



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE
FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Approved minutes of a meeting of South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Further Education Corporation
Held on 22 March 2018
At Filton Campus, Filton Avenue, Bristol

Present: John Huggett (Chair)
David Benson
Sophie Chester-Glyn
Mike Croker
Craig Dickinson
Phil Eames
Roger Ellis
Kevin Hamblin (CEO & Executive Principal)
Joe Lamonby
Dave Merrett
Moyra Pascoe
Carrie Pickford
Charlie Webb

In Attendance: Moira Foster-Fitzgerald (Chief Group Services Officer)
Jude Saunderson (Chief Financial Officer)
Andy Slaney (Chief Operations Officer, Commercial & Estates)
Sara-Jane Watkins (College Principal)
Sharon Glover (Clerk)

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Sophie Chester-Glyn to her first Corporation meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Laura Boutle, Martin Jones and Richard O'Doherty. Jack Gritt did not attend the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received. However, the Clerk reported that Charlie Webb, due to his age, would not be able to participate in resolutions relating to the submission of capital bids, financial and investment strategies and the appointment of a contractor relating to The Chase development at Stroud campus.

3. **Other Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 22 Feb 18 were approved and signed as a correct record.

5. **Matters Arising From Those Minutes**

a) Members monitored actions on the action log and updates were provided.

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

The CEO & Executive Principal reported on the following:

a) Confidential Item.

b) Confidential Item.

7. **Principal's Report**

Having attended the AoC Principals' and Chairs' meeting the Principal reported the depressing state of the sector with a lack of funding impacting on the longer sustainability of Colleges resulting in the need for larger College groups/mergers.

The College Principal then reported on the following:

a) 16-18 allocation – overall core funding has been reduced, equating to a 2% funding reduction for 2018/19. Members were informed that the Principal and Chief Financial Officer are reviewing budgets and tabled a list of known changes and impacts on the budget.

- b) ESF – In terms of budget planning for 2018/19 a worse-case scenario, in regards to ESF income, is being worked on.
- c) Office for Students (Higher Education) – This is the replacement for HEFCE and there is a need for the College to go through the same registration process as Universities in order to operate as a Higher Education provider. From September 2019 there will be additional costs that will have a £150k impact on the 2019/20 budgets. There will also be a further funding impact on Colleges due to the withdrawal of government grant funding for Jisc. Members also raised the increase in pension costs from April, which it was confirmed had been factored into the financial strategic planning taking place.
- d) Apprenticeships – The College has successfully grown its apprenticeship provision and work with many large public sector organisations. The College is now failing to secure a place on their purchasing frameworks due to their requirements for significant quality marks and are being squeezed off the frameworks by large national providers. This is causing a high financial risk and potential risk to current contracts and the College has raised this issue with the AoC.
- e) GDPR – The College has established a working group and the action plan was appended to the report. A consultant has been engaged to review the College's data processing approaches and a Data Protection Officer has been appointed.
- f) Feedback on actions from previous meeting – updates were provided in the report.
- g) Student Exclusions – there have been no exclusions so far this academic year.
- h) Appraisal completion rate – an update was provided in the report.
- i) Confidential Item.

Members questioned whether the top performing Colleges could provide a link for the College to share best practices. Confirmation was received that peer work is already taking place with two of these Colleges.

Members asked if the EDGE/GOAL projects will be extended and were advised that the current contract is to be delivered this academic year and a new contract would be in place with effect from August 2018. At the Audit Committee members were informed of the challenges faced with the GOAL project and the Principal advised that the College appreciated that it would be challenging and that provisions had been made in the budget.

The report was noted.

8. Management Information

- a)
- (i) Financial Strategy – Confidential Item.
 - (ii) Investment Strategy – The Chief Financial Officer presented an updated Investment Strategy, outlining key priorities when considering any new investment. Following consideration of the Investment Strategy, one typographical error was raised.

Charlie Webb abstained from the following resolution.

It was resolved:

To approve the Investment Strategy, subject to the one minor change raised.

- b) Management Accounts exception report – The Chief Financial Officer reported that the College has over-recruited on apprenticeships and there are concerns relating to obtaining accurate reporting for certain income streams. The forecast has therefore been based on faculty records which have historically proven to be accurate. Members were informed that the apprenticeship reforms are causing many challenges. In addition there is now a need for employers to complete ILR returns so until the employers' ILR has been confirmed the learners fall out of the funding, which is a risk for the College. Members questioned whether the AoC are taking this up on behalf of Colleges and confirmation was received that most Colleges have raised this issue with them.

The Chief Financial Officer reported that the student debt had reduced and when asked, confirmation was received that other Colleges are in the same position. The option of outsourcing debt collection to an external organisation is being considered. Members noted that the cash flow forecast was more positive and that the College was doing well in managing costs. When asked, confirmation was received that provision has been made for any shortfall in Adult Skills Budget and that there had been £140k bursaries awarded to adults that were not in the figures. Members were informed that every year becomes more challenging and it is becoming harder to be more radical. Members questioned whether courses can be rationalised. Confirmation was received that this is reviewed by the Executive Team and fewer delivery groups are planned but group sizes increased. Stroud campus remains inefficient whereas Filton and WISE campuses are very efficient. Management and delivery savings are being investigated. When asked, confirmation was received that the teaching department were over budget due to sickness, mainly flu, however there had been a reduction in work related stress.

The report was noted.

- c) KPI report – The College Principal reported that attendance in English and Maths remains lower than targeted, despite small improvements in functional skills attendance. Members noted that there are currently no concerns reported regarding

retention and questioned why many of the KPIs under the prevalence of quality assessment are red. Members also asked that FR24 and FR25 are checked for accuracy. The Principal agreed to investigate further and report back. The Chair also raised that he had spotted an error on FR18 and FR19 and asked the Clerk to circulate an updated Finance and Resources sheet.

The report was noted.

**Action: College Principal.
Clerk.**

9. **Curriculum Strategy (including the Higher Education Strategy**

Members noted that, due to the rescheduling of the curriculum conference, this agenda item is to be carried forward to the next meeting.

10. **Progress against College Quality Improvement Plan, including the Higher Education HE QIP**

Members were presented with progress against improvement outcomes in the College's Improvement Plan and against the Higher Education Development Plan. It was reported that improvement objectives are meeting expectations however space for Higher Education continues to present a significant challenge and appraisal completion is being reviewed.

The report was noted.

11. **Equality Objectives**

Members were presented with the College's Equality Objectives for approval, following consultation and engagement with a range of stakeholders. The College Principal pointed out that there was a typographical error in Equality Objective 1, which would be updated following approval.

It was resolved:

To approve the SGS Single Equality Objectives 2018-2020, subject to the change raised at the meeting.

12. **Gender Pay**

Members received a gender pay gap report and concurred that this report shows the College in a positive light.

The report was noted.

13. **Strategic Property Group**

Confidential Item.

14. **Corporate & Social Responsibility Statement**

Members received an updated Corporate & Social Responsibility Statement, with one minor revision proposed.

It was resolved:

To approve the Corporate & Social Responsibility Statement.

At this point the Staff and Student Governors and members of the Executive Team were invited to leave the meeting. The CEO & Executive Principal and College Principal were invited to remain in the meeting.

15. **Vice Principal Learner Support and Experience appointment**

Confidential Item.

16. **Confidentiality**

Members agreed that due to business sensitivities the CEO & Executive Principal's report and appendix 1, confidential part of the College Principal's report, appendix 2 and tabled item of known changes (item 7), Financial Strategy (item 8 a) (i)), SPG minutes of 6 Mar 18 and minute's 6a, 6b, 7i, 8a (i), 13 and 15 are to be treated as confidential.

17. **Assessment of meeting**

A summary of feedback in relation to the meeting held 22 Feb 18 was received. The Clerk distributed forms to members so that an assessment of the Corporation meeting could be undertaken.

18. **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 26 April 2018 at 5pm, Stroud Campus.

The meeting commenced at 5.00pm.

Carrie Pickford left the meeting at 6.45pm (after item 8b)

Craig Dickinson, Roger Ellis, Moira Foster-Fitzgerald, Jude Saunderson, Andrew Slaney and Charlie Webb left the meeting at 6.53pm (after item 14)

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

The meeting was quorate.