



**SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE**  
**FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION**

Approved minutes of a meeting of South Gloucestershire and Stroud College  
Further Education Corporation  
Held on 30 January 2020  
At Stroud Campus, Stratford Road, Stroud, GL5 4AH

<b>Present:</b>	Moyra Pascoe	(Chair)
	Carly Dyson	
	Roger Ellis	
	Sophie Green	
	David Hagg	
	Kevin Hamblin	(CEO & Executive Principal)
	Martin Jones	
	Dave Merrett	
	Richard O'Doherty	
	Ben Short	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Gavin Murray	(Assistant Principal, Quality & Performance)
	Jude Saunderson	(Chief Financial Officer)
	Sara-Jane Watkins	(College Principal)
	Sharon Glover	(Clerk)

The Chair opened the meeting by explaining that David Benson would not be attending the meeting due to health reasons that had arisen over the Christmas period. Flowers from the College had been sent and a card would be circulated for members to sign.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from David Benson, Sophie Chester-Glyn, Mike Croker, Matt Davis, Phil Eames, Moira Foster-Fitzgerald, Joe Lamonby. Charlotte Argust and Juno Sharrock did not attend the meeting.

The Chair advised that, due to the late change to the meeting venue, some members were unable to attend the meeting. The Principal apologised about the need to change the venue and explained that there was concern over car parking at WISE campus due to a reduction in spaces following the commencement of building works and an event being held at the campus that evening. Wherever possible all meetings are being relocated from WISE campus over the next 18 months.

## 2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were reported and noted:

- As a Trustee of SGS Academy Trust, Kevin Hamblin in the CEO report relating to SGS Academy Trust and item 14 relating to SGSAT.
- Richard O'Doherty, as Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gloucestershire, in the CEO report relating to UoG.
- Sophie Green in the Search Committee item 13 relating to her re-appointment.

## 3. **Other Items of Urgent Business**

There was one item of urgent business received. This related to the utility contract for electricity. Members were informed of the need to take Chair's action in order to lock in contracts to secure the best deal as advised by the Broker who monitors market conditions and then tenders on behalf of the College, SGSCSL and SGSAT. Following tender the recommendation was to go with a 24 month offer, with a 0.2% overall saving against the current costs. This will guarantee the pricing for 2 years from 1 April 2020. This saving also included a small premium to have 100% renewable.

The Chair raised the need for earlier notification to Corporation in future in order that Chair's action can be agreed in advance. The CEO & Executive Principal informed that lessons had been learnt and in future the Chief Financial Officer will oversee the process and any such review will be undertaken in advance. Corporation ratification of the Chair's action was sought.

### **It was resolved:**

**To ratify the Chair's action taken to agree the offer for electric and of the signing of the contract.**

## 4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 5 December 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

## 5. **Matters Arising From Those Minutes**

- a) The final signed Annual Report and Financial Statements were noted.
- b) Actions on the Corporation action log were monitored. There was one confidential update provided and reflected in the confidential minutes.

## 6. **CEO & Executive Principal's Report**

The following items were included in the CEO's report and questions were invited; report on the Group Strategy meeting held between the Chairs of SGS Corporation, SGS Academy Trust, SGS Commercial Services Limited and the CEO; updates from SGS Academy Trust; HEI partnership and Eco Central. Members were informed that successful meetings relating to the HEI partnership had been held with the University of Gloucestershire and thanks were extended to Richard O'Doherty.

Following on from discussions at the Search Committee meeting, the need for a reciprocal arrangement at Board level was discussed with the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gloucestershire. It was proposed that as the new arrangement is more of an operational nature there wasn't the need for reciprocal representation at Board level and that HEI partnership updates could be provided via the CEO report. As Richard O'Doherty's term of office comes to an end in April this would bring the current agreement to a natural conclusion. Members were informed that this proposal will also be presented to the University of Gloucestershire's Council and views from SGS Corporation were invited. Following discussion members were supportive of this proposal.

Members were also informed that a recommendation is being made to SGSAT Board for the appointment of John Huggett as a Trustee and for the Board to appoint him as Chair of SGSAT Board.

Richard O'Doherty refrained from the following resolution.

**The report was noted and it was resolved:**

**To cease the reciprocal representation at Board level between SGS College and the University of Gloucestershire.**

## 7. **Principal's Report**

The following items were included in the Principal's report and questions were invited; Shortlist of SGS College for the TES FE Awards 2020; the ESFA Integrated Financial Model for Colleges; Office for Students update; shortage of University level accommodation within Bristol; Workforce for the future project; Employer Apprenticeship Conference; the College Principal's invitation to join the new West of England Skills Advisory Panel; Employability Expo 2020; Key Performance Indicators; official opening of SGS Stroud Growth Hub and approval for the establishment of an Additional Voluntary Contribution Pension Scheme.

In response to questions raised in advance of the pre-Corporation meeting, Members were informed that a request had been made for comparative attendance data against previous year. The Principal reported that English and Maths continue to be the greatest areas of concern due to the higher number of learners sitting GCSEs, in particular from the construction department. Work is being undertaken with the teams in this respect. The Principal had also produced comparative attendance data and the Clerk was asked to circulate to governors. A question was also raised about the number of learners engaged with the Employability Expo event and confirmation was received that learners had been prepared ahead of this event and the statement of numbers in the report was broadly accurate.

Members were informed that under the Local Government Pension Scheme rules the College is required to offer an AVC arrangement to employees. An employee who wishes to pay AVCs has approached the College. Corporation approval for the establishment of an AVC Pension Scheme, the contributions and management of this scheme being through the Avon LGPS, together with approval for HR to provide the Governor information sought by AVIVA to process this scheme was sought.

Members congratulated the Principal on being invited to join the new WofE Skills Advisory Panel on behalf of the College and positioning the College so well. The College was also congratulated on reaching the short list for the TES FE Awards and wished well.

**The report was noted and it was resolved:**

**To approve the establishment of an Additional Voluntary Contribution Pension Scheme, the contributions and management of this scheme being through the Avon LGPS, together with approval for HR to provide the Governor information sought by AVIVA to process this scheme.**

**Action: Clerk.**

## 8. **Management Information**

- a) Management Accounts exception report – The Chief Financial Officer reported that following a positive forecasting meeting there is confidence that the forecast will be achieved. As with previous years adult provision remains a concern and proves challenging as ever to achieve. The pay costs are below budget, which is naturally occurring rather than targeting this area. Members asked if there was a 5% allowance for vacancies and confirmation was received that there is a 1-2% allowance in corporate areas. No allowance has been made for teaching staff and this will be reviewed next year.

Following the local pension scheme valuation the pension fund has performed well and is funded higher than expected. The lump sum deficit has reduced and costs are less than budgeted for. Members were informed that contributions to the local government scheme are increasing to 16.3%. It was reported that there is 13 years to re-pay the deficit and currently good progress is being made.

Small savings on individual lines in non-pay were reported and these related to the timing of budget expenditure. The cash position is looking healthy, without the usual concerns around March, and the impact of the STEAM project is being modelled through.

Members raised an error in the executive summary relating to the current ratio and Year To Date actual as this carried through into the accounts as “requires improvement” financial health. Concern was raised that this point had been highlighted previously and the same error had occurred. The Chief Financial Officer apologised for this error and agreed to closely monitor. The Chief Financial Officer suggested that the forecast figures rather than YTD figures are included in the management accounts as the YTD data did not represent where the College will be.

**The report was noted.**

- b) Primary Risk Registers (including SGSCSL) – The Chief Financial Officer reported that there were no significant changes to the SGS primary risk register and there will be a focus over the next few months to reduce these risks. In some areas of risk it was felt that the College had been overly cautious and harsh on itself. The addition of STEAM was a new risk and has been added to the risk register for awareness.

It was reported that the SGSCSL primary risk register was not significantly different and risks had been condensed. Although financial support to SGSCSL had previously been approved the Chief Financial Officer wanted to provide early notification that there will be a need to approach the College to extend and formalise the loan and work is being undertaken on a 3-year financial plan for presentation to the SGSCSL Board, in the first instance.

**The risk registers were noted.**

**9. College Self-Assessment Report 2018/19 (including HE & CIPs)**

The Assistant Principal presented the College Self-Assessment Report and confirmed that it had been externally validated on 9 December 2019. The covering report confirmed that the Annual Review of Higher Education and the Improvement Plan had been previously presented to Corporation and, subsequently, no further changes had been made. Questions were then invited from members. Prior to the meeting one member had provided a list of minor typographical errors and the Assistant Principal confirmed that these would be addressed in the revised version. Members questioned

some data in Appendix B and were informed that this was an anomaly and would be removed as not meaningful.

Members raised that the headline grades between 2017/18 and 2018/19 had decreased in two areas and the reason for this questioned. Members were informed this was due to the change to the Education Inspection Framework and the focus on the quality of education which in some areas was deemed to need improvement and it was felt these improvements should be driven by Leadership and Management.

Members questioned the reference to high quality accommodation in the SAR as this did not reflect that Filton campus is not fit for purpose. Members agreed that the statement should be changed to reflect the emphasis on vocational resources as opposed to accommodation. The CEO & Executive Principal commented that 51% of Filton campus accommodation as not fit for purpose but in a recent government survey they had reported that 10% of the College's accommodation was at Grade C but did not indicate where that was. Members suggested that the College questions the survey results to ensure that the report provides an accurate reflection of the College estate. Overall, the College has more accommodation in good rather than poor condition. However, in South Gloucestershire the concern is about the future growth in population and replacing the accommodation that is not fit for purpose at Filton campus with the logic of building on one site. Members were informed that Ofsted's main focus will be on teaching and learning rather than the accommodation. The Assistant Principal agreed to revise the wording in this respect. Members raised that the learner outcomes are even more impressive taking into account that teaching accommodation in some parts of the College is poor.

The Principal informed that a list of capital work needed has been prepared and the Staff Governor informed of a leak in the IT room which had be closed and teaching relocated. He concurred with the statement that 51% of Filton campus accommodation was not fit for purpose.

The College was congratulated on the excellent work undertaken in the production of the Self-Assessment Report.

**The report was noted and it was resolved:  
To approve the 2018/19 College Self-Assessment Report, subject to changes raised, and note the contents of the 2018-2020 cross-College Improvement Plan.**

**Action: CEO & Executive Principal.**

10. **Extension to Lease to Bristol City Football Club**

Confidential Item.

11. **SGS Academy Trust Statement of Assurance**

Members noted that this item is to be carried forward to a future meeting.

12. **Strategic Property Group**

Confidential Item.

13. **Search Committee**

The minutes from the Search Committee meeting held 16 Jan 20 were noted. The Vice Chair of the Search Committee (Martin Jones) reported the following:

*At this point Sophie Green was invited to leave the meeting.*

- a) Following consideration of the re-appointment of Sophie Green for a further 3-years to complete her first 4-year term of office, the Committee had no hesitation in making this recommendation to Corporation.

**It was resolved:**

**To approve the re-appointment of Sophie Green, at the end of her current term of office, for a further 3-years to complete her first full 4-year term of office.**

*At this point Sophie Green was invited to re-join the meeting and the Chair of the Corporation invited Martin Jones to leave the meeting.*

- b) The Chair of the Corporation reported that as part of succession planning for the departure of Martin Jones the Committee recognised that his HR expertise is critical and there would be benefit in considering his continuation on the Remuneration Committee as Chair as a Co-Opted Member. In light of the focus on Senior Post Holder remuneration it was considered beneficial to have an independent Co-Opted Member to Chair this Committee. Members were invited to consider this option. Following consideration members concurred this would be a good decision and the Clerk raised that the Remuneration Committee terms of reference would need to be revised and approved by the Corporation.

*At this point Martin Jones was invited to re-join the meeting.*

- c) Confidential Item.

14. **SGS Academy Trust**

Members noted the SGSAT Annual Report and Financial Statements and the Annual Report to SGS Corporation.

15. **Learner Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure**

Members received revisions to the policy and procedure for approval.

**It was resolved:  
To approve the Learner Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.**

**16. Governor Development Event**

Members noted the report of the Governor Development Event held 16 January 2020.

*At this point the Staff Governor and members of the Executive Team were invited to leave the meeting. The CEO & Executive Principal was invited to remain in the meeting.*

**17. Remuneration Committee**

Confidential Item.

**18. Confidentiality**

Members agreed that due to business sensitivities the confidential part of the Principal's report (item 7), extension to lease to Bristol City Football Club (item 10), Strategic Property Group minutes (item 12), Search Committee confidential minutes (item 13c), Remuneration Committee (item 17) and minutes 5b, 10, 12, 13c and 17 are to be treated as confidential.

**19. Assessment of meeting**

A summary of feedback in relation to the meeting held 5 December 2019 was received. The Clerk distributed forms to members so that an assessment of the Corporation meeting could be undertaken.

**20. Any Other Business**

The Chair raised the importance of Governors' attendance at Voice of the Learner meetings and activities in order to triangulate reporting at Board level. However, it was appreciated that many governors are in full time employment and do not find it easy to attend these events so those that are able to attend were encouraged to do so.

**21. Date of Next Meeting**

Special Corporation meeting, Thursday 27 February 2020 at 4pm, Stroud Campus.

The meeting commenced at 5.00pm

Roger Ellis, Gavin Murray, Jude Saunderson and Sara-Jane Watkins left the meeting at 6.10pm (after item 16)

Kevin Hamblin left the meeting at 6.15pm (during item 17)

The meeting closed at 6.40pm and the meeting was quorate.