



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE
FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Approved minutes of a meeting of South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Further Education Corporation
Held on 11 October 2018
At Stroud Campus, Stratford Road, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 4AH

Present:

Moyra Pascoe	(Chair)
David Benson	
Mike Croker	
Craig Dickinson	
Phil Eames	
David Hagg	
Kevin Hamblin	(CEO & Executive Principal)
Martin Jones	
Joe Lamonby	
Dave Merrett	
Richard O'Doherty	

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 David Hagg to his first Corporation meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Sophie Chester-Glyn and Roger Ellis. Harrison Festa Adams did not attend the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

- a) The Clerk reported, and members noted, the following fresh declaration of interests from David Hagg:
- Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust – Member (“Shareholder” equivalent).

- Chair, South West Regional Advisory Board, Canal and River Trust (National Charity – Voluntary position).
- b) The Clerk reported, and members noted, Kevin Hamblin, Martin Jones and Andy Slaney’s interests, as Directors of SGS Commercial Services Limited, in agenda item 13.

3. **Other Items of Urgent Business**

There was no other items of urgent business.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 20 September 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 Chair advised that she would be bringing forward agenda item 10 in order to allow the early departure of the Chief Group Services Officer.

6. **Safeguarding, Children Protection and Vulnerable Adults policy and annual report (Agenda Item 10)**

Members received the report and questions were invited. Members commented on the lack of data provided in the report in comparison to previous years’ reports. The Chief Group Services Officer reported that the former Lead Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer had invested a lot of time manually collating data which she did not have the resources to commit. In the meantime work is in progress to develop the My Concern system and it was proposed that a further report is presented at a future meeting. It was agreed to re-present at the January Corporation meeting.

Members were informed that work had been undertaken to RAG rate the concerns to help target future concerns. Well-being and mental health being the highest concern and the College is trying to obtain trend data. The College is not resourced to provide 24/7 support and there is a need to ensure that staff are supported when dealing with safeguarding concerns to which there is no additional funding for the support needed. When asked, confirmation was received that 19+ learners will also be included in the report. When asked, the Chief Group Services Officer reported that the use of technology makes it easier to report and more issues are surfacing. Austerity is also a contributing factor and support from agencies is poor.

The report was noted.

7. **CEO & Executive Principal's Report (Agenda item 6)**

In the absence of the CEO & Executive Principal, the College Principal presented the report:

- a) When asked for an update on Higher Education Expressions of Interests, members were informed that one meeting had taken place with other meetings still to take place.
- b) Members noted the concern that there could be a cash flow issue around March 2019 due to the tranche of money for the STEM project being paid in arrears. Having worked through the worst case scenario, the Chief Financial Officer has spoken with the contractors who are content to wait until funding received therefore mitigating any cash flow. The Chief Operations Officer agreed to obtain this confirmation in their contract.
- c) Confidential Item.

The report was noted.

8. **Principal's Report (Agenda item 7)**

The College Principal reported on the following:

- a) Behaviour – Expectations of behaviour have been emphasised to staff and learners with higher standards being evidenced this year. As part of a no-tolerance approach to poor behaviour a number of learners have been excluded and the reasons for these exclusions were reported.
- b) Love our College – This is a national campaign to lobby parliament to raise awareness of the funding challenges that Colleges face. The actions being taken were shared with members, together with a national march on 17 October to which some staff and learners from SGS would be attending. Members were also invited to attend if they are able. Local MPs have also been invited to the College's Ambitions event in order to showcase the excellent work that the College and its staff undertake. The Clerk was also asked to share with members the petition to parliament circulated to all staff to encourage further support.
- c) Devolution and tendering for Adult Education Budget – Challenges are ahead in relation to the direction of travel and the allocation of funding. The College will need to bid for its allocation and the communication of the outcome of the bids falls considerably outside of the College's planning and budgetary timescales. The Chair of the Corporation agreed to lobby the lead Councillor, Paul May. When asked, there was a lack of clarity of how the funding would be allocated and that

the College needed additional funding to support vulnerable learners. Members asked if SGS was more at risk than other Colleges. Although not as exposed as some other Colleges there is still further work to understand how it will all operate and with the new infrastructure there is a concern that it will attract further top slicing of funding to support it.

- d) West of England Combined Authority, Skills Planning – WECA are keen to develop “Talent Institutes” and are seeking £60m from Government, which could be used to invest into the FE sector instead of research and development.
- e) Performance Reporting for FE College groups and multi-site Colleges – The Department for Education recently published its response to the consultation on performance reporting by campus location for FE College groups and multi-site Colleges. The College has agreed to support Ofsted in a research project and they are on site today at Filton campus visiting Animal Care and Preparation for Work and Life departments.
- f) Bid tracker – Appended to the report was data relating to extensive bidding work undertaken by the College.

The report was noted.

Action: Clerk

9. **Management Information (Agenda item 8)**

- a) Management Accounts Exception Report – The Chief Financial Officer presented the draft report and confirmation was provided that the external audit was progressing well. Members raised the lower number of 16-19 learners compared to target. The Chief Financial Officer reported that she had been modelling through the financial impact which would see a drop in funding of between £200k - £500k. On top of this, the greatest concern being the teachers’ pension scheme valuation which is projected to have a £580k impact on the College. The AoC are lobbying parliament about this. The rising cohort in ages is also a cause for concern and is impacting upon funding.

Members raised that the adjustments to Income and Expenditure under FRS102 LGPS adjustments is confusing. The Chief Financial Officer provided an explanation and advised that further detail will be contained in the annual financial statements. Members questioned whether SGSCSL will break even this year and were advised that a £30k deficit was expected. However, confirmation was received that Wessex Water had settled the claim and the company had been paid. When asked, confirmation was received that financial health remained good, albeit at the bottom end. Members’ commented that this had been a credible achievement.

The report was noted.

- b) KPI report – The College Principal reported that the final outturn is due 18 October and there remains outstanding outcomes to close down. However, there is confidence that an improvement in outcomes will be evidenced. Members were informed of an apprenticeship concern, just come to light, which has had an impact on apprenticeship performance. Once further clarity has been received Corporation will be kept updated.

Members questioned whether there is a disparity in outcomes between Filton and WISE campuses. Members were informed of the different provision and environment between sites which plays a part in that but when amalgamated the levels even out. When asked, confirmation was received that the disparity will form part of the College's Self-Assessment Report action plan.

Members congratulated the College on its leadership in light of the recent redundancy programme.

The report was noted.

- c) Full Risk Registers (including SGSCSL) – The Chief Financial Officer presented the risk registers, which had been scrutinised in detail by the Audit Committee. Members were informed that the impact of teachers' pension, apprenticeship performance, HE partnership risks and STEM are to be added. Members raised the date had been moved for the monitoring of staff contact hours and questioned the mitigations in place ahead of the revised date. Members were informed of how the curriculum is planned and delivered and that staff utilisation was felt to be an incorrect measure. The Chair of the Audit Committee reported that staff utilisation had been discussed at Audit Committee and the internal auditors will be covering this as part of their audit plan and will be looking at how other Colleges approach this measure.

The Chair of the Audit Committee also raised the number of risk on the SGSCSL risk register that had been carried forward and confirmation was received that these had recently been refreshed.

The report was noted.

10. **Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Agenda item 9)**

The College Principal presented the report, intended to inform Corporation of the progress against actions taken following the 2017/18 review of Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Members were informed of the introduction of formal lesson observations as part of the developmental process. Members were informed of data requiring urgent support with the focus being on Maths and English, A Levels and provision at Berkeley campus. When asked, members were informed of the variability demonstrated at Berkeley hence the need for intervention.

It was reported that Programme leads have been introduced with more managers being responsible for the quality of their provision in their areas and this also supports staff progression. When asked how staff have responded to these changes members were informed that staff have become used to it and is now considered the norm. Members were informed that the College had worked with the Unions and consulted extensively and invested in the Teacher Development Team.

The report was noted.

11. **Treasury Management annual report and strategy**

The Chief Financial Officer presented the report on the performance of the Treasury Management function 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 and strategy to be pursued in the current year. Members sought, and received, clarity of the revolving credit facility.

It was resolved:

To note the Annual Report on Performance and Treasury Management function for 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 and approve the strategy and plan to be pursued in the current year 2018/19.

12. **The Chase – Collateral Warranties**

Application of the Corporation Seal was sought for the signing and sealing of Collateral Warranties from the works to create The Chase project at Stroud campus. Members were informed that the warranties were common practice based on the standard Scape form and were to be enacted as Deeds, hence the need for the application of the Corporation Seal.

It was resolved:

That the Corporation Seal be applied to the Collateral Warranties in the presence of Moyra Pascoe (Chair of the Corporation) and Kevin Hamblin (CEO & Executive Principal).

13. **SGS Commercial Services Limited**

Confidential Item.

14. **Governance Self-Assessment (including Governor Attendance data and Training and Development plan)**

The Clerk presented a draft 2017/18 Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and action plan. Members noted the collated responses following completion of the member satisfaction/self-assessment questionnaires, Corporation Chair's performance review, Executive Team questionnaire on governance and self-assessments against Committee terms of references.

The Governance SAR had identified strengths, areas of continuing focus and also included a governance action plan. Following due consideration of the Governance SAR members validated the Governance SAR grade as 2 (Good).

Members received Governor attendance data for 2017/18, which reflected 76% overall compared against the 80% target. Benchmarking data obtained from the Clerk's network was also shared with members.

The Clerk reported on governor training and development undertaken during 2017/18. Members considered the outcome of governor training needs analysis and training/development topics covering 2018/19 were agreed.

The report was noted and it was resolved:

- a) **To note the collated results from the questionnaires completed as part of the 2017/18 Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) process.**
- b) **To approve the 2017/18 Governance Self-Assessment Report and 2018/19 action plan and to validate the Governance SAR grade as 2 (Good).**
- c) **To note the 2017/18 Governor attendance data.**

15. **Recruitment**

The Principal reported:

- That the College continues to enroll learners and is expected to be close to plan. There is a growing 18+ cohort which attracts different factors that have an impact on funding. The market is very competitive with decreasing demographics. Members' attention was drawn to appendix 1 of the report covering a full-time enrolment overview by Faculty and Age Band. Also provided was Late Applicant Information, Advice and Guidance data.
- A decrease in A Level starts due to aggressive marketing by Schools, whilst also lowering their entry requirements. When asked, confirmation was received that the College would not be looking to lower its entry requirements.
- Stroud campus has seen a decrease of learners on last year. However, The Chase has been developed and there are possibly other growing opportunities for pre-16 and home educated learners. The need to consider different options for Stroud campus was raised by members.
- Higher Education is positive, at budget forecast, with conversion rates higher than last year and exceeding University conversion rates. Members discussed the Higher Education budget, which is higher than last year but set on a prudent basis. Members also questioned of those first year students enrolled onto the university study programmes how many had been studying at Level 3 at the College. The Principal agreed to obtain the figures.
- That apprenticeships have a positive recruitment.

Members questioned whether different approaches are being adopted to increase learner numbers. The Principal advised of a growth in Level 1s and NEET projects however these learners require more support and are therefore less cost efficient.

The report was noted.

Action: College Principal.

16. **Audit Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held 27 Sep 18 were noted. Mike Croker (Chair of the Audit Committee) reported the following:

- The Audit Committee had requested a post system implementation review and overall a positive report had been provided with further developmental work required.
- RSM's draft annual report was considered and will form part of the Audit Committee's annual report to the Corporation.
- The Director of Work Place Learning was invited to the meeting to provide an update on the new apprenticeships system. In the initial report RSM had been critical but had then explained that in part this was attributable to the new apprenticeship process.
- Risk registers of SGS College and SGS Commercial Services were reviewed.
- RSM's Letter of Engagement is being recommended to Corporation for approval.

It was resolved:

To approve RSM's Letter of Engagement and to delegate authority to the CEO & Executive Principal to sign the letter for and on behalf of SGS College.

17. **Framework of College policies**

Members noted that this item is to be carried forward.

18. **Confidential Minutes Review**

Members received a report covering the review of minutes and documents that had previously been deemed confidential. In accordance with the Standing Orders for the Corporation and its Committees, the Chair of the Corporation and the Chairs of each committee had undertaken a review and made recommendations to the Corporation in order that, where appropriate, minutes and documents now deemed non confidential can be released for the public record, including the publication of minutes on the College website.

The report also recommended that retention of documentation for unsuccessful applicants is extended from 1 year to 3 years in order to retain information on a holding list in case of future use.

It was resolved:

- a) **That documentation for unsuccessful applicants is retained for a period of 3 years.**
- b) **To approve the Chairs' recommendations of those minutes and documents now deemed non confidential to be released for the public record.**

19. **Colleges Senior Staff Remuneration Code Consultation**

Members received a report covering the proposed amendments to the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and The Colleges Senior Staff Remuneration Code consultation. Delegated authority for the Chair of the Remuneration Committee to complete the online survey on behalf of the Corporation was sought.

It was resolved:

To delegate authority to the Chair of the Remuneration Committee to complete the online survey, on behalf of the Corporation, for The Colleges Senior Staff Remuneration consultation.

20. **Confidentiality**

Members agreed that due to business sensitivities appendix 2 of the Principal's report, SGSCSL report (item 13), RSM Letter of Engagement (item 16a), Confidential Minutes review report and appendices (item 18) and minute's 6 and 13 are to be treated as confidential.

21. **Assessment of meeting**

A summary of feedback in relation to the meeting held 20 Sep 18 was received. The Clerk distributed forms to members so that an assessment of the Corporation meeting could be undertaken.

22. **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 8 November 2018 at 5pm, Filton Campus.

The meeting commenced at 5.00pm.

Moira Foster-Fitzgerald left the meeting at 5.20pm (after item 6).

Kevin Hamblin joined the meeting at 6pm (during 9b)

David Hagg left the meeting at 6.30pm (after item 13)

The meeting closed at 6.50pm.

The meeting was quorate.