by the DfE. It was hoped that this would be finalised by 18th December 2019 and submitted before Christmas.

Appreciation was expressed for the hard work of the Executive Director Employment and Skills & IoT and the team in trying to get the IoT complete before the Christmas break.

Q. What are the implications if the College does not sign the documentation before the end of December 2019?

A. It may be that outputs for the Autumn term would not be counted for 2019/20 and it was important for Aston to start building the Hub in January 2020 to keep the project on track.

Q. Are there any restrictions on making announcements about the IoT during the election?

A. No, the DfE had continued to work with the College throughout the election and were also keen to complete the approval process.

It was **agreed** that where the College Seal was used on the IoT documentation the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporation would sign on behalf of the College, with the Principal signing on behalf of the IoT.

3.4 HE and Higher Apprenticeships – Student Number Analysis

Discussion took place regarding student numbers for HE and Higher-Level Apprenticeships and it was noted that overall there had been a reduction in HE numbers in the last three years, but Higher Apprenticeships had grown significantly. Governors continue to monitor this closely.

4. Curriculum Intent 2019/10 – curriculum design and management

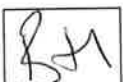
4.1 Creative Arts

The Head of School Creative Arts and Maths and English presented the curriculum intent for the Creative Arts provision at Stratford upon Avon College. It was noted that it was very useful to hear about the work with alumni and parents.

Q. Do you have statistics on destination data?

A. The Deputy Principal will provide destination data at the next Corporation meeting.
ACTION.

Discussion took place about Ofsted's recent comments nationally regarding the creative arts and how collegestend to mislead students about the pathways from qualifications into the sector. Governors judged this was not the case at Stratford. The presentation gave them confidence about the intent of the College in offering this provision. It was noted that it was very important to maintain strong creative arts



provision. Creative arts subjects are important for students in building resilience, confidence and in developing transferable and problem-solving skills. It was also important for the economy and provided students with good careers.

Q. What local companies work with the College other than the RSC?

A. Companies including Adventure Travel and Adventure Bike Ride – they run a competition and work with the students; the Dogs Trust; media students provide marketing materials for businesses in Stratford; a dance company in Leamington provide work experience opportunities for students. All subjects have arrangements for working with local employers.

Q. How do you link with LEP priorities and what do you hope to get out of it?

A. A number of bids, to obtain funding have been submitted to CWLEP, however, to date they have been unsuccessful. The CWLEP and the RSC have joined to undertake a large project together. The College works with the RSC, which is one of the largest employers in Stratford upon Avon and offers a broad range of careers. The CWLEP also supports SMEs in the creative arts as part of their local priorities. Such employers provide employment opportunities for students.

Dr Peter Bebbington confirmed that he had conducted a Learning Walkthrough at Stratford. He had seen a dance class who were choreographing a dance concerned with plastic waste in the ocean. This had demonstrated good teamwork and interpersonal skills. It had been a really enjoyable and valuable experience.

Q. Was the College involved with the Coventry City of Culture bid?

A. The College had not been directly involved in the bid to date but did sit on the Coventry and Warwickshire Eight that brought together all the creative areas in Coventry and Warwickshire, e.g. the Hepworth Gallery and Coventry Cathedral.

4.2 Vocational Studies, including Apprenticeships and Distance Learning

The Head of Vocational Studies, including Apprenticeships and Distance Learning presented the curriculum intent for the Vocational Studies provision at Stratford upon Avon College. It was noted that the presentation provided a comprehensive overview of a broad range of provision and it was important that intent was about developing skills at appropriate levels to allow students to move on to their chosen destinations.

Q. What type of distance learning programmes were offered?

A. They are predominantly short, certificate courses. About 30-35 courses are offered and the offer changes based on employer requirements or market intelligence. Most students tend to be employed adults. Discussion took place regarding the likely nature of colleges in the future where more distance learning would be required.

Q. The Vector data had been very interesting – are there any major areas where the College does not offer provision or where this provision should be considered?

A. One area is hairdressing – there are about 55-60 students in the Stratford area who travel out of the area to attend hairdressing courses. Construction also offers some similar data. Both subjects were being considered for development in the curriculum. It is anticipated that these would be popular programmes with students. The Vector data supports this suggestion by showing an increase in relevant demographics.

Q. Focussed discussion with parents about employability – do you discuss destination data with parents?

A. Yes, a broad range of data is prepared for parents. Learners are very aware of destinations and where previous students had gone. In March students will work on their destinations and options are discussed alongside that of HE. Data is also available regarding promotion in the relevant industry.

Dr Peter Bebbington had visited the Working with Children and Health and Social Care classes at Blossomfield and noted that students were happy with their choices to come to the College and were very engaged in their classes. A lot of students aspire to move onto higher education.

Q. What makes you confident about growth potential in your curriculum areas?

A. Vector data and career data – the College is working with local schools about what the College offers and provides an alternative for students who won't be doing A levels. The College's reputation is improving a lot with positive messages about infrastructure investment being disseminated in schools and throughout the local community. The Head of Vocational Studies, including Apprenticeships and Distance Learning, explained that he conducts presentations for parents and students and these sessions are very positive and have a vibrant atmosphere that really makes the College present as alive and growing. It was noted that numbers at open days were increasing year-on-year and conversions from open days to enrolment were positive.

The Chair thanked both Heads of School for their presentations – it had been really valuable to hear first-hand how curriculum areas plan their curriculum and work with employers.

5. **Self-Assessment Report 2018-19 and Quality Improvement Plan 2019-20**

5.1 Executive SAR Summary 2018-19

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum explained that the SAR provided context and progress towards achieving points raised by Ofsted in the monitoring visit in March 2019 and the wider goal of achieving outstanding at the next inspection.

5.2 College SAR 2018-19

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented the SAR for 2018-19.

Q. Is it better to be realistic or underestimate your performance?

A. It is a balancing act. It is very important to judge performance as accurately as possible. Ofsted want to see a genuine understanding of an organisation's performance. The next SAR will be structured in relation to the new Ofsted framework. It will be necessary to carefully consider judgements for 2019/20 to fully demonstrate a good understanding of the organisation, what requires improvement and how this can be achieved.

Discussion took place regarding achievement and aspirational/stretch targets and it was noted that this had been discussed in detail at the Quality and Progress Expert Group. The correlation between attendance and achievement was discussed and it was noted that this is not always the case. It is important to really understand how learners learn to ensure that the right approach is being used for all subjects. The approach may differ between subjects. Analysis regarding approaches to underpinning learning was undertaken to fully understand student needs in varying



subject areas, for example, students with mental health issues value broader ways of studying.

Q. Is achievement data benchmarked?

A. All achievement data is benchmarked – this is reported to Governors in the Summer term and data for 2018/19 can be found on Boardpacks – presented at Corporation on 20th May 2019, Item 14.

RESOLVED that the College SAR for 2018-19 be approved and signed by the Chair to the Corporation.

5.3 College Summary QIP 2019-20

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented the Quality Improvement Plan for 2019-20 and noted that it was an emerging picture, being only the end of the first term. The key areas for improvement were highlighted as were areas currently in intensive care. There was a need to continue to improve attendance for maths and English and some strategies are in place to address this. Progress in relation to maths and English is positive compared to last year and will be monitored closely when the December assessments have taken place.

Discussion took place regarding the QIP and important messages for Governors. It was suggested that Governors focus their attention on the items listed on the summary for on-going monitoring of performance and ensuring improvement going forward.

Clarity was sought regarding the achievement data for 2018/19 and it was noted that this needed to be amended and re-published. **ACTION.**

The RAG rating in relation to areas that had achieved at 100% in 2018/19 was discussed and it was noted that where they were showing below last year's outcomes (even though it was early in the year), they were rated red as a precaution and to ensure any issues were raised as soon as possible.

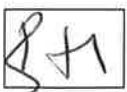
It was noted that the dashboard had been developed further for 2019/20 and there was much more focussed and detailed information to measure performance.

The strategy for English and maths was discussed and it was confirmed that the approach of registering all students for GCSE, rather than Functional Skills, was appropriate and should continue to be the College's policy. Discussion took place regarding attendance and the need to closely manage and monitor attendance levels on maths and English. The Maths and English Hubs do help where students need additional support and help with revision. There is also online support for students. Having maths and English hubs enable students to book in for additional support and revision – so a lot of opportunities for intervention.

6. Dashboard- Quality Section

6.1 Review of Key Strengths and Areas for Improvement regarding Teaching and Learning

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented the quality section of the Governors' Dashboard. She explained that 325 learning walks had been completed in 2019/20 to date. The follows areas for development were noted:



- Checking of learning and assessment of learning (this also features as a strength);
- Planning and implementation;
- Attendance

There is a monthly CPD rolling programme for all staff to attend based on their individual development plan, which is monitored termly with their line manager. This ensures that there is a very transparent and supportive process. The December staff CPD sessions focused on value added and stretch targets to support students to reach their potential.

Discussion took place regarding the staff dashboard and it was noted that it was currently under review. It was suggested that it would be useful to have previous years data to provide comparison.

It was noted that a dashboard session would be set up early in 2020 to provide clarity regarding stretch targets and detailed discussion about what the dashboard tells us. This will build on previous dashboard training sessions for Governors held in 2018/19.

Student survey data would be published in due course and would be provided with a previous year comparison.

Q. How would a governor be able to see evidence that Ofsted's comments regarding a lack of formative feedback to student is being addressed?

A. This would be evidenced through survey data - there are 2 questions about feedback relating to how it helps students to improve and the timeliness of feedback. In addition, evidence will be gathered through deep dives into curriculum areas when an audit will be carried out regarding marked work. CPD is offered for staff to improve the quality of feedback to improve grades.

6.2 Governor Engagement Feedback

Discussion took place regarding Governor engagement during the Autumn term 2019. It was noted that the progress walk-throughs had been enormously beneficial in being able to triangulate what happens in the classroom in relation to the information provided for Governors and data presented.

Paul Assinder had conducted a walk-through at the Blossomfield Campus and had seen a dance group, who were working on a theme of protest. The overwhelming impression was the sense of teamwork and the awareness of the broader context of what they were doing and the benefits. He had noted the great facilities in Hair and Beauty. There was a very positive view from learners and real connection between the staff, subject and ethos of the students working together in a shared endeavour.

It was noted that Lucy Lee's employer had an apprentice from the College and this provided a good perspective of how the College supports and works with students. It provided an opportunity to see apprenticeships from the employer's side and to understand how the College supports the employer and the student. It had demonstrated availability of students who want to do an apprenticeship and particularly the higher-level apprenticeships.

7. In-Year Progress Update

7.1 In-Year Progress Report

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum provided an update regarding the progress data in relation to stretch targets, which measure progress in relation to a student's entry point. Using stretch targets encourages students to reach their full potential based on their entry level. It was noted that the data provided was early in the year and in some areas there were reasons why achievement to date was incomplete, but this would change as the year progressed, for example, some can re-submit and some do mock exams, which have not yet been done.

Q. Is EMT happy with what they are seeing with the in-year progress data to date?
A. EMT would hope it was all green, but it is a developing picture. Different curriculum areas conduct summative assessment differently, so the data isn't necessarily comparable. It is important to know the context. The current data gives an early indicator of progress to date and will develop further during the year.

The Principal explained that Governors could do a walk-through in any areas of concern which would give a good opportunity to observe teaching and learning and therefore get an understanding of progress.

Discussion took place regarding how entry levels are arrived at and it was noted that there was a standard DfE formula and this was the baseline against which stretch targets were set. It was noted that this was a consistent approach across the sector, but for some students the formula did not match their situation: each target was sense-checked and tailored for the individual student. It was confirmed that students are used to target setting as this was a key element in schools for monitoring progress.

7.2 Maths and English Update

7.3 Notes of the Quality and Progress Expert Group meeting held on 25th November 2019

The notes of the Quality and Progress Expert Group meeting held on 25th November 2019 were received for information.

8. Complaints Annual Report 2018-19 and Policy Review

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented the report and explained that it set out data regarding concerns and complaints received during 2018/19 with a breakdown of complaint categories by gender, age and ethnicity. It was noted that the name of the Policy had been changed to Concerns and Complaints Policy and some minor changes had been made.

It was noted that it would be useful to have the universal population included where there were breakdown figures by characteristics.

Q. How does the learning from complaints feed back into College Policy?
A. Analysis of complaint type and concentration is undertaken and this will inform any required action. Where there might be an issue raised by a group that would be further explored and analysis undertaken. Changing the name to 'Concerns and Complaints' provides a softer level of issue relating to concerns that a student may wish to raise, but not an actual complaint. For example, where a student has a

concern about lighting, this could be met by providing additional lighting, but doesn't necessarily need to be raised as a complaint.

RESOLVED to approve the Concerns and Complaints Policy.

9. **Property Report**

9.1 Property Strategy

The Vice Principal Finance presented the property reports and explained that the financial forecasts were now more cautious about growth and this would be built into the re-forecast to be presented at the next meeting. **ACTION.**

The Vice Principal Finance explained that during the election promises had been made about capital funding for FE, which was likely be available in the next few years. This needed to be considered with regard to the current spending plans for the upgrade of the Stratford upon Avon campus to address substantially poor buildings - and if capital funding is available, this has the potential to relieve any budget identified to-date for the works, and therefore an important matter to consider.

Discussion took place regarding planned maintenance costs and the need to uphold the good building conditions, particularly at Blossomfield and Woodlands. There was a need to address this to avoid deterioration over time. Planned maintenance commitments needed to be reviewed and although Phase 1 of the Stratford upon Avon College re-development was committed, it would be necessary to re-visit future phases before final approval and subject to government policy.

Discussion about utilisation and the nature of utilisation regarding specialist rooms versus standard classrooms took place.

It was noted that re-scheduled Property Expert Group would take place as soon as possible. **ACTION.**

9.2 Stratford Car Park Sale

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and explained that the nature of the site meant that there were limited options for its use, so it would be necessary to review. Stratford upon Avon District Council was suggesting that the land be designated for educational use and this would have an impact on its value. The College was appealing this decision and was considering other options to sell different areas of land.

9.3 Sanctuary Housing Update

This item was deemed confidential and Barbara Hughes left the meeting.

10. **Sub-contracting Policy**

The Deputy Principal presented the Sub-contracting Policy, which had been reviewed following additional guidance. The Policy had been streamlined to make it more manageable and in line with ESFA requirements.

R.H.

RESOLVED to approve the Sub-Contracting Policy.

11. **Governance**

11.1 Draft Governors' SAR

The Chair presented the draft Governors' SAR for information.

11.2 Governors' Declarations of Interest

The signed forms for the Governors' Declaration of Interests were received for information.

12. **Regular Update Reports**

12.1 Bids and Projects Report

The contents of the Bids and Projects Report were received for information.

12.2 Use of the College Seal and Chair's Electronic Signature

It was noted that neither the College Seal nor the Chair's Electronic Signature had been used since the last meeting.

12.3 Tender Update Report

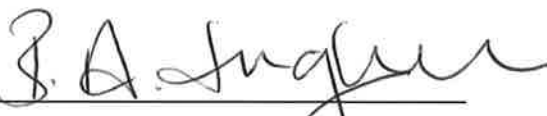
The contents of the Tender Update Report were noted for information.

13. **Date of Future Meetings**

The date of the next meeting is 10th February 2020.

A Governors' Development morning will take place on Saturday 25th January 2020.

Signed:



Date:

10.2.20

