



OAKLANDS COLLEGE

Minutes of an electronic meeting held at 1800 on 6 July 2020

Present	Christine Chisholm	June Cory	Jean Fawcett
	Phillip Fulton	Sue Grant (Chair)	Jesmin Haq
	Zoe Hancock (Principal)	Kerry Hood	Ginny Kerridge
	Neil Myerson	John O'Sullivan	Rob Payne
	Peter Thompson		
In Attendance	Laina Baftjari (Dir Curr)	Nicola Caiger (Dir I&P)	Ronnie Davison (HR)
	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Stephen Fox (Dir HE)(109&110/19 only)	Ana Guimaraes (Dir Curr)
	Harpreet Nagra (DP)	Paul McCormack (FD)	Sian Williams (Dir Curr)
Apologies	June Cory		

PART ONE

109/19 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM AND OPENING REMARKS

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no interests declared.

The information was received.

110/19 UCSA REPORT (Out of Agenda Order)

The Report, in ten sections, informed Members on progress since the last update in December 2019. The Report had been presented to the UCSA Board in June and had been updated to reflect current information; including the main management and delivery focus on the Covid-19 response. The rapid move to on-line delivery had been well achieved but had an inevitable impact on planning for the coming year. Which was specifically considered in the report. The current portfolio of 7 degree programmes and 4 "Accreditation of Prior Learning" (APL) would be widened to include 3 additional elements when fully developed. Recognition that the UCSA was becoming a "centre of excellence" for continuing educational pathways for students from 25-65 was fully examined. Progression from the local consortium was sometimes challenging since UCSA could be wrongly perceived as a competitor and this suspicion sometimes migrated to local colleges. The fee structure was discussed and endorsed as similar to the College pattern. The flexibility of operations allowed rapid assimilation of business opportunities and all involved remained enthusiastic and committed, however without complacency; the two detailed future challenges in the conclusion would be addressed with determination and vigour.

The information was received and noted.

The Head of HE left the meeting.

111/19 STANDING ITEMS

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, particularly Jesmin Haq, the newly elected staff member and recorded thanks to the SMT and all staff for their continued professionalism and commitment. The meeting process was explained.

- a. The minutes from the Corporation meeting (Part 1 & 2) held on 15 May and 08 June 2020 (special) were confirmed for electronic signature. **(Action 1)**
- b. Matters arising. re 93/19b (Numbers and Targets). Recruitment, which had slowed during May had started to recover and marketing activity had been stepped up accordingly, numbers of returning and progressing students was c1300.
- c. Actions. There were no outstanding actions from either meeting.

15.05.20. See referenced minute for full detail		Status
Action 1	87/19b. Last minutes (09.03.20 & 03.04.20) confirmed.	Complete
Action 2	87/19c(i). J O'S appointed general member for 2 years.	
Action 3	87/19c(ii). PT to be safeguarding nominee 2020.21.	
Action 4	89/19g. FR checked against other Policies for consistency.	
Action 5	89/19g. Financial Regulations approved.	
Action 6	93/19a. Appreciation passed to safeguarding/welfare team.	
Action 7	94/19. DTP & FOI Policies approved.	
Action 8	95/19a. Updated Corporation Register to be circulated.	
Action 9	95/19a. Committee membership to be discussed by Chair.	
Action 10	95/19b. Chairs term extended by 2 years.	
Action 11	95/19c. Meeting Schedule approved.	
Action 12	99/19. Confidential Minutes 9.3.20 Approved.	
08.06.20. See referenced minute for full detail		Status
Action 1	100/19b. Special meeting formed.	Complete
Action 2	104/19. "Mid" CV parameter adopted for budgetary planning.	
Action 3	104/19. Capital and staff pay decisions in October,	
Action 4	104/19. Full budget reforecast in October.	
Action 5	104/19. Deficit budget may need to be set.	
Action 6	105/19d. MOS to be mapped across "Priorities".	
Action 7	105/19. JOS & HR to develop aspirational culture.	
Action 8	105/19. Further detail on Partnership numbers required.	
Action 9	106/19. Individual points to Principal for inclusion in papers.	

- d. Minutes of the Audit Committee (AC)(18.05.20). The AC minutes were explained by the Committee Chair; challenges associated with learner numbers and funding had been fully detailed and were tougher with the plans for reassessment and rectification brought to Members' attention: the recommendation at 22/19 was accepted and the External Audit Plan 2020/21 (and fee) was approved. **(Action 2)**

- a. **The information was noted and received.**
- b. **Actions had been identified (Register 120/19)**

112/19 PRINCIPALS REPORT

The Principal's Report updated on points not included on the agenda or considered elsewhere, the report had been circulated well in advance of the meeting and was received but of note were:

- a. Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The KPI (Annex 1) were studied and discussed; individual performance movements were explained in the report and information contained in other agenda items was signposted. Members' attention was drawn to Annex 2 which detailed agreements reached during the Strategy Day held in June.
- b. The plan for the reopening, including the specific re-opening Risk Assessment (Annex 3) was considered and discussed in depth. It was suggested that some ancillary workers may be obliged to attend to receive wages and not be entitled to sick pay; all such workers in College were employed by large, reputable catering and cleaning providers and that did not apply. The re-opening plans at Annex 4 were studied and endorsed. **(Action 3)** Introduction of timetabling for the "bubble" grouping process was considered and it was noted that English and Maths (EAM), which involved inevitable mixing of student groups would be on-line through targeted delivery/personal tutors.

- c. College Collaboration Fund. Full details of a £9m successor to the recent Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF) initiative following were noted, together with the 5member partnership application under the leadership of West Suffolk College.
 - d. Further Annexes were noted:
 - (i) Annex 5, "Rebuild" a skills led recovery plan;
 - (ii) Annex 6, a letter from the FE Commissioner; and
 - (iii) Annex 7, the Corporation business cycle 2020/21, which was approved. **(Action 4)**
- a. The information was noted and received.**
b. Actions had been identified (Register 120/19)

113/19 QUALITY UPDATE

The report updated on work during the Covid-19 restrictions. The lockdown had impacted considerably and importantly on process particularly with practical programmes and apprenticeships and possibly on staff and student wellbeing. The comprehensive paper explained student engagement, Focus Group feedback, the assessment process and was complemented by 3 specialist Annexes:

- a. Student Engagement. Annex 1 showed tabulated engagement detail by department for the last 10 weeks, the high levels particularly in early days was welcomed.
- b. Student Focus Groups. Students had been asked to complete a comprehensive survey examining dispersed delivery during lockdown and consolidated answers to the wide range of associated questions were considered.
- c. Quality Planning for 2020/21. A comprehensive planning document had been compiled to 3 Objectives to:
 - (i) ensure that quality assurance (QA) processes are robust and meet the needs of students' assessment, awarding body criteria and Ofsted;
 - (ii) make sure that quality improvement processes enhance teaching and learning in all modes of delivery and provided added value and students' experience. To make sure that assessment processes are fit for purpose, varied and robust; and
 - (iii) make sure that the observation, curriculum area reviews and developmental observations meet the college's KPIs, support and learner experience and provide good and outstanding outcomes for staff and students.

The document was noted.

The content led into a general interactive discussion of how the arrangements were working in practice. Feedback indicated that the work was appreciated and mostly the students enjoyed keeping busy although there were elements of "love it or hate it", the latter generally missing the social interaction of college life. Regular 1:1 sessions continued with teachers and student advisors working effectively; a wide range of "Microsoft Teams" presentations and webinars had proved effective. Students were aware that on-line work would not be taken fully into account during assessment of qualification under Ofqual arrangements; which were fully explained in the report; the process had been rigorously planned and had been scrupulously fair and even-handed and all clearly evidenced. Discussions led into the arrangements for the coming year and the "social distancing" influenced space limitations, which were particularly considered. Attendance by groups would include some on-line provision and the vital areas of wellbeing and health would continue to be closely monitored.

The information was noted and received.

114/19 FINANCE REPORT

- a. Management Accounts. The management accounts (Annex 1) were presented as a comprehensive narrative supported by tabulated data; the detail accurate to 31 May 2020 was then considered and discussed. The current position was a predicted unfavourable variance of c£25k against budget; income was unfavourable, by c£781k, with all variances clearly explained generally through reduced High Needs funding, payroll expenditure was positive by c£370k, non-payroll costs had been profiled with reference to the previous year's actuals. The balance sheet remained positive with a strong cash balance. Capital expenditure was within budget. The accounts were noted.
- b. Budget Reforecast. The accounts had been re-forecasted (Annex 1) to reflect Covid influences, it was noted that the pre-Covid budget had been in scope. The revised outturn deficit was c£348k worse than the pre-Covid plan but was a c£130k improvement on earlier predictions; full details were tabulated, explained and noted.
- c. KPI. The KPI schedule (Annex 2) analysed against 4 parameters was considered; the revised lower outturn, explained above, had impacted on the Financial Health, which had reduced from "Outstanding" to "Good"; key points had been identified and all were noted. It was noted that the pay cost percentage may rise as the overall income had reduced.
- d. Risk Management (RM). The Risk Register presented as a RAG rated table at Annex 4 had been reviewed by SMT on 18 June; one risk (PT1) had been removed since agreement over pay negotiations had been agreed. There were currently 25 Risks associated with the Strategic Themes, 5 "High" (Red), 14 "Medium" (Amber) and 6 "Low" (Green). A specific Covid related Register had been created and was informing consideration of financial and operational planning. The Register and the information was noted.
- e. Purchases over £100k. There had been 3 Purchase Orders (PO) over £100k since the last meeting, they were noted as;
 - (i) £487,752 to Noble House Services for cladding to the Discovery Building;
 - (ii) £177,600 to DLA Architecture for Construction and Engineering Stages 3-6; and
 - (iii) £147, 399.60 to PM&QS for Phase 3, Sports Pavilion.
- f. Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy (SCFCP) 2020/21. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) required an externally validated assurance certificate of subcontracting control. The IAS had recommended timely approval of the SCFC Policy attached at Annex 5; the Policy now included an itemised explanation of the amounts of cash retention from each contract and was approved. **(Action 5)** It was also agreed that Peter Thompson (safeguarding nominee) would discuss the safeguarding elements with the Dir (I&P).

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Table 120/20 below)

115/19 PEOPLE ENGAGEMENT

The full People Engagement Report was considered and discussed. Human Resources (HR) staff had been continually in contact throughout lockdown, particularly the mental health champions and wider support had been provided for those on maternity absence. The employee assistance programme. "LifeWorks" was updated each day. Returnees had indicated that they had felt well supported during their remote working. Full detail in the Paper was explained and discussed with the following considered:

- a. returning to work, the process was explained;
- b. 'flu vaccinations would be offered to all staff;
- c. measures of success widened to include areas agreed at the strategy day were individually examined;
- d. staff sickness noted as 3.8 days annually against the target of 5.6;

- e. time to hire, job vacancies were generally filled within 34 days against the target of 45;
- f. Investors in Diversity (IiD), the benefits associated with IiD were discussed and noted; and
- g. Nursery, the Nursery had remained open throughout the lockdown to support key workers' children and procedures for wider opening were explained. Thanks were recorded to the staff for their commitment.

The information was noted and received.

116/19 GOVERNANCE

- a. Regulatory Documents. The Regulatory Documents would be brought to the October meeting for consideration.
- b. Meeting Schedule 2020/21. The meeting schedule 2020/21 was approved. **(Action 6)**
- c. Corporation Register. The Corporation Register was noted and agreed. **(Action 7)**
- d. Attendance. Overall Corporation attendance throughout 2019/20 had been 86%; a "Good" performance. The difficulties and pressures on members continued to be understood and thanks were recorded for this commitment. After discussion the target for 2020/21 was unchanged and approved at 85%. **(Action 8)**.
 - a. **The information was received and noted.**
 - b. **Actions had been identified.** (Table 120/20 below)

117/19 POLICIES

Policies. There were 3 Policies to consider for approval:

- a. Inclusion Policy (Annex 1). there had been no substantial changes to the Inclusion Policy;
- b. Freedom of Speech and Visiting Speakers Policy (Annex 2). The Inclusion Policy had been amended to reflect changes from the Student Advice Co-ordinator to the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager; and
- c. Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (Annex 3) had been reviewed by the HR Director, changes were listed in the accompanying paper.

All Policies were approved. **(Action 9)**

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Register 120/19)

118/19 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no urgent business requested.

119/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 1800 on 12 October 2020.

120/19 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full detail		Resp	Date
Action 1	111/19a. Last minutes (15.05.20 & 08.06.20) confirmed.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	111/19d. IAS Plan 2020/21 approved.	FD	
Action 3	112/19b. College opening Plans endorsed.	Chair	
Action 4	112/19d(iii). Corporation Business Plan 2020.21 approved.		
Action 5	114/19f. SCFCP approved.	FD	
Action 6	116/19b. Meeting schedule 2020.21 approved.	Clerk	
Action 7	116/19c. Corporation Register approved.		
Action 8	116/19d. Corporation attendance target retained at 85%.		
Action 9	117/19. All Policies approved.		