



# OAKLANDS COLLEGE

Minutes of the Board meeting held at the St Albans Campus at 1800hrs on 13 May 2019.

<b>Present</b>	Christine Chisholm	June Cory	Jean Fawcett
	Sue Grant (Chair)	Zoe Hancock (Principal)	Teresa Heritage
	Kerry Hood	Ginny Kerridge	Peter Marshall
	Neil Myerson	Rob Payne	Peter Thompson
<b>In Attendance</b>	Nicola Caiger (Dir I&P)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Stephen Fox (Head HE)(91-93/18)
	Paul McCormack (FD)	Harpreet Nagra (DP C&Q)	Sean Scully (Dir C&R)
	Sian Williams (Dir Curr)		
<b>Apologies</b>	Mete Ekmekcioglu	Geoff Lambert	

The meeting was preceded by a training session delivered by the DP(C&Q), the interactive presentation, "Quality Updates" explained the comprehensive electronic monitoring capability used by senior staff to keep track of cross college quality improvements; the key element was the "Achievement Tracker ". These interlinked and sophisticated systems facilitated a wide range of tracking and, by "drilling down" even to individual teachers and students, allowing information on students who were performing above expectations, not meeting their personal targets and critical issues such as the state of marking and assessment. Such detail informed grading of departments and individuals facilitating prioritisation of remedial effort. The accuracy of the predictions would be analysed and validated after the outcomes of this year's examination had been published.

## PART ONE

### 91/18 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION INTERESTS AND MEMBERS

The apologies were received. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no interests declared. (Standing Sue Grant UH/UCSA).

**The information was received.**

### 92/18 STANDING ITEMS

a. The Minutes from the Corporation meeting (Part 1 & 2) held on 11 March 2019 were confirmed for electronic signature. (Delegated to Clerk) **(Action 1)**

a. Matters arising. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

b. Actions. There were no actions outstanding from the previous meeting:

See referenced minute for full detail		Status
Action 1	75/18a. Last minutes (11.02.19) confirmed for signature.	92/18a
Action 2	77/18c. TLA information to be detailed more specifically.	94/18b
Action 3	77/18d(ii). Register of Interests available to all.	Complete
Action 4	79/18a. KPI presentations to members.	94/18a
Action 5	80/18. Long and short sickness absence to be separated	Noted
Action 6	81/18a. Both Policies approved.	Complete
Action 7	81/18b. E&D Annual Report received.	

c. It was agreed that use of the Corporation Seal would be considered as urgent business.

- a. **The information was received.**
- b. **Actions had been identified (Register 102/18)**

**93/18 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS (OfS) REGISTRATION (Out of Agenda Order)**

The OfS detailed and complex registration process for Higher Education (HE) had now been successfully completed, the issue was discussed generally, informed by the tabulated detail. Each of the 30 listed areas together with the enhanced monitoring requirements for Condition B3 (Quality and Standards) were explained and discussed; there were two elements to the provision, one delivered on behalf of the University of Hertfordshire (Foundation Degrees) and the other as the College (Higher National Diplomas (HND)). Assessments could be complex and the relatively low number of enrolled students disproportionately affected percentages and clouded comparisons; compounded by the published OfS Benchmarking data being historically 2 years old. Progress tracking was becoming more precise through work with the DP (C&Q) along the lines of the pre-meeting training.

**The information was received and noted.**

**94/18 QUALITY UPDATE**

- a. KPI. The comprehensive Quality Update explained how the KPI Tracker, in conjunction with other data, allowed the SLT to monitor individual Departmental progress against KPIs and other benchmarks. Performance against these indicators was then considered and discussed, The disparity in attendance and retention performance between the English and Maths (EAM) GCSE and Functional Skills (FS) elements was discussed in particular. It was noted that EAM continued to be challenging and was receiving focused attention as was improvement in timely marking of work and assessment, the negative and inevitable effect on achievement, was being addressed. Some significant staff shortages were also being addressed and more and wider support was being delivered; challenges were starting to ease.
- b. Teaching Learning and Assessment. (TLA) Presentation of the information had been rearranged as requested during the last meeting. The first cycle of lesson observations had resulted in 77% meeting "College expectations"; the 23% (49 teachers) who had not made the grade were receiving a QIF support programme with extremely positive results. These regularly completed observations, together with detailed Curriculum Audits provided valuable indicators for standards. The relatively low numbers involved motivated against use of percentages for reporting on comparison data and that was noted. During a full examination and deep discussion of all information, it was agreed that there were signs of improvement, evidenced in part by some positive comments in the recent Ofsted Monitoring visit report. However, it was sometimes unclear which specific areas were progressing, it was agreed that historical "RAG Ratings" in departmental reports, particularly comparative reports, would be helpful and that was agreed. **(Action 2)** Concern was expressed that, despite noted steady progress, pockets of weak teaching remained and more direct action was required. In response to that challenge, it was explained that clear and firm preparatory requirements for the coming academic year had been established, which would provide for immediate concentration on high standards from day one. These actions would include some that specifically facilitated focus on the remaining lower teaching standards and would be fully, clearly and firmly explained to all staff at the coming INSET sessions. Clearly, the plans included wider scrutiny, including, but not limited to, attention on more regular marking and assessment of students' work together with attendance and behaviour issues. The work of the Quality Advisory Group (QAG) would be fundamental to that process and plans for Heads of Department (HoD) to attend meetings to discuss the findings of their curriculum audits were noted and welcomed. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the QAG were attached at Annex and were noted. Liaison with similarly placed colleges that had recovered continued to be valuable and direct support work with West Herts College in particular was welcomed.
- c. The Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) had been updated since the monitoring visit to include visit impact information and the revised document was circulated. There were eleven "RAG Rated" elements; the two Red areas (Apprentice Timely Completion) and (Attendance including EAM) were discussed, the challenges considered and the planned

remedial actions and timings noted. Members were reminded that the overall objective was to drive the overall grade from “Requires Improvement” (RI) to “Good”.

- d. Ofsted Monitoring Visit. The one day monitoring visit had been completed on 3 April the consequent report was attached at Annex; there were 5 themes to the Report, namely how much progress have leaders and managers made in:
- (i) ensuring that teachers have high expectation of learners and apprentices, and provide activities that stretch and motivate them? **Insufficient progress** had been made with this theme;
  - (ii) improving the performance of those staff whose learners’ and apprentices’ progress and outcomes are not good enough? Reasonable progress had been made with this theme;
  - (iii) ensuring that learners and apprentices are safe, and know how to keep themselves safe from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Reasonable progress had been made with this theme;
  - (iv) providing governors with the information they need to support and challenge them effectively. Reasonable progress had been made with this theme.
  - (v) Improving the monitoring of learners’ and apprentices’ progress and helping those who are behind schedule to catch up? Reasonable progress had been made with this theme.

The outcome had not quite matched internal assessments of progress and that information was valuable in informing which areas demanded greater attention, such as Attendance and EAM. Immediate added impetus had been provided and, as had already been explained, plans to take the coming year “on the burst” from day one and to maintain that pressure had been established; the report had indicated that much remained to be done.

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Register 102/18)

## 95/18 FINANCE

Some questions had been electronically raised in advance of the meeting; response detail, which had been copied to all members, has been included below.

- a. Management Accounts. The management accounts (Annex 1) accurate to 31 March 2019 were then considered and discussed. The current overall position, a deficit, was £733k improved on the budget number with total income £665k higher than planned, all variances were clearly detailed. Payroll expenditure was unfavourable by c£206k, again with all contributory elements listed and explained, non-payroll costs were also favourable at £272k; all variances were clearly tabulated and explained. The balance sheet remained positive with a strong cash balance and the Cash-Flow Forecast (CFF), despite March being the lowest profiled income month in the year, remained sound and an overall increase was expected at year-end. Capital expenditure was £915k/£1m. Identified Risks and Opportunities were listed and were individually discussed. In response to information contained in recently published Association of Colleges (AoC) Good Practice Guide Document prompted by the “Colleges’ Insolvency Scheme” , a Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Schedule had been detailed and was at Annex 2. Future reports would include, when appropriate, “surplus/deficit” and “reserves” information and financial impacts of lower student numbers in the following year. (**Action 3**) the progress was explained, discussed and **noted**. Essential and positive elements that had emerged were:
- (i) strong cash and no debt;
  - (ii) pay costs, after adjustment for Springfield, in line with the FE sector median, two conflicting numbers were quoted in the document and the discrepancy would be resolved the next day (**Action 4**); and
  - (iii) positive cash and creditor days.

The full year estimates indicated “Outstanding” financial health. The end-of-year forecast remained as budgeted “break even” result. The accounts were **noted**.

- b. Purchases over £100k. There was one invoice over £100k (Noble House Services £425,785.72) for services in the Borehamwood fit out; the detail was **noted**.
- c. Financial Health. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) response (dated 21 March 2019) to the annual financial statements was at Annex 4 and was confirmed:
  - (i) the underlying financial health was “Outstanding”;
  - (ii) that no significant financial concern had been identified; and
  - (iii) included financial dashboard information.

The information was **noted** and welcomed.

- d. Quarterly Investment Report. Members were reminded of the Investment Strategy and it was noted that the present position, which was clearly detailed in the accompanying paper, compared favourably with the strategic cash reserves requirements. Each investment element was clearly listed and were explained individually and the information was **noted**. Particular attention was given to the recent adverse publicity surrounding the Metro Bank and the issue was discussed in depth; as a precaution notice had been served regarding funds held on deposit and consequently they would mature in May and June and be available for re-allocation. It was unanimously agreed to move the funds at the earliest opportunity (initially to Barclays Bank) (**Action 5**)
- e. Risk Management (RR). Risk Management (RM). The Risk Register presented as a RAG rated table at Annex 6 had been reviewed by SMT on 26 February and two risks (FS6 & QC5) had been reduced from “Medium to “Low”, and two new risks (FS11 & 12), relating to ISG(superseded with Willmott Dixon) and HAS associated with the capital works respectively, had been added, both with medium residual risks. There were currently 21 Risks associated with the Strategic Themes, 17 Medium and four Low, the information was **noted**.
- f. Sub-Contracting. The July 2018 Corporation meeting approved continuation of partnership activity (84/17) with:
  - (i) Progression 2;
  - (ii) Groundworks Hertfordshire; and
  - (iii) Monarch.

Recently 2 additional subcontractors had emerged:

- (iv) SPS Training. Contract value £100k in 2018/19. SPS has a high quality delivery of “employability” and “Skills for Life” programmes in job centres as well as English, Maths and ICT within Herts and Beds; and
- (v) Together Training (TT). Contract value of c£40k in 2018/19. approx. 30 students completing L3 & L4 Construction courses, TT provided the NVQ element.

The additional partnership arrangements with SPS Training and TT were approved. (**Action 6**)

- g. Data Protection Policy (DPP). The DPP at Annex 7 had been scrutinised by the Internal Audit Service (IAS) and had been amended in the light of the consequent report recommendations, the revised Policy took greater account of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); the changes were explained and noted and the Policy was approved. (**Action 7**)

- a. **The information was received.**
- b. **Actions had been identified (Register 102/18)**

## 96/18 PRINCIPALS REPORT

The Principal's Report, widened to include KPIs with relevant references as agreed at the last meeting and updated on points not included on the agenda was considered.

- a. KPI. Performance against the challenging 2018/19 KPI (approved in July 2018) was tabulated at Annex 1 and was supplemented by textual updates, the strategic themes were:
  - (i) talented and valued workforce, Sickness KPI currently met, currently 4.12 days/employee against the target of 5.6, and staff turnover was showing 8.09%/11%;
  - (ii) financial sustainability, the numbers were discussed and noted as having been previously informed;
  - (iii) high quality responsive curriculum, timely success for apprenticeships, previously discussed and noted as high priority stood at 67%, which may reduce further. Tracking and monitoring of this provision had now been improved and corrective action would halt any further decline. Work experience was 34% and previous years' experience indicated a strong chance of achievement. Close focus was being maintained of A level students after a poor organisational start to the year; and
  - (iv) there had been 56 complaints compared with 64 at the same time last year.
- b. The post Ofsted Inspection restructuring of the SLT, which had included the distribution of the former Deputy Principal's (DP) duties amongst the remaining members had now been re-examined and the consequent new team comprised
  - (i) DP Curriculum and Quality (D&Q), Harpreet Nagra;
  - (ii) Dir Inclusion and Progression (I&P), Nicola Caiger;
  - (iii) Dir Commercial and Resources (C&R), Sean Scully; and
  - (iv) Dir(s) Curriculum, Sian Williams and one other.

The Dir(I&P) would be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The responsibilities of the team were described, discussed, and welcomed.

- c. EDSV. The previously reported incident at EDSV had prompted termination of the contract; immediate alternative arrangements had been made for the existing students and a longer-term solution would be found.
- d. Strategy Day. The Corporation Strategy Day would be held on the 10 June at the Welwyn Garden City Campus; the agenda was noted. **(Action 8)**

**a. The information was received.**

**b. Actions had been identified (Register 102/18)**

## 97/18 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Report examined the student involvement programme, which aimed to engage and enhance the student experience partly through social and personal development. Key activities were detailed in the comprehensive paper and the essential theme of student involvement, including ESOL students, in as wide a range of College activities as possible was emphasised. That was evidenced by an impressive list of such events, all of which were noted alongside the work of the Student Union (SU), whose informal meeting with the Corporation had already been noted. Current activities were listed in the report and were noted. Out of class activities were popular with a total of c4300 participants; focus events listed in the report had contributed strongly to this record. Work experience in 2017/18 stretched to 100k hours over 800 organisations, which was set to be bettered in the current year. Funding for the "Tackling Inactivity" initiative was being well invested and the "Active8" programme was now in the third year of operation. Finally, the residential provision had been recently inspected with a strong positive outcome and feedback was included in the report. The report was welcomed and members took comfort from the content.

It was noted however that there should be more reporting to the Corporation with regards the residential provision. It was agreed that this and other safeguarding issues should be reported more regularly to the corporation to allow for oversight and challenge ActionX.

**The information was received and noted.**

**98/18 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement with Key Stakeholders was elemental to the College ethos in terms of future proofing, reputational stability and informing on local and regional priorities; the scope extended through Local Strategic Partnerships over St Albans, Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere and the present improvement at Borehamwood all evidenced the importance of that activity. Representation on the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the High Needs Provision Group, and many other important and influential agencies was noted. There was no doubt this work was essential to the enhancement of continuing sound local relationships and the relevance of the College to the community.

**The information was received and noted.**

**99/18 POLICIES AND ANNUAL REPORT**

- a. Policies. The Data Protection Policy had been approved at 95/18g. The Freedom of Information (FOI) Policy had not been significantly altered from the former version, but had been updated for personalities and best practice. The Policy was confirmed. **(Action 9)**
- b. FOI Activity. The associated Report provided an overview of FOI requests and the responsive action; there had been seven requests, of which five had been internally generated; all had been properly dealt with and had been compliant with all regulations.

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified. (Register 102/18)**

**100/18 URGENT BUSINESS**

Use of the College Seal on 15 April 2019 to authenticate A Form DS3 relating to the substation site at the St Albans Campus was retrospectively approved. **(Action 10)**

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified. (Register 102/18)**

**101/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- The next meetings would be held at:
- a. WGC campus 10 June 2019 (Strategy Day); and
  - b. St Albans campus 8 July 2019.

**102/18 ACTION REGISTER**

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date by
Action 1	92/18a. Last minutes (11.02.19) confirmed for signature.	Clerk	
Action 2	94/18b. Departmental performance progression info to be RAG rated.	DPCQ	asap (10.06.19)
Action 3	95/18a. Financial KPI to be widened.	FD	14.05.19
Action 4	95/18a(ii). Pay cost detail to be clarified.		asap (June 19)
Action 5	95/18d. Investments in Metro Bank to be reallocated to Barclays.		wie
Action 6	95/18f. SPS & TT partnerships approved.		
Action 7	95/18g. Data Protection Policy approved.		
Action 8	96/18d. Strategy Day tbh at Welwyn.	All	10.06.19
Action 9	99/18a. FOI Policy approved.	DPCQ	
Action 10	100/18. Use of College Seal approved.	Prin	wie