

## Solihull College & University Centre

### Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at 5 pm in the Damson Suite at Blossomfield Campus

4.30 pm – presentation by members of the Student Executive Committee

5.00 pm – Corporation Meeting

#### Present

Christine Abbott [*joined the meeting from Item 6*]  
Paul Assinder – Joint Vice-Chair of Governors  
Scott Beasley  
Tasleem Chaudary  
Rebecca Gater – Principal and Chief Executive  
Vic Gwozdz – FE Student Governor  
Barbara Hughes – Chair of Governors  
Ravi Kumar  
Lucy Lee  
Amirun Nehar  
Donna Poole – Staff Governor  
Geraldine Swanton  
Harrison Thompson  
Sally Tomlinson

Chloe Sims – attending as an informal observer until discussion and confirmation of her appointment as HE Student Governor

Anita Suman – Shadow Governor

#### In Attendance

Heather Evans - Deputy Principal  
Pete Haynes - Vice Principal HR & Student Services  
Lee Jamieson – Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum  
Neil Brayshaw – Interim Vice Principal Skills, Curriculum Innovation & Partnerships  
Sam Bromwich - Director of Corporate Governance, Risk and Compliance

#### Presentation by member of the Student Executive Committee

The Chair welcomed members of the Student Executive Committee to the meeting and thanked them for their informative presentation.

#### 1 Apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the attendees to the meeting and offered an apology on behalf of Tony Lucas and Sarah Horton-Walsh, who were unable to attend.

#### 2 Declarations of interest in relation to this agenda

There were no conflicts of interests declared.

#### 3 Minutes from previous Corporation meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

The minutes of the meeting on 08 December 2022 were noted and approved without any amendment.

#### Matters Arising

##### 3.1 HE Student Governor

Chloe Sims was approved as the HE Student Governor.

### **3.2 Action Tracker**

The Action Tracker was produced, and these actions will be reviewed termly.

### **3.3 Top Risks**

A Governor queried the risk of industrial action taking place and this was acknowledged as a query matter that will be discussed within a later confidential item.

### **3.4 Governors' Development Morning - 11<sup>th</sup> February**

The Director of Corporate Governance, Risk and Compliance reminded the Governors to read the Ofsted Report and Self-Assessment in advance of the Governors' Development morning.

### **3.5 Minutes of Previous Corporation Meetings**

The minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> July, 5<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 were approved to be amended.

## **4 Sustainability Discussion / Development**

### **5 New Vice Principal Post Recruitment Proposed Timeline**

As the meeting's agenda was an extensive one, it was agreed to postpone the above items until a later date to allow appropriate time for discussion.

## **6 Verbal Feedback from Ofsted SiG / Ian Smith, External Consultant, Visit**

The Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum, the Vice Principal HR & Student Services and the Director of Corporate Governance, Risk and Compliance all provided their feedback.

The Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum referred to the School-level QIP and went on to discuss that attendance remains an issue within the College. He explained that retention is high and whilst withdrawal is low, attendance has dropped. It was discussed as an action to ask the students who are not attending, why they are not attending. **Action**

*Christine Abbott joined the meeting at 5.40pm.*

The Vice Principal HR & Student Services discussed that day 2 focused on safeguarding. Previously safeguarding was highlighted as a problem by Ofsted. There has been a significant improvement with record keeping. Ian Smith [external Consultant] met with two DSLs [Designated Safeguarding Leads] and the safeguarding team without any management present, and all responded positively. Ian Smith looked at the Single Central Record and had no concerns.

An audit on the Single Central Record was recently undertaken by the Safeguarding Lead Governor [Geraldine Swanton] and the Director of Corporate Governance, Risk & Compliance – with no issues reported. The importance of completing the feedback loop with staff members raising any concerns was once again stressed.

The Director of Corporate Governance, Risk and Compliance discussed the role of governance during an Ofsted inspection and how her role will help Governors during an inspection.

The HE Student Governor queried whether attendance could be low as some students may feel a lack of direction. The Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum to meet with Chloe Sims and Mary Younan. **Action**

## 7 Curriculum Update

The Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum presented the report, and he discussed the national education reforms. He discussed the proposal to offer small suite of A-Levels as a pilot from September and the Governors agreed to this. The Principal explained that this was designed to make the college more competitive.

It was **agreed** that the Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum would present an online briefing session on qualification reform and how provision will look in the future. **Action**

## 8 Treasury Management Annual Report and Policy Update / Review

The Deputy Principal presented this paper and Corporation agreed with the recommendation that the minimum cash balance remain at £6 million, with the Director of Finance having the discretion to invest a proportion of that amount in short-term investments [up to 32 days] in line with cashflow requirements.

Discussion of the Treasury Management Policy followed.

**Q: Can the Policy be reworded to provide more clarification on the threshold where there is authority to act immediately to prevent loss?**

A: The Deputy Principal and Audit Committee will work on this. **Action**

## 9 Sub-Contracting Termly Update

The Interim Vice-Principal skills, Curriculum Innovation & Partnerships presented this item and asked the Governors to approve the AEB tender.

Q: What is the issue with RMF?

A: RMF now have their own direct contract with WMCA. But based on last year's performance against KPIs the College is now monitoring them more closely and challenging them against their profile through regular performance meetings to ensure that overall targets against the contract are met timely.

Q: How much profiling is done?

A: This contract was awarded to Learning Curve. Monthly monitoring meetings and tracking of targets have been set up to ensure monthly profile targets are achieved.

## 10 Property Update Report

The Deputy Principal presented the summary report, which updated on the:

- Stratford Campus Redevelopment
- Heat Network
- T Level bid Animal Care
- DfE Capital Funds
- Brick Workshop – Woodlands
- Student Residences
- Tudor Grange House [TGH]

### 10.1 – Stratford Redevelopment – Landscaping Update

EMT recommended option 1 to the Governors. There has been an increase of a significant amount due to the current climate. However, this will be covered by the cash surplus. The FE Student Governor commented that the higher cost is worth it as the students at Stratford need the development and the money invested in the campus to improve the experience for the Stratford students.

**Q: How much has already been spent? It is important not to be complacent and ensure that a maintenance plan is in place.**

A: £11.5 million.

**Q: Is it an appropriate use of diminishing funds?**

A: Cash one-off costs can be used. ONS reclassification states that any capital income from sale of assets must be reinvested in capital development.

**Q: Is it possible to put the tender back out to the market?**

A: We are up against time and want the work done this summer so that the campus is ready in September for new students.

**Q: Is this the best use of the money? Is there anything else that should be invested in other than campus?**

A: This is an investment that money has already been spent on and it is important to align the Stratford campus to the other sites, so it is comparable for all students.

The Deputy Principal asked for approval for the EMT's recommendation of option 1. This was **approved** by Governors on the basis that there is reassurance of the ongoing maintenance and approved on the basis that the Property SIG would meet to discuss what would be put in place for the approval.

## **11 Cyber Security Discussion / Development**

### **11.1 IT Update**

The Director of ICT presented the reports and gave an update on IT and cyber security.

### **11.2 Managed Detection & Response**

Guy Sudron from JISC presented a cyber security presentation [by Teams link] to Governors and highlighted what they need to be aware of as a board in relation to cyber security.

Discussion followed about making sure appropriate business continuity and recovery is in place.

The impact on staff is high if a cyber-attack happens and the board must ensure that the College looks after its staff in the event of such an attack. Accountability in governance is vital.

There was a discussion about the risk being higher out-of-hours when there is not an IT team working. The biggest weakness in inadvertently enabling an attack is staff, if they click on a link and put their details in, which is why phishing simulations are used.

**Q: What is top of our list of priorities?**

A: In recognition that the team cannot be expected to provide the 24/7 high-level expertise needed to manage cyber security, College trialled a Managed Detection Response [MDR] solution in 2022 – and the summary update report details next steps for continuing this level of support.

**Q: How is staff training on cyber security managed?**

A: There is a 3-stage process to ensure that staff are targeted if they have not completed the training.

Governors **approved** the extension of the SOPHOS contract and **approved** the finance system [Sun Systems with Lake] extension for another two years, as recommended by EMT.

## 12 Finance Report Re-forecast Presentation

The Deputy Principal presented the finance report reforecast/ reforecast budget 22/23. The Governors **approved** the reforecast budget for 22/23 and noted the indicative budgets for 23/24 and 24/25.

## 13 Anti-Fraud Policy

The meeting discussed the Policy and Procedure and it was:

**Resolved** to approve the **Policy** to Prevent and Respond to Fraud, Corruption and Bribery, subject to further work being undertaken on the **Procedure** by the Deputy Principal and Director of Corporate Governance and presented again to Corporation for final review and approval. **Action**

## 14 Bids and Projects Report – [inc Termly KPI Report]

Governors noted the Bids and Projects Report, the update on the Bids and Projects Termly KPIs Report and **approved** the Project for HTQ Skills Injection Fund, detailed in Appendix 3.

## CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

*The following items were deemed confidential and the Staff, Student Governors and the Shadow Governor left the meeting.*

## 15 Pay Award

## 16 Contribution Report (confidential from Staff and Student Governors)

## 17 Minutes of the Remuneration Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (Including Remuneration Committee Annual Report)

## 18 Items for Information

The following Reports were presented to Corporation and noted:

### 18.1 Staff Management Representations and Declarations of Interest Summary to July 2022

### 18.2 Gifts and Hospitality Report

### 18.3 Governors' Register of Interest

## 19 Minutes of the Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) SiG (Special Interest Group) meeting held on 17 January 2023

Notes of the EDI SiG meeting were received for information.

## 20 Any other Business: Verbal update – anti-racism training

The Chair reported on the training (which had been held in College on 16 January 2023 for senior staff and Governors – the “Black Leadership Group” induction session). The next stage is the “train the trainer” model. The Chair also advised that the Governors’ Dashboard has been updated and is now fully available and she encouraged all governors to look at this before any learner visits and be up to date with KPIs.

## 21 Dates

**Governors were asked to note the following upcoming dates:**

- w/b 6th February – **Learning Visits and/or Student Focus Groups**
- **Governor Development Morning:** Saturday 11th February 2023
- **Audit Committee** – Tuesday 07 March at 5.30 pm on Teams
- **Corporation** – Tuesday 28 March at the IoT Hub, Aston, Birmingham

Signed



Date 28 March 2023

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