# SOLIHULL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CENTRE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 27TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT THE BLOSSOMFIELD CAMPUS, starting at 7pm

PRESENT:          Barbara Hughes (Chair)
Stan Baldwin
Dr Peter Bebbington
John Bolt
Badri Gargeshnari
Mark Hayes (Staff)
Paul Large
Lucy Lee
Sukhy Nijjar
Geraldine Swanton
Sally Tomlinson

IN ATTENDANCE:    John Callaghan (Principal)
Lindsey Stewart (Deputy Principal and Stratford Chief Operating Officer)
Heather Evans (Vice Principal Finance)
Pete Haynes (Vice Principal HR and Student Services)
Sam Bromwich (Director of Risk, Control and Compliance)
Theresa Lynch (Clerk)

Rosa Wells (Executive Director Employment and Skills & IoT) Item 4
Sue McGregor (Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation) Item 5

## 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Assinder, Katie Higgins (Student Governor), Tony Lucas and Matt Warburton (Staff Governor) – LOA.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

## 3. Minutes and Notes of Previous Meetings and matters arising

### 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2019 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record. Clarity was sought regarding the position statement that would be replacing the Prevent Action Plan and the Vice Principal HR and Student Services confirmed that this would be presented for the next academic year.

It was noted that the Teaching and Learning Policy had been amended to include deep dives for curriculum areas, in line with the new Education Inspection Framework.

The Chair also confirmed that the ESFA Financial Health Letter and Finance Dashboard October 2019 had now been received.

### 3.2 Notes of the Governors' Development Day 19th October 2019

The notes of the Governors' Development Day on 19th October 2019 were received and it was noted that it was a useful morning in preparing for the inspection. Further it was confirmed that there would be dashboard training sessions for governors in the New Year.

### 3.3 Questions and Answers between meetings

Questions between meetings were received and the Chair reiterated the importance of governors using the Dashboard effectively to challenge management and set actions. The Dashboard was also useful in correlating information presented in other formats to the Corporation.

4. **Institute of Technology (IoT)**

The Executive Director Employment and Skills & IoT presented the report and explained that it was hoped to obtain full DfE approval and all partners to sign off the project before the end of December 2019. This will enable the College to count learner numbers for the Autumn term as part of the IoT. Further, it will allow capital projects to commence to ensure funding is spent by March 2021.

Q. Has the curriculum been delivered in terms of IoT requirements?
A. Yes, students have been assigned as IoT students, but until it is fully approved, the brand cannot be officially used. Partner-colleges have met their learner numbers, whereas university-partners have not been able to. It is hoped that additional numbers from BMet will be able to be used to compensate for the shortfall in HEI numbers. The DfE will not performance manage the IoT KPIs for 2019/20, due to the delay in start date. Solihull College student numbers are predominately level 4 and 5 provision at Woodlands campus, higher degree apprenticeships and some level 3 apprenticeships. When approved the students will be made aware that they are now officially part of the IoT. The students had been made aware of this at enrolment.

Q. Could there be a negative impact for the College regarding the lease for the Hub?
A. It was confirmed that Eversheds had advised that there would be some general terms that would be included in the Collaboration Agreement. This would avoid any negative impact for the College.

Q. Will the planned building work at Woodlands have any impact on the students?
A. The timeline has been planned to minimise the impact of building work on the students at the Woodlands campus. The workshop is external, so can be built during term time, with appropriate fencing and health and safety precautions.

Q. Has the delivery of curriculum started and will there be any further recruitment this year?
A. Yes, delivery has started and being a student of the IoT will be an add on to their current study programme.

Q. When will the IoT contribute to growth in student numbers?
A. Level 3 provision has already grown in 2019/20, as a result of the IoT and this should increase. New courses with Oxford Brookes will start in September 2020 and it is hoped that this would ensure growth. Further, courses will be planned in the future too.

Discussion took place regarding the shift of HE numbers in Engineering to higher level apprenticeships and it was confirmed that data would be produced for Governors to consider and it was suggested that this information could be included on the Governors' Dashboard. **ACTION**.

Q. Is marketing in place for the IoT for 2020?
A. Yes, there are 2 working groups working on this: Learner Engagement Working Group and Marketing and Communications Working Group. The College cannot start using the brand until the project is fully approved, but planning is underway to ensure immediate action, once approved.

Governors congratulated the team for all the hard work on the IoT project to date.

<div align="center">**RESOLVED** to approve the:</div>

- Collaboration Agreement;
- That Chair signs the documents with the IoT on behalf of the College; and
- The Guarantee to DfE to be executed as a Deed.

## 5. HE Annual Report and Assurance Statement

The Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation presented the report. Discussion took place regarding the OfS's approach to scrutiny regarding the number of first-class degrees awarded by institutions and it was confirmed that the College had a very robust process regarding degree grades. External examiners are very positive and supportive of the College's approach. The Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation explained that a new SEN degree, a top up degree and a part time masters degree were planned and were currently being developed.

Q. The Governors' Dashboard seems to show that targets for HE (pt and ft) are quite a bit below – how can governors make sense of this in terms of the impact of higher-level apprenticeships?
A. HE numbers are live in the Dashboard and income has been sensitised in the budget, so the income target has been achieved, but it is necessary to analyse the movements towards apprenticeships and the impact on the HE data. In terms of efficiency, both HE and apprenticeship students are taught together. Analysis of the data would inform future targets.

Q. Is there in-year recruitment for the higher-level apprenticeships?
A. Yes, there can be in-year starts, but generally the majority of the courses join in the Autumn alongside the HE programmes. There may be a small amount of recruitment in January.

The Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation explained that the OfS had now confirmed that the annual assurance process was no longer required

Q. Can you explain the risks regarding HE, as described at the Audit Committee?
A. Yes, HE is becoming a higher risk in relation to OfS scrutiny. It is important to work closely with HE partners and internally to keep abreast of changes and meet OfS and QAA requirements.

Q. Can students build degrees through credit accumulation?
A. There have been national discussions on this matter for some time, however, in practice this is very difficult.

Q. What is the College's USP regarding HE?
A. The level of quality and support for students is the College's USP. Teaching is high-quality, group sizes are smaller than universities and contact time is higher. Support for students is very good.

Q. There is currently no HE at Stratford – is this planned once the development work is complete?
A. HE has been tried at Stratford, however, it is important to consolidate and increase 16-18 market first. The re-development will provide better facilities that would be more likely to meet HE students' expectations.

It was noted that the Dean of HE and Curriculum had been to a recent briefing where the definition regarding reportable events had been clarified. It was noted that this would be communicated to the Corporation in due course. **ACTION**.

Q. Is it the cohort or the type of degree that necessitates the involvement of the Mental Health Worker?
A. Some curriculum areas do have a higher number of students with mental health and social anxiety issues, eg, Animal Care and Welfare, and numbers are increasing across the College.

The Dean of HE and Curriculum Innovation explained that the College had received a letter from the Director of Competition and Registration, at the OfS regarding non-compliance with regulatory deadlines. This related to the payment of QAA subscription fees. The QAA had approved late payment of the fees. Some 250 colleges received the same notification, and our notification was later withdrawn due to a misunderstanding between OfS and QAA requirements. The College had received an apology from OfS that our payment date had been agreed and no further action was necessary.

6. **Finance and Resources**

**6.1 Financial Position 2019/20 and PMR for September 2019**

The Vice Principal Finance presented the financial position for 2019/20. It was noted that £0.5m had been reduced in terms of pay costs. It was noted that as budgets get tighter it is difficult to make savings re vacancy factors.

Clarity was sought regarding work on TGH and it was noted that planning approval had been requested for the new road design, but the main project did seem to be quite delayed, so it was uncertain when the overage payment would be made for starting work on the site.

It was noted that the AOC had suggested an increase in funding for 2020/21 of about 7% and a new finance requirement meant that the ESFA required the College to re-model 2020/21 by end of February 2020.

Q. What is a high-value course?
A. Courses like Digital Technology. Generally, those courses that require more equipment or costs to run.

**6.2 Pay Award**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services explained that the AOC had released the following advice:

*'In light of no additional funding for the current year we are making a final pay recommendation for 2019/2020 of 1%, or £250 (whichever is the greater).'*

It was noted that the budget had included 1% pay award, with the additional recommendation of £250 for the lower paid, this would increase the provision in the budget by £17,000.

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services explained that the Unions (including UCU and Unison) had rejected AOC recommendation and it was possible that, nationally, members might be asked to ballot for industrial action in the new year, including Unison. At local level, UCU and Unison whilst not formally accepting the offer, were accepting that the award would be made in December.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the recommended pay award of 1%, or £250 (whichever is the greater) for all staff, including senior postholders and the Clerk, backdated to 1st August 2019 and to be paid in the December salary.

**6.3 Notes of the Pre-Corporation meeting held on 13th November 2019**

The notes of the Pre-Corporation Finance meeting held on 13th November 2019 were received for information.

7. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee meeting held on 11th November 2019**

### 7.1 Risk Strategy and Timetable for 2019/20

The Director of Risk, Control and Compliance presented the report and explained the Committee had suggested that she review the Policy and Strategy to merge the documents and recommend an appropriate review period.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the Risk Strategy and Timetable for 2019/20.

### 7.2 Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy, Procedure and Strategy and Assessment Malpractice Policy

The Clerk to the Corporation presented the Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy, Procedure and Strategy and the Assessment Malpractice Policy.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the:
> - Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy, Procedure and Strategy
> - Assessment Malpractice Policy.

### 7.3 Appointment of Internal and External Auditors

*This item was deemed confidential.*

### 7.4 Data Protection Policy

The Director of Risk, Control and Compliance presented the Data Protection Policy and noted that some additional, minor changes had been made following the Audit Committee on 11th November 2019.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the Data Protection Policy.

### 7.5 Data Archiving and Retention Policy

The Director of Risk, Control and Compliance presented the Data Archiving and Retention Policy and noted that no changes were recommended.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the Data Archiving and Retention Policy.

### 7.6 No-Deal Brexit Risk Analysis

The Director of Risk, Control and Compliance presented the NO-Deal Brexit Risk analysis and noted that this incorporated the AOC guidance at Item 7.7.

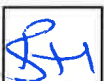### 7.7 AOC No-Deal Brexit Guidance

The AOC No-Deal Brexit Guidance was received for information.

### 7.8 Risk Management Covering Report for Audit Committee

The Risk Management Covering Report was received for information.

### 7.9 Data Protection and GDPR Update Covering Report for Audit Committee

The Data Protection and GDPR update covering report was received for information.

8. **HR Policies – Collective Agreements**

**8.1 Grievance Procedure for all Staff**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Grievance Procedure for all Staff.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the Grievance Procedure for all Staff.

**8.2 Adoption Leave Policy**

The Vice Principal HR and Student Services presented the Adoption Leave Policy and noted that this had this mirrored the Maternity Policy that had recently been approved.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the Adoption Leave Policy.

9. **Health and Safety**

**9.1 Annual Report 2018/19 and 9.2 Health, Safety and Safeguarding Termly Report Autumn Term 2019**

The Vice Principal Finance presented the reports and discussion took place regarding the good level of assurance provided by the reports. It was noted that it was positive that students were involved in some aspects of health and safety. It was also noted that no students had been caught with weapons on site, however, it may be that they hide them outside the College and collect them when they leave.

Discussion took place regarding the work of the College nurse. It was noted that it was unusual to have a College nurse, but that her role was very important to staff and students. The new nurse would work 4 days per week, with the 5th day being covered by a College first aider. The nurse would see students that were unwell and this was helping with attendance. It was noted that the Mental Health worker role was also very important in providing support for students.

10. **Bids and Projects**

The Vice Principal Finance presented the report and noted that the final Full Business Case figures for the LEP projects required approval, as the figures were lower than when they were previously approved.

The table below summarises the LEP bids with Outline Business Case (OBC) figures shown in red and the revised Full Business Case (FBC) figures shown in black:

| Project | Estimated Project Costs £'000 | Estimated LEP funding £'000 | Match Funding £'000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| OBC - Construction Skills (B068) | 712 | 332 | 380* |
| FBC – Construction Skills (B068) | 636 | 287 | 349* |
| OBC - The Outpost (B068) | 957 | 427 | 530 |
| FBC – The Outpost | 727 | 390 | 337 |
| OBC - Total | 1,669 | 759 | 910 |
| FBC – Total | 1,363 | 677 | 686 |

*£177K of this match will be provided by RMF
*£136K of this match will be provided by RMF

It was noted that the costs for these projects were built into the budget for 2019/20.

RESOLVED to approve the final Full Business Case
figures for the LEP projects, as indicated above.

11. **Governance Matters**

**11.1 Audit Committee Terms of Reference**

The Clerk presented the amended Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee and noted
that the College auditors had been asked to review the amendments.

RESOLVED to approve the Audit Committee Terms of
Reference.

**11.2 Search and Governance Committee Terms of Reference**

The Clerk presented the amended Terms of Reference for the Search and Governance
Committee and noted that no changes were recommended.

RESOLVED to approve the Search and Governance
Terms of Reference.

**11.3 Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference**

The Clerk presented the amended Terms of Reference for the Remuneration Committee.

RESOLVED to approve the Remuneration Committee
Terms of Reference.

**11.4 Membership Report**

The Clerk presented the report and noted the following:

- Stevie Gray had resigned in October 2019 with immediate effect.
- Pat Knauff had resigned in November 2019 with immediate effect.

The Chair explained that John Bolt had also expressed his wish to resign as a Governor with
effect from December 2019. John Bolt had agreed to remain involved with the College with
links to data management. His role would be clarified in due course. **ACTION**.

It was noted that Matthew Warburton had advised the Chair and Clerk that he would be absent
from College due to ill health for the foreseeable future. It is suggested that he be given a
leave of absence for the Autumn term 2019, in the first instance and this would be reviewed
in the Spring 2020.

Nominations for a Vice Chair of the Audit Committee had been requested at the Audit
Committee meeting held on 11th November 2019.

RESOLVED to appoint Stan Baldwin be appointed as
Chair of **Property Expert Group** (2019/20); and to give
Matthew Warburton a leave of absence for the Autumn
term 2019, in the first instance.

**11.5 Register of Interests for Governors and EMT**

Governors were asked to update and sign their declaration of interest form for 2019/20.

## 12. Remuneration Committee Annual Report to the Corporation

The Chair of the Committee presented the Remuneration Committee Annual Report to the Corporation.

> **RESOLVED** to approve the Remuneration Committee Annual Report, submitted by the Committee to the Corporation.

## 13. Minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 13th November 2019

### 13.1 Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum Probation Report and Targets 2019/20

*This item was deemed confidential.*

### 13.2 Deputy Principal and Chief Operating Officer at Stratford Targets 2019/20

*This item was deemed confidential.*

### 13.3 Vice Principal HR and Student Services Targets 2019/20

*This item was deemed confidential.*

### 13.4 Vice Principal Finance Targets 2019/20

*This item was deemed confidential.*

> **RESOLVED** to approve the targets for members of EMT for 209/20.

## 14. Register of Gifts and Hospitality Report

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

## 15. Regular Reports:

### 15.1 Property Update

The contents of the Property Update were noted for information.

### 15.2 Tendering Report

The contents of the Tendering Report were noted for information.

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

It was noted that the College Seal and Chair's electronic signature had not been used since the last meeting.

## 16. Date of the next meeting:

The date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 11th December 2019 at 5pm at Stratford upon Avon campus, and the Governors' Development Session would take place on Saturday 25th January 2020 9.30-1pm

## 17. Any other business

Discussion took place during the confidential part of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____11·12·2019_____