

**CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE**

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Governors held on  
Monday 27 January 2020 at 5pm  
in the Conference Centre, Paget Road**

**PRESENT**

Mr Mark Taylor (Chair)	Mr Mike Hastings (Vice-Chair)
Ms Emma Bull	Dr Isabel Gillis (to item 8d)
Ms Sally Slater (Staff)	Mr Yankho Songwe (Student) (from item 5)
Mr Clarence Crosdale	Mr Mal Cowgill
Mr Trevor Dutton	Ms Alison Shannon

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr Peter Merry – Vice Principal Business Success  
Mr Ian Browne – Vice Principal Student Success  
Ms Louise Fall – Assistant Principal Student Engagement  
Ms Karen O'Reilly – Assistant Principal People Engagement  
Mrs Elizabeth Ball – Clerk to the Board of Governors  
Mr Michael Nicol – ESFA  
Ms Hannah Bingham - ESFA

**01/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM 1)**

Apologies for Absence were received from Mr Ian Fegan and Mrs Amanda Newbold.

Declarations of loyalty were made by Mr Mark Taylor and Ms Alison Shannon as employees of the City of Wolverhampton Council in relation to item 2 and item 8(d) on the agenda.

Members of the Board of Governors who were not conflicted agreed that they should remain in the meeting and take part in the discussions relating to those items.

**02/20 INDEPENDENT BUSINESS REVIEW (ITEM 2) (Confidential minute)**

**03/20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (ITEM 3)**

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 16 December 2019 were approved.

**04/20 MATTERS ARISING**

**159/19 – Outline of QSR Process**

The Assistant Principal Student Engagement reported that the review will take place between 5 and 7 February 2020.

Whilst the plan did not include a meeting with Governors, this could be arranged if Governors wanted to meet with the inspectors.

**05/20 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Assistant Principal Student Engagement reported that the College had received a copy of a letter from Ofsted responding to a parent of a student at the College.

The parent wrote to Ofsted as her son had attended various Colleges but had not had a very positive experience. He has however transferred to City of Wolverhampton College and his mother wrote expressing her appreciation for the support that he was being given.

#### **06/20 NOTES/MINUTES FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE (ITEM 4)**

The Board of Governors received the notes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 4 December 2019 and the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019.

*Yankho Songwe joined the meeting.*

#### **07/20 PAY AND CONTRACTS (ITEM 5)**

##### All Staff Increase

The Assistant Principal People Engagement presented the report which updated the Board of Governors on the pay proposals and contracts of employment for staff.

It was noted that the financial viability of the AoC recommendations of 1% or a minimum of £250 were being considered and that a further report would be made to the meeting of the Board on 24 February 2020.

##### Pay Proposal – Low Paid Support Staff

In relation to the pay proposal for low paid support staff, the Assistant Principal People Engagement advised that the aspiration is for the College to achieve the real living wage for staff and to support this the proposal is to remove scale 2 and start support staff at scale 3.

Governors noted the cost of the proposal in-year and for the first and second full years.

##### Contract – Support Staff

It was reported that a new support staff contract has been agreed by UNISON which applies to all support staff at the College.

Governors noted the changes to the existing contract.

##### Lecturer – Variable Hours Contract

It was reported that this contract has been agreed with UCU with new rates being agreed for both qualified and unqualified lecturers.

##### Update on UCU Contract and Pay Discussions

The Assistant Principal People Engagement advised that in view of the proposed £30k starting salary for teachers, consideration was being given to starting lecturer salaries at point 29 for unqualified staff and point 30 for qualified staff. Consideration was also being given to increasing the lecturer scale to point 38.

The Board of Governors noted the proposals and that a further report would be prepared for consideration once the negotiations with UCU were complete.

It was also reported that the contract for lecturing staff is still subject to discussion with UCU.

The Assistant Principal People Engagement was asked whether the cost implications of the proposals had been built into the budget. Governors were advised that the cost of the proposal relating to low paid support staff had been included but no provision had been made for a general pay award to staff.

**It was resolved that the Board of Governors:**

- **Note the update in relation to the all staff increase.**
- **Approve the recommendation to remove scale 2 and use scale 3 as the lowest point on the Support Staff scale.**
- **Approve the Contract for all current Support Staff and new recruits.**
- **Approve the contract for all existing and new lecturer (variable hours) staff.**
- **Note the update in relation to the UCU contract and pay discussions.**

#### **08/20 2019/20 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (ITEM 6 a)**

The Assistant Principal Student Engagement presented the report which provided an update on the activities that the College has completed in Term 1 in relation to Personal Development.

Governors noted the most significant dimensions of personal development which were detailed in the report and the feedback from students which was evidenced in the outcome of the Induction Survey.

**It was resolved that the Board of Governors note:**

- **The breadth of activity that is covered in support of the Personal Development OfSTED criteria.**
- **The positive levels of engagement with activities by students and impact being measured through the high levels, and in some cases improved Induction Survey outcomes.**
- **That activities contribute to the high levels of retention of classroom-based students.**

#### **09/20 2019/20 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES UPDATE (ITEM 6 b)**

The Assistant Principal Student Engagement presented the report which provided an update on the activities that the College has completed in Term 1 in relation to behaviour and attitudes.

It was noted that an update in relation to punctuality would be provided later in the spring term when further data is available.

Governors noted that there had been an increase in student disciplinarys this year in relation to attendance and asked whether this was seen as a positive as the College was being pro-active in tackling this.

They were advised that attendance is a focus for the College and that OfSTED would see this as making students ready for employment.

It was accepted that levels of attendance needed to improve and as a result appropriate action has been taken. However, in response to Governors' questions about whether

attendance is improving the Assistant Principal Student Engagement advised that levels of attendance overall remain at a similar level and may be affected by attendance in particular areas.

Whilst it is difficult to make comparisons year on year as they are different cohorts, it was agreed that some further analysis would take place which could then be circulated to Governors.

***Action: Louise Fall***

Governors welcomed the updates and considered that the reports relating to Personal Development and Behaviour and Attitudes identify what is being done differently and helped Governors to understand what was improving.

It was also noted that the report referred to the access by students to digital resources and that this was linked to the report relating to the Procurement of the Student Management Information system and the ability for students to access their own information via an app.

**It was resolved that the Board of Governors note:**

- **The breadth of activity that is covered in support of the Behaviour and Attitudes OfSTED criteria.**
- **The positive levels of engagement with activities by students and impact being measured through the high levels and in some cases improved Induction Survey outcomes.**
- **Attendance is 86% and below KPI levels, with continual work to address stubborn levels of attendance with numerous interventions.**
- **The rigour and early intervention to address conduct of students continue to be demonstrated by the increased levels of disciplinaries.**
- **That the activities are contributing to the high levels of retention of classroom based students.**

**10/20 CURRICULUM PLANNING UPDATE (ITEM 7)**

The Vice Principal Student Success presented the report which provided Governors with an update on the progress of the 2020/2021 Curriculum Planning Process, the improvements that have been made and the areas for discussion at the Purchasing meetings.

Governors noted that the Curriculum Planning process will be completed by the end of March 2020 with only one validation session where Heads of Faculty and Curriculum Managers will need to demonstrate to a panel that the curriculum offer is set up correctly and meets the criteria.

The dates of the Purchasing Meetings have been circulated to Governors in order that at least one Governor can attend at each of the sessions.

At the last meeting, Governors had asked what they would be able to contribute to the Purchasing meetings and were advised that attendance would enable Governors to ask questions about progression, test performance data and ensure that the themes of digital and sustainability are embedded in the curriculum.

Governors emphasised that attending the SAR validation sessions had been a very efficient way of learning about a Curriculum area and that it was important to ensure that Governors were in attendance for the Purchasing meetings.

The Clerk was requested to re-circulate the dates of the meetings to all Governors.

***Action: Clerk to the Board of Governors***

It was resolved that the Board of Governors note:

- The distance travelled and improvements that have been made on curriculum planning over the last 3 years.
- Actions to be taken to complete the 2020/2021 curriculum planning validation process.
- The importance of having a robust curriculum planning process.
- The need for Governors to be involved in the process and the types of questions they may wish to ask at the Purchasing Meetings.

**11/20 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS NOVEMBER 2019 (ITEM 8 a)**

The Vice Principal Business Success presented the Management Accounts to the end of November 2019 and highlighted key points including:

- The operating result is a surplus in comparison to the budgeted deficit resulting from a positive variance in income and a negative pay expenditure variance.
- ESFA have given a letter of assurance in relation to 16-18 growth funding and the additional funding will be received if the full-year target is met.
- Risks include the requirement to provide work experience for the new T levels and pay costs.
- Pay costs are being closely monitored and there is an expectation that there will be additional costs including agency cost due to the need to provide more learning support.
- Cash levels are at the same level of 2018/19 and are being monitored to manage the period in March/April.

Governors asked what arrangements were being made to mitigate that difficult period and were advised that these include close monitoring of payroll and projecting purchase ledger entries.

The Vice Principal Business Success reported that at the next meeting the Board would be required to sign off the new Integrated Financial Model for Colleges. This will reflect information that has already been presented to the Board of Governors but in the ESFA format.

Governors asked for confirmation that the additional income was as a result of the College recruiting more students than anticipated. The Vice Principal Business Success reported that the growth had been anticipated but in view of the lagged funding methodology the additional funding is usually not received until the following year.

If the full-year target was not achieved, then funding would be repayable to the ESFA.

It was noted that this income would usually be received in the spring but this would typically be in April/May onwards but the ESFA have agreed to review the timing. The Combined Authority have also agreed to look at their profiling.

It was emphasised that in addition every effort is being made to influence the funding calculation which is based on the type of learner and type of course.

Governors asked about the position in relation to apprenticeship funding which is currently ahead of budget.

The Vice Principal Business Success reported that this was due to increased carry-in in comparison to plan which also provides more certainty in relation to the funding although there is a need to monitor withdrawals.

Governors were also advised that the reduction in the level of creditors at the year-end is a reflection of the profile of the ESFA funding.

In relation to the activity at the Telford Campus, Governors noted that this was classed as commercial activity and provides specialist training for several employers.

**It was resolved that the Board of Governors:**

- **Note the Management Accounts to 30 November 2019 including the current operating surplus, the closing cash position and the requirement for the new Integrated Financial Model for Colleges.**

#### **12/20 CAMPUS TRANSFORMATION ICT AND FF&E PROCUREMENT RISK (ITEM 8 b)**

The Vice Principal Business Success presented the report which informed the Board of Governors about the risks associated with procuring ICT and FF&E from the City of Wolverhampton Council for the CLQ and CoWTechC projects.

Governors noted that the intention was for the purchase of assets by way of joint procurement using the Occasional Joint Procurement route which will involve stating in the OJEU notice that the purchase will be transferred to the College after a certain number of months.

The joint procurement exercise will also ensure that the warranties are transferrable to the College when the assets are transferred.

Governors asked whether this would show on the College's balance sheet as a creditor and were advised that this would be the case until payment was made to the Council.

Governors were also assured that the procurement would not take place until there is certainty in relation to CLQ.

It was also confirmed that the process will enable the College to benefit from the Council's purchasing frameworks.

**It was resolved that the Board of Governors:**

- **Note the key procurement risks associated with procuring ICT and FF&E from the City Council.**
- **Approve the recommended joint procurement procedure route to market to mitigate the risk.**

### **13/20 VALUE FOR MONEY UPDATE (ITEM 8 C)**

The Vice Principal Business Success presented the report which informed Governors about the key procurement and value for money activities conducted in the 2018/19 financial year and the efficiencies generated from these activities.

Governors noted the key activities that had taken place during the year and the activities that had been identified for the 2019/20 financial year.

It was highlighted that in addition to cash savings, the College had also improved its room utilisation and Governors asked whether this was due to improved reporting.

The Vice Principal Business Success advised that whilst some of the increase relates to improvements in reporting, as the College is growing, it is possible to use the space more effectively.

Governors noted the changes that had been made as a result of the Procurement Team restructure and the plan to develop the Procurement Strategy for 2020/21.

**It was resolved that the Board of Governors:**

- **Note the key procurement activities conducted during the 2018/19 financial year and the progress made from the previous year.**
- **Note the reorganisation of the Procurement Team.**
- **Note the key procurement activities planned for the 2019/20 financial year.**
- **Support the plan to develop the Procurement Strategy for the 2020/21 financial year.**

### **14/20 PROCUREMENT OF STUDENT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (ITEM 8 d)**

The Vice Principal Business Success presented the report which detailed the procurement process and the proposal to purchase a new Student and Management Information System.

It was noted that the outcome of the tender process was a recommendation that Tribal Education be awarded the contract to deliver the new Student Management system, subject to finalisation of costs and deliverables.

The Vice Principal Business Success reported that the system that will be provided by Tribal is built around the learner and the lecturer and will enable students to have an app on their phone which will include the ability to notify them of room changes or timetables etc.

It was emphasised however that the system is very different and will require a detailed implementation plan over 18 months to 2 years. It was suggested that a member of the Board of Governors could be involved with the project group and Mike Hastings agreed to take on this role.

Governors were advised that different working groups had been involved in testing the system. It was also anticipated that it will streamline many of the College's current systems.

Governors asked for clarification about the scoring methodology and were advised that the College's procurement expert had made sure that it was compliant.

It was resolved that the Board of Governors:

- Note the key risks and inefficiencies associated with the current MIS system.
- Note the tender submissions received following a formal procurement process.
- Approve the recommendation to award Tribal Education the contract to deliver a new student management system, subject to finalisations of costs and deliverables.

*Isabel Gillis left the meeting at 7pm.*

**15/20 NON CONFIDENTIAL REPORT FROM THE REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (ITEM 9)**

The non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee which took place on 13 January 2020 were received.

Governors considered the draft Senior Postholder Remuneration Policy which had been prepared following the adoption by the Board of Governors of the Senior Staff Remuneration Code in November 2019.

Governors also noted the request to determine whether the Board would be referred to as the Corporation or as the Board of Governors.

It was resolved that:

- The minutes of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee which took place on 13 January 2020 be received.
- The Senior Post Holder Remuneration Policy be approved.
- That the term 'Board of Governors' should be used in relevant documentation.

**16/20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (ITEM 9) CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE**

**17/20 CONFIDENTIALITY (ITEM 10)**

It was agreed that the report and minutes on the Independent Business Review, the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019, the confidential notes and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee and the confidential report from the Remuneration Committee should not be made available for public inspection.

**18/20 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING (ITEM 11)**

24 February 2020 at 5.00pm.

Approved as a correct record:.....*A Newbold*.....

24 February 2020