



OAKLANDS COLLEGE

Minutes of the Board meeting held at the St Albans Campus at 1800hrs on 08 July 2019.

Present	Christine Chisholm	June Cory	Jean Fawcett
	Sue Grant (Chair)	Zoe Hancock (Principal)	Ginny Kerridge
	Geoff Lambert	Peter Marshall	Neil Myerson
	Rob Payne	Peter Thompson	
In Attendance	Nicola Caiger (Dir I&P)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Stephen Fox (Head HE)(112-114/18)
	Paul McCormack (FD)	Sian Williams (Dir Curr)	
Apologies	Mete Ekmekcioglu	Teresa Heritage	Harpreet Nagra (DP C&Q) (Attendee)
	Kerry Hood		

PART ONE

The meeting was preceded at 1700 with an interactive electronic presentation on the St Albans Masterplan delivered jointly by Damian Norris (DLA Architecture) and Nolan Smith (Fusion). The comprehensive detail comprised a brief overview and history recap, before moving on to consider the existing buildings layout, the final replacement layout including eventual roadways, services and car parking arrangements. Each of the 5 project phases was discussed and the eventual building interrelationship and integration on the finished site was explained.

112/18 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION INTERESTS AND MEMBERS

- a. 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).
- b. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and explained that, as all papers had been circulated well in advance of the meeting, papers would generally be taken as read and discussed accordingly. Agenda Item 6 would be taken first for the convenience of the Head of HE.

The information was received.

113/18 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Minutes from the Corporation meeting (Part 1 & 2) held on 13 May 2019 and the Special Meeting held on 10 June 2019 were confirmed for electronic signature. (Delegated to Clerk) **(Action 1)**
- b. Matters arising. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.
- c. Actions. There were no actions outstanding from the previous meeting:

See referenced minute for full detail.		Status
Action 1	92/18a. Last minutes (11.02.19) confirmed for signature.	Complete
Action 2	94/18b. Departmental performance progression info to be RAG rated.	
Action 3	95/18a. Financial KPI to be widened.	
Action 4	95/18a(ii). Pay cost detail to be clarified.	
Action 5	95/18d. Investments in Metro Bank to be reallocated to Barclays.	
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.	
Action 9	99/18a. FOI Policy approved.	

Action 10	100/18. Use of College Seal approved.	
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Action 5 was specifically challenged and once more confirmed as complete.

d. The Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting, held on 4 June 2019 were explained by the Committee Chair; there was some discussion regarding the “Reasonable” assurance level for Governance, but the Committee Chair further explained that was a positive assurance. The following recommendations were noted and approved; **(Action 2)**

- (i) Internal Audit Service (IAS) Plan and Fee;
- (ii) External Audit Plan and Fee; and
- (iii) Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) (to be included in the annual considerations of the Regulatory Documents in October). **(Action 3)**

e. It was agreed to consider the use of the College Seal as urgent business.

a. The information was received.

b. Actions had been identified (Register 123/18)

114/18 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ST ALBANS(UCSA)

The Report informed Members on progress since the last update in November 2018. The Report had been presented to the UCSA Board in May and had been updated to reflect current information. Key Achievements, including substantial academic developments, expected achievement of the annual financial targets, recognition that the UCSA was becoming a “centre of excellence” for continuing educational pathways for mature learners and that the Director had addressed the “All Parliamentary University Group” on FE/HE collaboration. (reported at Appx 1) were all listed. Good progress had been made in the five years since inception and the comprehensive report detailed activities planned to strengthen the organisation by increasing the offer to seven areas with five more under development, all detailed in the supporting paper. The three ongoing challenges were noted. The flexibility of operations allowed rapid assimilation of business opportunities and all involved remained enthusiastic and committed, however without complacency.

The information was received and noted.

The Head of HE left the meeting.

115/18 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 5.2 days/employee against the target of 5.6, and staff turnover was showing 10%, target 11%;
 - (ii) financial sustainability, the numbers were discussed and noted;
 - (iii) high quality responsive curriculum, timely success for apprenticeships, previously discussed and noted as high priority stood at 67%. Tracking and monitoring of this provision had now been improved and corrective action had arrested further decline. Improvements had been made to tracking and monitoring in this area, which should improve performance in the coming year. Work experience had improved to 67% with a strong chance of target achievement.
 - (iv) there had been 68 complaints compared with 70 at the same time last year.
- b. Discovery Centre Fire. Investigations into the cause of the fire at the Discovery Centre continued, the report from the Fire Service was awaited. The students concerned remained suspended, although arrangements had been made for completion of their qualifications and there had been nfa from the Police as yet. Internal damage had been generally limited

although the Sports Hall condition could not be finally assessed until the floor had been lifted; accordingly, the effect on sport student recruitment with associated income implications could not be assessed. Specialist engineers would shortly assess the integrity of the full external structure. The insurance company had responded well and provided up-front cash to assist and agreed that existing on-site contractors (Fusion and Willmott Dixon) should complete the repairs; most should be completed by next term although the question remained over the sports hall. Should that not be available then a temporary facility would be hired. Internal fire containment had been good but the cladding, despite meeting building regulations had fared less well. Although immediate actions and evacuation had performed well, a prudent, thorough and wide-ranging local review of the processes was underway and a specialist fire consultancy report had been commissioned and that would be circulated to all Members. **(Action 4)**

- c. Business Cycle 2019/20. The Corporation Business Cycle, had been amended to include more information on student inclusion/progression and people engagement; changes to the quality reporting to follow the “student life cycle” for the coming year and to include twice yearly HE reports; the document (Annex 2) was noted and approved. **(Action 5)**
- d. Whistleblowing. The previously reported Whistleblowing allegations and consequent action by external agencies had now been detailed. Annex 3 explained the outcome of a visit by NCFE, nothing remiss was found by Ofsted during the recent monitoring visit and satisfactory implementation of the single recommendation from OCR was complete. There had now been two fresh allegations and these would be similarly processed.
- e. Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was at Annex 4, and the Mission, arising from discussions on the strategy day was noted and agreed. All were asked to go through the detail out of the meeting and send final suggestion/comments to the Principal by the following Monday for consideration/incorporation and the document was conditionally approved. The corporation approved the strategic direction as outlined in the paper. **(Action 6)**
- f. FE Commissioner’s Letter. The FE Commissioner’s termly letter and annex explaining the 10 points of good governance (“Ten Cs”) were at Annexes 5&6 respectively. It was felt that the content could be the basis for an SLT evaluation leading into some form of Corporation self-scrutiny. The Search and Governance Committee (SGC) would meet over the summer break and consider the matter. **(Action 7)** The Chair and CC had recently completed specialist training, CC training for AC Chairs and the Corporation Chair on the first cohort of the Oxford Business School BFE sponsored leadership programme.
- g. The recently completed staff survey had been discussed at the staff inset day and the analysis of the outcomes would be brought to the next meeting for discussion. **(Action 8)**
- h. Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Members had been advised of changes to the SLT structure at minute 96/18b and that they were complete but:
 - (i) the second Dir (Curr) (Ana Guimaraes) had now been appointed and would take up post on 23 August; and
 - (ii) the Dir (C&R) had decided to leave Oaklands and he would be replaced by Laina Baftjari who would take up post as soon as possible.

The revised Management Structure would be circulated to all Members. **(Action 9)**

- a. **The information was received.**
- b. **Actions had been identified (Register 123/18)**

116/18 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 apparent disparity in attendance and retention performance between the English and Maths (EAM) GCSE and Functional Skills (FS) elements was discussed in particular. Attendance was questioned, the variance between authorised and actual

numbers could cloud the issue, however it was confirmed that all attendance had improved, with the most significant in FS Maths; for clarification actual numbers would be circulated to members. **(Action 10)**

- b. Teaching Learning and Assessment. (TLA) 80% of TLA observations were meeting “College expectations”; the QIF support programme continued with positive results, for example all re-observations had now met expectations, full detail was included in the paper and had been noted. These regularly completed observations, together with detailed Curriculum Audits provided valuable indicators for standards. The TLA Policy was currently being rewritten and was at Annex 1. 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. The work of the Quality Advisory Group (QAG) would be fundamental to that process.
 - c. The Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) had been updated since the monitoring visit to include related impact information; the thrust of the Plan would be adjusted to meet the requirements of the EIF, although the identified actions would clearly remain.
- a. The information was received and noted.**
b. Actions had been identified. (Register 123/18)

117/18 FINANCE REPORT

- a. Management Accounts. The management accounts were presented as a comprehensive narrative supported by tabulated data; the detail accurate to 31 May 2019 was then considered and discussed. The current position was a favourable variance of c£1.35m against budget; income was favourable, by c£1.241k, with all variances clearly explained, payroll expenditure was adverse by c£292k, non-payroll costs were positive, by £392k; again, all variances were clearly detailed in the narrative. The balance sheet remained positive with a strong cash balance. Capital expenditure was £988k/£1m. The accounts were noted.
- b. Budget Reforecast. The accounts had been re-forecasted, details with no net change, were tabulated, explained and noted.
- c. KPI. The KPI Table analysed against 5 parameters was considered; all were in scope and key points had been identified and all were noted.
- d. Purchases over £100k. It was noted that there had been no Purchase Orders (PO) over £100k since the last meeting.
- e. Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy (SCFC) 2019/20. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) required an externally validated assurance certificate of subcontracting control, that validation was expected early in 2020. The IAS had recommended timely approval of the SCFC Policy attached at Annex 4; the Policy was approved. **(Action 11)**
- f. Risk Management (RM). The Risk Register presented as a RAG rated table at Annex 5 had been reviewed by SMT on 18 June; one risk (FS20) had been promoted from “Medium to “High”, and one new risk (QC6), relating to the recent fire, had been added, with a high residual risk. There were currently 23 Risks associated with the Strategic Themes, three “High”, 16 Medium and four Low. There was general consideration of management of the Register and it was agreed that the processes would benefit from some revision accordingly:
 - (i) the AC would scrutinise the complete document annually and receive an update at the remaining meetings; **(Action 12a)** and
 - (ii) the inclusion of a “Heatmap would be considered. **(Action 12b)**
- g. Budget 2019/20. The final draft budget for 2019/20, completed in line with the parameters approved on 11 February 2019 (54/18) and the ESFA funding detail considered at the last meeting was discussed. The draft had been prepared in accordance with Governance

Policies and clear and comprehensive notes, including the background and clear links to the Strategic Plan, supplementing the full detail. The implications, assumptions and associated risks, including the increased pension contributions, were also clearly detailed and were noted. Expenditure had been rigorously scrutinised and economies had been listed in the documents, the provision for a 1% general staff salary increase was noted. Partnership activity was noted and approved for continuance, **(Action 13)**. The capital expenditure budget, including the contingency was noted and approved. **(Action 14)** The budget was then fully discussed page by page with reference to the Annexes (A1-5):

- (i) A1. statement of comprehensive income for year-end 31 July 2020;
- (ii) A2. ESFA income breakdown;
- (iii) A3. bridging analysis (pay and non-pay);
- (iv) A4. year on year variance analysis (current v proposal); and
- (v) A5. cost groups a percentage of income; and

It was agreed that the proposals met the needs of the College and provided for the financial commitments for the coming year and the budget was unanimously approved. **(Action 15)** Completion of the 3-year Financial Forecast (FF), together with signing of the necessary certificate was delegated to the Principal on the basis detailed in the document. **(Action 16)**

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Table 123/18 below)

118/18 EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

The Paper included full detail of current Apprenticeship activity, timely achievement of 67% and overall of 75% was noted as above the national benchmark and no improvement over the previous year indicating that the decline had been halted. Prospects for the coming year were detailed and were discussed. Full detail of Marketing and Key Employers were included in the paper and were noted. Changes to STEM provision were explained and noted.

The information was received and noted.

119/18 GOVERNANCE

- a. Regulatory Documents. The Regulatory Documents would be brought to the October meeting for consideration.
- b. Attendance. Overall Corporation attendance throughout 2018/19 had been 90%, the Audit and Search Committee had been 85% & 100% respectively; an “Outstanding” performance. The difficulties and pressures on members continued to be understood and thanks were recorded for this commitment. After discussion the target for 2019/20 was unchanged and approved at 85%. **(Action 17)** Individual attendances at Corporation and College events was detailed for information and was noted; members were thanked for their contribution in this area and it was agreed to retain the aim for each member to attempt two activities in the year.
- c. Meeting Schedule 2019/20. The meeting schedule 2019/20 was considered and approved. **(Action 18)** changes to the dates and times of the AC would be incorporated and the schedule would be electronically circulated. A Search and Governance Committee meeting would be arranged during the summer break to consider the arrangements for the Corporation SAR and to consider the skills set leading to filling of current vacancies. **(Action 19)**
- d. Appointments.
 - (i) Ginny Kerridge’s term of office would shortly draw to an end and it was unanimously agreed to extend her membership until July 2020; and
 - (ii) Peter Thompson would join the AC and Christine Chisholm appointed as Chair. **(Action 20)**

e. Corporation Register. The Corporation Register was noted and it was agreed to include membership of the Capital and the Quality Advisory Groups, **(Action 21)**

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Table 123/18 below)

120/18 POLICIES AND ANNUAL REPORT

Policies. There were 3 Policies to consider for approval.

- a. Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. The Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (Annex 1) had been reviewed by the HR Director, changes were highlighted in red and related to forbidding of electronic recording of meetings and the treatment of personal data. The changes were noted and approved. **(Action 22)**
- b. Inclusion Policy and Freedom of Speech and Visiting Speakers Policy, there had been no substantial changes to the Inclusion Policy or the Freedom of Speech and Visiting Speakers Policy (Annexes 2&3 respectively). The Inclusion Policy would be incorporated in the shortly to be reviewed Equality and Diversity (E&D) Policy. The information was noted and the Policies were approved. **(Action 23)**

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (Register 123/18)

121/18 URGENT BUSINESS

- a. Use of the College Seal on 10 June 2019 to authenticate A Form DS3 relating to the south side of Sandpit Lane St Albans was retrospectively approved. **(Action 24)**
- b. **From Part 2.** This had been Geoff Lambert's final meeting as a Corporation member and AC Chair over many (9) years, thanks were recorded for his outstanding contribution to the College and valued input to the Corporation. The Chair presented him with a memento for his time and Geoff responded accordingly.
- c. The Chair thanked all for their support and commitment over what had proved to be a challenging year. Notwithstanding it was clear that progress was being made. She wished all a relaxing summer break and urged them to hit the ground running in September.

122/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meetings would be held at St Albans campus 14 October 2019.

123/18 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date by
Action 1	113/18a. Last minutes (13.5.19 & 10.6.19) confirmed for signature.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	113/18d. AC recommendations approved.	FD	
Action 3	113/18d(iii). Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) (to be included in the annual considerations of the Regulatory Documents in October).	All	
Action 4	115/18b. Consultants' Report circulated to all.	ZH	
Action 5	115/18c. Corporation Business Cycle approved	All	
Action 6	115/18e. Strategic Plan (conditionally) approved	ZH	
Action 7	115/18f. SGC to meet during summer break.	Clerk	
Action 8	115/18g. Staff Survey analysis to next meeting.	Dir (I&P)	10.10.18
Action 9	115/18h. Revised Mgt Structure to be circulated	ZH	asap
Action 10	116/18a. EAM attendance detail to be circulated.	Dir (Curr)	
Action 11	117/18e. SCFC Policy approved.	FD	wie
Action 12	117/18f(ii). RM processes to be examined.		asap
Action 13	117/18g. Partnership Activity to continue.		wie
Action 14	117/18g. Capital budget approved.		
Action 15	117/18g, Budget 2019/20 and 3-year FF approved.		
Action 16	117/18g. All documents approved for signature.		
Action 17	119/18b. Corporation attendance target set at 85%.	All	2018/19
Action 18	119/18c. Meeting Schedule 2019/20 approved.		

Action 19	119/18c. SGC to consider SAR and vacancies.	Clerk	asap
Action 20	119/18d. GK term extended. PT to join and CC to Chair AC.		wie
Action 21	119/18e. Corp Register to included CAG/QAG detail.		
Action 22	120/18a. Disciplinary Policy approved.	ZH	
Action 23	120/18b. Inclusion and Freedom of Speech Policies approved.		
Action 24	121/18a. Use of the College Seal approve.		