



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE
FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Approved minutes of a meeting of South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Further Education Corporation
Held on 8 November 2018
At Filton Campus, Filton Avenue, Bristol, BS34 7AT

Present: Moyra Pascoe (Chair)
David Benson
Sophie Chester-Glyn
Mike Croker
Craig Dickinson
Phil Eames
Roger Ellis
David Hagg
Kevin Hamblin (CEO & Executive Principal)
Joe Lamonby
Dave Merrett
Richard O'Doherty

In Attendance: Jude Saunderson (Chief Financial Officer)
Andy Slaney (Chief Operations Officer, Commercial & Estates)
Sharon Glover (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Harrison Festa Adams, Moira Foster-Fitzgerald, Martin Jones and Sara-Jane Watkins.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were raised:

- a) David Benson in item 13 (STEM build) and in Search Committee minute 7 of item 16 (Search Committee).
- b) Dave Merrett in Search Committee minute 7 of item 16 (Search Committee).
- c) Kevin Hamblin and Phil Eames in the CEO's report relating to SGS Academy Trust.

- d) Richard O'Doherty and David Benson in the CEO's report relating to HE Expressions of Interests.
- e) Richard O'Doherty in item 8 (Higher Education).
- f) Kevin Hamblin and Andy Slaney in the Other Item of Urgent Business.

3. **Other Items of Urgent Business**

There was one item of confidential urgent business tabled at the meeting.

At this point Gavin Murray, Assistant Principal Quality and Performance, joined the meeting. The Chair advised that she would be bringing forward agenda items 8b, 9 and 10 as the Assistant Principal would be presenting these items in the absence of the College Principal.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 11 October 2018 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. The Chief Operations Officer reported on the conference attended on solar which provided assurance of the terms being offered by Ecotricity. A detailed proposal has now been received for roof mounted solar panels funded under the power purchase agreement. The location of battery storage at WISE is being further investigated in light of the possible STEM building project. When asked what Dyson are doing in this market, the Chief Operations Officer reported that the main emphasis for Dyson is on vehicles.

In response to his other outstanding action, the Chief Operations Officer reported that the occupancy rate has been included in SGSCSL interest tracker which from memory was 69%. The interest tracker also documented interests expressed by potential tenants and the Chief Operations Officer agreed to circulate the interest tracker.

Action: Chief Operations Officer, Commercial & Estates.

6. **Final KPI report (Agenda item 8b)**

The Assistant Principal presented the final data and reported significant improvement across the board. The overall headline achievement for all Education and Training

learning aims had improved by 3.1%, which is above the benchmark for GFE Colleges and 2.4% higher than the target set at the start of 2017/18. 16-18 pass rates had improved by 7%, which is 5% above benchmark for GFE Colleges. In addition, at headline level, there is no significant achievement gaps for minority learners or those with a learning difficulty or disability and a significant improvement is expected in A Level Added Value. However, the overall achievement for Apprenticeships was 5% lower than 2016/17 but the significant amount of time and effort invested in the apprenticeship reforms needs to be recognised.

Members congratulated staff on their outstanding efforts and impressive results.

The report was noted.

7. **Single Equality – Policy, Plan & 2017/18 Annual Report (Agenda Item 9)**

The Assistant Principal presented the report and confirmed that during the 6 months since the Single Equality objectives had been set good progress is being made with no barriers for those learners with protected characteristics. It was proposed to extend the Single Equality policy to 2020 as no legislative changes to the Equality Act. Members were informed that Ofsted are particularly interested in “hidden learners” e.g. those eligible for Free College meals. The College continues to proactively engage with these learners to identify and remove barriers and to understand the issues faced on an individual basis. Members were informed that although the report makes reference to 35% of learners not recalling training to improve their awareness of equality and diversity issues, having targeted areas of the College the current percentage is 61.3%.

The Child Protection Advocate raised that at the last South Gloucestershire Children, Young People and Families Partnership meeting the Local CAMHS Transformation Plan and Emotional Health and Wellbeing Transformation Plan 2018 were discussed and she wanted to ensure that this was being taken into consideration by the College. Assurance was provided that they would be via the Learner Experience and Engagement Committee. Also it was suggested that the College should demonstrate consideration and compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The report was noted and it was resolved:

- a) **To approve the Single Equality Report 2017/18.**
- b) **To approve the Single Equality Policy, subject to changes raised.**

8. **Higher Education (Agenda Item 10)**

Members received the Higher Education Annual Review 2017/18, Development Plans 2017/18 and 2018/19 and Office for Students Annual Assurance Statement. It was reported that Higher Education achievement had improved by 5% and that there are no gaps in academic progress or attainment for students with disabilities. Retention of students in their first year of study remained good however retention of students in their second year had declined, in particular in Sport and Zoological, and new strategies are in place to improve. Overall student satisfaction had dipped 1%, in line

with a national 1% dip. The main areas of concern being teaching and learning, academic support and resources. There is also a national drive to improve assessment and feedback. Good progress has been made on the development plan with a focus in 2018/19 to continue to improve the learner experience, outcomes and feedback to learners. Members were informed that there is no intention to submit evidence to OfS and there appears to be a lack of clarity in respect of the relationship between OfS and the QAA.

Members noted that the improvement plan did not have reference to best practice/benchmarking and questioned the College's position on this. Members were informed of the difficulties with benchmarking Higher Education and with the changes to OfS the College does not do as much as would like but going forward the aim will be to give this more focus. Members also suggested that it would be helpful to include more background context in relation to number of courses and campuses. A typographical error was also raised in the Executive Summary.

Richard O'Doherty declared an interest and refrained from the following resolution.

It was resolved:

- a) **To approve the Higher Education Annual Review and Quality Improvement Plan 2018/19, subject to changes raised.**
- b) **To approve the OfS Annual Assurance Statement.**

At this point the Assistant Principal was thanked and he left the meeting.

9. **CEO & Executive Principal's Report (Agenda Item 6)**

The CEO & Executive Principal reported on the following:

- a) Challenger Campus – Members were updated on a meeting held with YTL and the Leader of South Gloucestershire Council. The discussions were very positive and there was support for the College's aspiration for the airfield and various locations are being discussed. A bid is being submitted for funding to develop outline planning permission to indicate the costs required for a possible new build. Shareholders also want to investigate the possibility of YTL providing the building in which the College would occupy under a lease arrangement.
- b) Higher Education Expressions of Interest – Meetings have been held with those shortlisted and the intent being to hold further meetings. Thereafter, it is proposed that the Strategy Task and Finish Group hear formal proposals from the shortlisted HEIs.
- c) SGS Academy Trust – proposed new school – Members were updated on a bid submitted for a new Free School in Lyde Green (close to the Bristol and Bath Science Park). The school would be designed and operated with an expertise in Autism, to provide mainstream places for children studying at SGS Pegasus or for

children with ASD. There is also a section 106 on Filton airfield for the development of a school which could link with SGS Academy Trust and the Challenger Campus.

The report was noted.

10. **Principal's Report (Agenda Item 7)**

- a) Members received the Principal's report and questions were invited. Members raised concern with Plumbing and Heating apprentices at Level 3 and the impact this is having on employers. The process appeared to be very disjointed with a lack of communication and lack of assessors. Another member recalled her experience of seeking internships for Health and Social Care and the professionalism received from another College in comparison to SGS. The CEO & Executive Principal agreed to speak with the College Principal to ensure issues are addressed.

Members questioned how AoC are responding to the rise in pension contributions from employers following the Government actuary's valuation of the scheme and the impact this would have on College finances. There is confidence that the Department for Education will provide funding but for one year only. An additional increase of around £300k - £500k is also expected for the local pension schemes and there is uncertainty in relation to its affordability.

Members noted the recruitment update which was lower than target and the mix of age group of learners would have an impact on funding, which was difficult to predict until after the first ILR submission in December. It was reported that the College had already made many efficiencies by reducing staff and increasing class sizes. The CEO & Executive Principal suggested a review of the ratio of 65% staff/turnover as part of next year's budget preparation to assess if it remains realistic. Members asked whether there could be an appeal to volunteers to help support the students. The CEO & Executive Principal reported that he would consider further and that a scheme was already in place at Stroud campus where volunteers provide classroom support and assist with learners with special needs. Members suggested that the Chair of the Corporation writes to Members of Parliament about the funding situation.

- b) **Confidential Item – 2018/19 pay award.**

Action: Chair of the Corporation.

11. **Management Information (Agenda Item 8)**

- a) Management Accounts Exception Report – The Chief Financial Officer reported that pay costs are in line. Of concern is the impact of under recruitment on next year's allocation, as covered in the Principal's report. Members questioned why the cash flow is less than budget and were informed that it had been re-profiled on apprenticeship income but further work is to be undertaken.

The report was noted.

Action: Chief Financial Officer.

12. **Lease to Bristol City Football Club (Agenda Item 11)**

Members noted that this item is to be carried forward.

13. **STEM build: Project Order Form for Willmott Dixon (Agenda Item 12)**

Members were informed that the design phase Project Order Form was signed in good faith, however, on checking the financial regulations due to the value of the order exceeding £300k Corporation approval should have been sought. The wording in the financial regulations was ambiguous in this respect and it was confirmed that this wording would be revised and become more explicit at the next review of the financial regulations. Members were reassured that actions are being taken to clarify the financial regulations and stressed that there should not be a repeat of this nature in the future.

David Benson refrained from the following resolution.

It was resolved:

To retrospectively approve the signing of the Project Order Form with Willmott Dixon by the Group CEO & Executive Principal and to delegate the day to day management of the project to the Chief Operations Officer, Commercial & Estates.

14. **Learning & Development Dynamic Purchasing System Agreement (Agenda Item 13)**

Members noted that this item is to be carried forward.

15. **Strategic Property Group (Agenda Item 14)**

Confidential Item.

16. **Search Committee (Agenda Item 15)**

The minutes of the meetings held 25 Oct 18 were noted. In the absence of the Vice-Chair of the Search Committee, Moyra Pascoe reported on the following:

- a) The Committee had considered the re-appointment of David Benson and Dave Merrett and gave consideration to the appointment of a second Vice-Chair, David Hagg had been proposed, should he be willing, and subject to Corporation approval.

At this point, David Benson, David Hagg and Dave Merrett were invited to leave the meeting.

Moyra Pascoe presented the recommendations of the Search Committee for the re-appointment of David Benson and Dave Merrett for a further 3-years to complete their 4-year term of office.

- b) As part of succession planning discussions for the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Corporation the Chair of the Corporation had been tasked to speak with David Hagg to see if he would be willing to put himself forward as a 2nd Vice-Chair, alongside Martin Jones, and to also join the Remuneration Committee. In accordance with the Standing Orders there is a requirement for the Corporation to resolve the order in which the Vice-Chairs will fulfil their obligations. It was suggested that Martin Jones is the Senior Vice-Chair and David Hagg the Junior Vice-Chair and that in the absence of the Chair of the Corporation the Senior Vice-Chair would step in.

Nominations for the appointment of David Hagg as 2nd Vice-Chair of the Corporation were invited. Joe Lamonby proposed and Mike Croker seconded David Hagg's appointment as 2nd Vice-Chair of the Corporation and David Hagg was unanimously elected.

It was resolved:

- a) **To approve the re-appointment of David Benson at the end of his first year of office, for a further 3 years to complete his 4 year term of office.**
- b) **To approve the re-appointment of Dave Merrett at the end of his first year of office, for a further 3 years to complete his 4 year term of office.**
- c) **To appoint David Hagg as 2nd Vice-Chair of the Corporation, with immediate effective to 31 Jul 19 and that Martin Jones is the Senior Vice-Chair and David Hagg is the Junior Vice-Chair.**
- d) **To appoint David Hagg to the Remuneration Committee with immediate effect.**

At this point David Benson, David Hagg and Dave Merrett re-joined the meeting and were congratulated on their appointments.

17. **Framework of College policies (Agenda Item 16)**

Members received a report outlining the current status of the College's Framework of Policies which has been maintained to ensure compliance with the Department for Education guidance on the statutory policies required by Further Education Colleges.

The report was noted.

18. **Corporation Seal (Agenda Item 17)**

Members noted the application of the Corporation Seal to the Collateral Warranties with Gotch Saunders & SurrIDGE, Simpson Associates Consulting Engineers and Jones King Partnership.

19. **Confidentiality (Agenda Item 18)**

Members agreed that due to business sensitivities the item of urgent business, confidential part of the Principal's report, confidential Strategic Property minutes, confidential Search Committee minutes and minutes 3, 7c, 14a, 14b and 14 c are to be treated as confidential.

20. **Assessment of meeting (Agenda Item 19)**

A summary of feedback in relation to the meeting held 11 Oct 18 was received. The Clerk distributed forms to members so that an assessment of the Corporation meeting could be undertaken.

21. **Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 20)**

Thursday 6 December 2018 at 5pm, Stroud Campus.

The meeting commenced at 6.05pm.

Gavin Murray joined the meeting at 6.55pm (after item 4) and left the meeting at 7.25pm) after item 8.

Richard O'Doherty left the meeting at 8.10pm (during item 10).

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

The meeting was quorate.