

## SOLIHULL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CENTRE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2020 AT THE WOODLANDS CAMPUS, starting at 17.30pm

PRESENT: Stan Baldwin (*Chair for items 1-4 & left at 7.15pm*)  
Barbara Hughes (*Chair for items 5-16 & arrived a 6.30pm*)  
Paul Assinder  
John Callaghan (Principal)  
Raees Iqbal (Student Governor)  
Mark Hayes (Staff Governor)  
Paul Large  
Lucy Lee  
Tony Lucas (*left at 7.20pm*)  
Sukhy Nijjar  
Geraldine Swanton  
Sally Tomlinson

IN ATTENDANCE: Lindsey Stewart - Deputy Principal & Stratford Chief Operating Officer  
Heather Evans - Vice Principal Finance  
Pete Haynes - Vice Principal HR & Student Services  
Rebecca Gater - Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum  
  
Theresa Lynch – Clerk  
  
Rosa Wells – Executive Director Employment & Skills and IoT  
  
Alan Downing – Head of School, Motor Vehicle  
Phil Paddock – Head of School, Construction  
Mark Hayes – Head of School Engineering  
  
Stuart Lyons – observer [*HE Student Governor role*]  
Isabel Read – observer (*to item 5*)

The Chair welcomed the new Student Governor, Raees Iqbal and Isabel Read, who was observing the meeting.

#### 1. **Apologies for Absence**

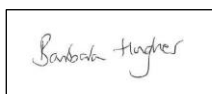
Apologies for absence were received from Badri Gargeshnari and Dr Peter Bebbington. Matthew Warburton – leave of absence.

#### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest.

#### 3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.



Item 2.1 Confidential Minute relating to Sanctuary Housing – it was agreed to make the following minute available publicly to ensure transparency and openness with regard to the Corporation’s approach to member’s conflicts of interest:

*‘The Corporation reviewed the Chair’s declaration of interest in respect of Sanctuary Housing and considered in particular whether, given the role of Chair, it would be appropriate for her to remain in the meeting while discussion on the matter was being conducted. The Corporation resolved to maintain the status quo and to continue to require the Chair to withdraw during discussion in common with other members with declared interests, to maintain objectivity of decision-making. It was agreed that the Principal would brief the Chair following the discussion and decision, as appropriate.*

*Part of the discussion will remain confidential.*

### 3. Matters Arising

#### 3.1 ESFA Return Confirmation and notes of the Governors’ meeting that took place on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020

The Vice Principal Finance confirmed that the ESFA return had been submitted to the ESFA by the deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and noted that the full spreadsheet was available if Governors’ wanted to see it.

Discussion took place regarding the concerns raised across the sector regarding the return. The Finance Directors Network had done an exercise to estimate the amount of time that had been spent on the return by colleges. Concerns were being raised by colleges and the AOC.

Paul Assinder confirmed that he had liaised with the Vice Principal Finance to finalise the return and commended her on the amount of time she had had to devote to producing the information.

#### 3.2 Institute of Technology

The Executive Director Employment and Skills and the IoT provided a verbal update regarding the IOT. She noted that documentation had been signed and returned by the College and by BCU. South and City College would submit shortly and this would be followed by Aston University, as they were leading on the construction of the Hub and therefore had additional requirements to fulfil for the DfE.

*Part of this items was deemed confidential.*

#### 3.3 Higher Education Recruitment Trends

The Deputy Principal presented the information and explained that it provided a comparison between part time HE and apprentices. She noted that there had been a large increase in Engineering, Built Environment and Professional higher degree apprenticeships and that Computing was growing. STEM subject apprenticeships were popular and employers worked well with the College.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that actual HE income had not decreased significantly as fees had increased. The cessation of the 2by2 Warwick University Health and Social Care programme had resulted in about £200k reduction in income. It was noted that some subjects were proving successful, particularly in niche

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subjects like SEND, whilst others seemed to be in decline – this was a normal phenomenon in the HE sector.

There was on-going monitoring of this area in terms of the market and the budget.

Discussion took place regarding the reasons for decline in some subjects and whether it related to the growth of apprenticeships or whether there were other reasons, like competition and where there may opportunities to reverse the decline or create new growth. The Principal confirmed that in developing the HE Strategy the senior team considered subjects with low numbers and the potential opportunities.

Q. The income implications are shown in the report – is HE breaking even?

A. HE is a good funding stream – it is funded a higher level than FE, eg, £4.1k/£3k for FE students, whilst HE students attract income of £6k+.

Q. Is the College identifying future trends and adding courses accordingly?

A. Yes, the team does reflect on opportunities that can be grown, eg Health and Social Care and Sport. It was noted that the removal of the nursing bursary had an impact on Health and Social Care numbers, but as it was being re-introduced this may support growth again. It is necessary to identify the niche in Sport and pursue HE programmes in that area.

Q. Are there staffing implications with the change from HE to apprenticeships?

A. Staff are very flexible and there tends to be infill arrangements for apprentices with HE programmes. Some assessors have had to be employed at the right level and that has been a challenge.

The Deputy Principal noted that HE was a substantial item on the next Corporation agenda – it was suggested that the Clerk ask members for input into what they would like to cover under the HE item. **ACTION.**

#### 4. **Strategic Updates**

##### **4.1 T Level Update**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality gave a presentation providing an update on the College's position regarding preparation for the delivery of T Levels.

Q. How did you decide the best way to roll this out?

A. The DfE have offered different tranches that Colleges can choose from. The College made decisions about which tranches to opt for by ensuring they could be confident about student numbers, work placements and good quality teaching and learning. It is important to ensure the subject is embedded and the provision is developed successfully, so that as the provision grows it is a good quality experience for students. It was anticipated that the College would be able to offer the full range of T Level subjects by 2025.

Q. Can we be sure there will be demand for T Levels?

A. Currently, it would be difficult to be clear about demand, but as funding is withdrawn from other level 3 programmes demand will shift to T Levels. The government's wish is to put technical education on a par with A levels. Some subject areas will be through apprenticeships only.

Q. What is the capital funding for and is it match-funded?

A. Capital funding is to support providers in ensuring they have adequate facilities and infrastructure in place to offer these technical subjects. It will be match-funding.

Q. If rolling out Digital in 2021, will there be any large-scale infrastructure development required?

A. It may be necessary to develop IT infrastructure in terms of delivery and operating systems.

Q. If demand is uncertain will there be any clawback in capital funding?

A. It will be necessary to invest to ensure the foundations are available to be able to do the state-of-the-art IT delivery. Target number for T Levels is 15.

Q. The College is planning on rolling out Digital in 2021 – how does this relate to what other colleges are doing in the region?

A. The pilot for 2021 will be Digital. The majority of colleges will be doing 1 subject in 2021 as a pilot – this will be one of Education and Childcare; Digital; or Engineering and Manufacturing. It is anticipated that the requirement of 45 days work experience will be an issue for many colleges – this will be tested during the pilot.

#### **4.2 Termly Updates on Targets 2019/20**

The Deputy Principal presented the termly update on the targets for 2019/20. It was noted that legacy learners at Stratford upon Avon had had an impact on apprenticeship data in 2019/20 and was down by about 1.5% below national average. Attendance continued to be challenging, but efforts were being made to move towards the target of 90% for all areas.

Q. Are there any national benchmarks for attendance and are they relevant?

A. There are no national averages for attendance and colleges do tend to record it differently, so difficult to compare across the sector, although maths and English did tend to be low across the sector. The College operated an electronic attendance register, so tended to be more accurate than those colleges that use manual systems.

The Deputy Principal explained the content of Actual (up to current time) and Outturn (projected at end of year) columns for 2019/20. She explained that the targets previously agreed had been based on provisional achievement data and that apprenticeships had been too high and adults was too low, so these had been revised as below.

Whether there is a correlation between attendance and achievement was discussed. Ofsted tend to suggest that if students do not attend they cannot learn, but this was not the experience at Stratford in 2018/19 when attendance was lower than other areas of the College and yet achievement was better. It was noted that resources were online for students that were not in lessons, but that was intended to be supplementary to lessons, rather than as an alternative.

Key financial performance indicators, EBIDTA, surplus/deficit and reforecast were discussed.

**RESOLVED** to approve the 2019/20 Targets, as below:

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	Actual 2018/19	Revised Targets 2019/20
<b>16-18 overall</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>87%</b>
Level 1	78%	81%
Level 2	87%	89%
Level 3	87%	88%
<b>19+ overall</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>87%</b>
Level 1	90%	91%
Level 2	87%	88%
Level 3	77%	81%
<b>Apprenticeships</b>		
Overall	65%	70%
Timely	62%	65%
<b>HE</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>89%</b>

### 4.3 Coronavirus (Covid-19) Briefing

*The Chair explained that a briefing regarding preparation regarding Coronavirus/COVID-19 had been requested and was therefore added to the agenda.*

The Principal provided an update regarding preparation and responses regarding the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) situation. He explained that the College was following published government advice, which was changing regularly. Planning would take place as issues arose and responses in terms of deep cleaning and/or closure would be taken as appropriate. The situation would continue to be managed carefully to carefully protect staff and students and the good of the College community. It was noted that trips to Italy by Arts and Early Years had been cancelled.

The Clerk would circulate the most recent guidance to all Governors'. **ACTION.**

Q. Is hand gel available around the College?

A. Yes, hand-sanitisers will be put behind reception for circulation to all staff and machines were being re-filled.

Q. Will staff that are self-isolating be paid?

A. Yes, substantive staff and part time staff would continue to be paid. The College would take a sensible and reasonable approach to support all staff. The Vice Principal HR and Student Services noted that ACAS guidance was very clear and was being followed.

Q. What will happen regarding exams?

A. As in previous situations exams boards could go back to tutor marks to review progress or exams may be delayed.

## 5. Curriculum Intent 2019/20 – curriculum design and management

### 5.1 Construction and Electrotech

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The Head of School presented information about the curriculum intent for the School of Construction and Electrotech and discussion took place.

Q. Is there interest from 16-18 year olds?

A. More 16-18 year olds have been recruited over the last three years. It is important to advise these students about what the opportunities they can have if they engage fully in construction subjects. Once they get engaged with employers they can see pathways for going forward.

Q. Are there enough students coming through?

A. There are 224 full time students 16-18 in Construction and about 63 in Electrical. Industry is concerned about whether there are enough young people and are starting to see the importance of having young apprentices.

Discussion took place regarding local Construction employers and RMF Construction Services that provides Plant Training for a number of the companies. They would be training people for the High-Speed Rail project and the College would continue to build their partnership with them. The Principal noted that it may be interested for Governors' to visit the Dickens Heath site.

Q. If developing partnerships and relationships with employers is a priority are there enough staff to do this effectively?

A. A lot of partnership work is through Employer Services and very pro-active on-site assessors. It would be good to increase the time lecturers have to do this too. They probably have a lot of relationships with local employers that could be useful to develop further. There is, however, an increase in employers approaching on recommendation.

Q. Is there any issue relating to recruiting staff, given the shortage of skills?

A. There is quite a settled staff at the moment, but in the future it may become an issue. Being able to compete with sector salaries may become difficult.

The Chair explained that she had done a learning visit to the School of Construction and Electrotech and had discussed the importance of raising the profile of English and maths. Some of the learners have had poor school experiences. Maths tends to be better for them given that the content links to their chosen subject. English tends to be more difficult for them. On the Governors' Dashboard Maths attendance was showing as 80% and English attendance was 78% - this had now improved. Employers were encouraged to reinforce the importance of maths and English.

## 5.2 Engineering

The Head of School presented information regarding the School of Engineering.

Q. Very impressive curriculum – how many students do you have?

A. 538 students across the curriculum – FE and HE.

Q. Can students fast-track to a degree programme?

A. A number of the aerospace extended diploma students have moved onto the Coventry University BSc Aircraft Maintenance this year, but they can also go to other universities.

Q. How long has it taken to get the structure like this?

A. The curriculum structure has changed a lot of the last 5 years to respond to changes in the sector, to offer subjects like CAD. Initially some courses had low

numbers, but they have grown and there are good progression routes. The College supported this growth. Although there is a good curriculum offer now, there are still more change that can be done to continue to develop and improve subjects and progression.

It was noted that the introduction of T Levels would have an impact on the offer outlined if funding was withdrawn from current courses offered. This would present the next series of changes.

Q. How do employers influence the curriculum?

A. There is a major link with Aston Martin. A lot of it is grassroots liaison between assessors, apprentices and work experience students who tell employers what the College can do and feedback in with comments and requirements.

### **5.3 Motor Vehicle**

The Head of School presented the curriculum intent for the School of Motor Vehicle.

Q. When will the students doing air conditioning and hybrid achieve?

A. Would expect them to complete at least 4 weeks before the end of the academic year in 2019/20 for both levels 2 and 3.

Q. Are the awarding bodies keeping up with changes in technology?

A. Unfortunately some awarding bodies are not – they need to change to keep up with manufacturing changes and targets for changing, ie all electric cars by 2035. Currently no other local colleges have electric car programmes. It generally tends to be private providers, like Delfi Technologies.

The Chair thanked the Heads of School and they left the meeting.

## **6. Dashboard – Quality**

### **6.1 Update on Stretch Targets**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality presented the Governors' Dashboard and demonstrated that the staff information was now live. She explained the 'working at grade' target.

Q. What do you do in response to the Stretch Target data?

A. During MOTs programmes in a department are reviewed in terms of performance against the stretch target data. Where a course is under-performing they will be put into 'intensive care', which will mean they are monitored more closely (4 weekly) and will have actions put in their Quality Improvement Plan to be monitored against.

The Chair explained that Governors need to be aware of this data – it is an indicator as to what the outturn will be at the end of the year – Governors' should be asking what is happening to those that are not working at their expected level. When coming in for learning visits it would be useful to discuss this data with staff and students. Governors can discuss with students what their target grade is and what they are working at and how they are being supported to achieve it.

Discussion took place regarding reports to the Corporation about achievement against stretch targets/predictions and the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality confirmed that she would review this and consider how this could be reported on.

**ACTION.**

## **6.2 Notes of the Dashboard Workshop meeting that took place on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

The notes of the Dashboard Workshop that took place on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were received for information. The Chair provided an update on the meeting and noted that guidance notes were being produced alongside a glossary, which would be shared with members in due course.

### **7. Autumn 2019-20 Student Survey Report**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality presented the report and described responses by students to the Teaching and Learning Survey. She confirmed that results from the survey were used to inform improved teaching and learning. It was noted that comparison information was available on the Governors' Dashboard.

Governors' confirmed that it was useful to use information from the Dashboard to triangulate data when doing learning visits. It aids understanding of the area and provides lines of enquiry when visiting curriculum areas.

### **8. Deep Dives – Feedback regarding Curriculum Deep Dive Visits 2019/20**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality and confirmed that 10 deep dives had taken place to date across the campuses. It was noted that all schools would be completed by the end of the academic year.

### **9. Equality and Diversity Annual Report**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality presented the Equality and Diversity Annual Report and discussion took place. Governors commented on the excellent report which gave a comprehensive view of equality and diversity in the College. Governors particularly welcomed the case studies of individual students.

### **10. Property Update Report – Confidential**

#### **10.1 Car Park Sale**

*This item was deemed commercially sensitive and therefore confidential.*

#### **10.2 Sanctuary Housing**

The Principal confirmed that no further correspondence had been received.

### **11. Policy Approval**

#### **11.1 Joint Agreement on Supporting Staff to Improve Work Performance**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Guidance on Supporting Staff to Improve Work Performance.

**RESOLVED** to approve the Guidance on Supporting Staff to Improve Work Performance.

#### **11.2 Capability Procedure**

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The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Capability Procedure.

**RESOLVED** to approve Capability Procedure.

### **11.3 Joint Agreement on Guidance on Dealing with Short-Term Sickness Absence**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Guidance on Dealing with Short-Term Sickness.

**RESOLVED** to approve Guidance on Dealing with Short-Term Sickness.

### **11.4 Sickness Absence Management Procedure**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Sickness Absence Management Procedure.

**RESOLVED** to approve Sickness Absence Management Procedure.

## **12. Bids and Projects Report**

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report.

## **13. Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

The Clerk presented the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020. It was noted that the Register of Interest was being updated and Governors' asked to sign to confirm that they were correct, in line with audit requirements.

### **13.1 Skills Audit**

The content of the Skills Audit Report was noted and the current skills gaps recorded. It was noted that the audit data included new members and data from November 2018 for existing members. It was suggested that the data for existing members be updated. **ACTION.**

### **13.2 Membership Report and Advert for Vacancies**

*Lucy Lee, Paul Large and Sally Tomlinson left during consideration of their membership/role.*

The Membership Report was presented. A confidential discussion took place regarding membership for Peter Bebbington.

**RESOLVED** to approve:

- that all governors be asked to sign the Governors' Handbook to confirm they have received a copy and are aware of the contents.
- that with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 to have 18 members of the Corporation (with no external

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members) and initiate an appointment process for 4 new members.

- That there be an election for one Staff Governor on the Corporation and the number of Staff Governors be reduced to one.
- A continued leave of absence for **Matthew Warburton** to the end of his term of office in June 2020.
- Re-appointment of **Lucy Lee** to July 2024 as a full member of the Corporation, Chair of the Audit Committee and member of the Remuneration Committee.
- Appointment of **Sally Tomlinson** as a member of the Remuneration Committee with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020.
- Appoint **Paul Large** as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

### 13.3 Staff Governor Election Timeline and Information

The timetable for the Staff Governor election was noted.

### 13.4 Student Governor Appointment Process

The changes to the Student Governor Appointment Process, as set out in Appendix 4 of the Standing Orders were presented.

**RESOLVED** to approve:

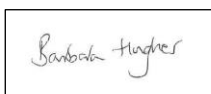
- the recommended changes to Appendix 4 of the Standing Orders regarding the Student Governor Appointment Process - Approval of amendments to Appendix 4 of the Standing Orders to allow appointment of the Student President (FE) and HE Student Voice Officer, alongside an appointment process.
- the appointment of **Stuart Lyons**, the current HE Student Voice Officer as a Student Governor for a 4-year term of office or until his programme of students ends.

#### 14. **ESFA Financial Health Letter and Dashboard dated March 2020**

The ESFA letter had not yet been received.

#### 15. **Regular Update Reports**

##### 15.1 Use of the College Seal and Chair's Signature



The contents of the Use of the College Seal and Chair's E-Signature were noted for information.

### **15.2 Gifts and Hospitality Register**

The contents of the Gifts and Hospitality Register were noted for information.

### **16. Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting would take place on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 starting at 5pm at the Blossomfield campus.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm.

Signed: Barbara Hughes Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
[Signed electronically due to lockdown in response to COVID-19 pandemic]

Barbara Hughes