

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation
held on Thursday 17th May 2018 at 8.00am
in the Boardroom of Matthew Boulton Campus**

Present:	Apologies:
Steve Hollis (SH) (Chair)	Joel Blake (JB)
Deborah Edmonds (DE)	Keith Horton (KH) (Chair)
Veronica Docherty (VD)	
Andrew Cleaves (Principal)	
Simon Thompson (ST)	
Hilary Smyth-Allen (HA)	
Michele Larmour (ML) (by telephone)	
Amardeep Gill (AG)	
Dan Zastawny (DZ)	
Joel Blake (JB)	
Angela Myers (AM)	
Cliff Hall (CH)	
Mohammed Al-bukair (MA) (student governor)	
Jane Smith (JS) (Staff Governor)	
Sonia Crook-Lake (SCL) (Staff Governor)	
In Attendance:	
Louise Jones (LJ)	
Liam Nevin (LN)	
Simon Cosson (SC)	
Jane Campbell (JC) (Items 1-4)	

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Keith Horton and Joel Blake

Declarations of Interest and Matters Arising

No declarations were received in addition to those contained in the register.

SH welcomed CH to his first meeting of the Corporation.

With the permission of the Chair the order of business was varied such that agenda item 4 was considered prior to items 2 and 3.

Item 1 – Open and Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of 22 March 2018 and Action Log

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting save that item 2(iii) should refer to Solihull College and not “Council.”

In respect of the Action Log LN advised that a candidate had been interviewed for the Co-opted Finance Committee member role but they were not being recommended for appointment. There was a pending interview with a further candidate.

Teaching and Learning

Item 2 – Post Inspection Action Plan Update

AM joined the meeting at 8.35, during this item and was welcomed to her first meeting of the Corporation by the Chair.

LJ summarised progress with the PIAP and reminded the Corporation that there were three significant priorities arising from the last Ofsted inspection; managing the performance of teachers, insufficient challenge to learners, and insufficient progress at level 3. In summarising progress LJ advised that attendance was stable at 87% and this was consistent with rates across the sector identified by a recent AoC survey. In addition retention was holding up well at 96% and students who were "missing in action" were being systematically followed up. In relation to observations, teachers recorded as making good progress had increased to 72%. The programme of re-observations was now well underway and of teachers assessed as initially making insufficient progress 2/3 of those re-observed were now making good progress, with the other 1/3 making some progress.

The student experience was also generally positive with Inspirometer surveys showing improved responses, a much higher proportion of students were on track to achieve target grades by comparison with previous years and destination recording had improved significantly.

ST queried the process and purpose of collating the destination information, and suggested that the full benefit of this would only be captured if it was assessed over a period of years.

DE asked what was being done to support the mental health of students and what training staff received for this purpose. LJ advised that there was now a counsellor for each College site and external training was provided to staff. In addition the College worked closely with external agencies for specialist support where a student needed to be referred on.

DV noted that the Safeguarding process had identified more students this year with mental health difficulties.

CH queried whether there a correlation between attendance levels and the quality of classroom delivery that was being identified in Observations and LJ advised that Observers are provided with data on various matters such as progress and retention so that they can triangulate their observations.

MA stated that there was good progress in the classroom and there was a greater focus on asking the students how things could be improved.

SH stated that the Deputy FE Commissioner had provided helpful advice that the evidence base to justify an Ofsted rating of "good" was more rigorous when the existing grade was "requires improvement." He queried whether LJ was satisfied that the evidence base was sufficiently rigorous to address this challenge. LJ advised that the College had significantly increased and improved its evidence base, and was also engaging with other Colleges who had recently been inspected in order to benefit from their experience.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Post Inspection Action Plan Update be noted**

Item 3 – Big Teaching and Learning Survey

LJ summarised the survey results which provided a much more positive set of responses than those received in 2016/17, and thereafter she set out the faculty areas where poorer responses had been received and the performance management measures that had been taken to address these. However, overall the results were pleasing and provided positive evidence for inspection.

ST noted that two department scored poorly on safety measures and stated that this was potentially an area of concern. LJ advised that the issue had been explored through focus

groups and the feedback from these was that there was inconsistency in how the "Ready, Respectful, Safe" agenda was being implemented in the classroom and this was a wider point about the student experience. It was acknowledged that there was more work to do on the Pivotal programme to address this inconsistency.

MA confirmed this and stated that poor behaviour of some students in the classroom would affect the responses where their fellow students were dissatisfied with this.

CH stated that it would be helpful to see if there was any correlation with cyber-bullying in particular curriculum areas that may have influenced responses within departments.

DE asked how students were involved in the improvement plan to address the issues identified in the survey and LJ advised that, where results were lower than were acceptable, focus groups were held with students to explore the issues further and the Student Council were also engaged.

VD reminded the Corporation that Student Council representation at the Academic Standards Committee was now routine and that it would be helpful for the full Corporation to hear from them also.

AM queried what the focus on student culture in the classroom was at the start of the year and LJ advised that this was a big part of the induction programme which was reinforced throughout the year. There had been a positive difference noticed in first year students.

DZ noted that 4,500 students had completed the survey and queried how the College benchmarked against others. LJ confirmed that the response rate was approximately 67% and the Principal advised that the number of responses would probably be amongst the highest in the country.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Corporation note the survey findings and the further actions being taken as set out in the report.**

Item 4 – A Level Review Project Update

LJ introduced JC to the meeting who summarised her experience and plans to lead A level provision at the College. Thereafter, LJ summarised progress on project implementation and advised that nine existing staff had been appointed to lead in specialist roles and four or five vacancies would require external recruitment.

ML asked LJ to summarise the basis on which she was confident of improvements in A level provision and LJ advised that the staff appointed had demonstrated competence beyond simply delivering the core curriculum and these staff would have, through JC, clear targets and objectives to achieve the A level vision. JC would also be reviewing College material and assessment processes to provide a fresh perspective and challenge and there was a substantial performance and development programme in place led by a learning coach who is an expert in A levels.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Corporation note the progress being made across the various strands of activity along with the risks and mitigations identified at this stage.**

Strategy Review

Item 5 – Business Plan and Three Year Strategy

The Principal delivered a presentation that was intended to inform the decisions to be taken over the annual business plan at the July Corporation meeting and the review of Strategy at the October "Away Day." The presentation presented the financial and business performance of the College both currently and over the longer term, the imperative of improving sustainability and the overall policy environment and market conditions that the College would be operating in. The presentation concluded with the proposed key priorities for the business plan and early thoughts on the themes to be developed in the strategy refresh.

ST stated that the growth of professional services in the City needed to be part of the high level focus as it was part of the macro picture that should be driving the College. Both HS2 and the relocation of business from London were significant factors in local job growth and skills needs.

CH stated that he was concerned that T levels would present additional resource and capacity demands on the College and the Principal agreed and added that the level of work experience required would present a further and specific challenge.

AM stated that cost efficiencies could be made by increasing blended and distance learning.

SH stated that governors were encouraged to think about the issues in order to inform the decisions on the business plan that were to be made in July. For present purposes it was only necessary to be satisfied that the broad themes in the presentation were supported. This was confirmed and ML concluded by stating that she found the presentation a helpful foundation for the pending strategic review.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the presentation be noted and that the themes and proposals be developed further to support the draft business plan and strategy review**

Finance

Item 6 – Management Accounts

This item is recorded in a confidential minute

Item 7 – Property Disposals

This item was taken as read.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Item 8 – ESFSA Allocations 2018/19

This report was taken as read.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Item 9 – Performance Report

The Principal summarised the key data trends and advised that the forecast achievement rate for apprentices was below forecast but comparable with the national rate.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Governance

Item 10 – DPA/GDPR Action Plan

LN summarised the implementation plan contained in the paper and advised on the areas where progress had been made to date and where the focus would be for the remainder of the academic year.

HA noted that the implementation plan covered the remainder of the calendar year and queried what the risk to the College was in terms of GDPR compliance. LN advised that the key mitigation that the ICO expected to see was an implementation plan that addressed the GDPR requirements and which gave appropriate weight to higher risk activities. This was reflected in the College's plan. There were over forty work streams and contributions to these from across the College. The Corporation was advised that a further update would be provided to the Audit Committee at its next meeting.

Item 11 – Registration with the Office for Students

LN explained that the College's submission to the OfS, as summarised in the report, required the approval of the Corporation.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Corporation delegate authority to the Principal to complete the application and any ancillary administrative actions required to register with the Office for Students for Higher Education provision.**

Item 12 – Amendment to Instrument and Articles of Government

LN advised that the report and track changes to the Instrument and Articles of Government reflected changes to governor eligibility as a result of legislative changes. In addition, an amendment to the Joint Audit Code of Practice meant that a staff governor could no longer sit on the Audit Committee as a member.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Corporation approve an amendment to paragraphs 8 and 10 of the Instrument of Government such that it is compliant with the trustee disqualification provisions made under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011**
- **That the Corporation approve an amendment to Article 6 of the Articles of Government such that a staff governor cannot be a member of the Audit Committee.**

Item 13 – Governor Confidential Discussion and Any Other Business

The staff and student governors left the room for this item

(i) Staffing Issue

This item is contained in a confidential minute

(ii) Feedback from the FEC Visit

The Chair advised that this issue had been addressed by the Principal in his presentation and at various points in the agenda.


(iii) Any Other Business

The Principal advised that he had attended an FE Senior Leadership Course during the previous week which had provided useful learning and good networking opportunities.

The Principal advised that Michael Nicol had requested to attend the next Corporation meeting.

The remainder of this item is contained in a separate confidential minute.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 12 July 2018

Signed.....

Chairman

Date.....