

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION
Held on 27 and 28 April 2017 at a Governor Residential
At Beechfield House, Beanacre, Melksham
from 5.00 pm on 27th to 3.30 pm on the 28th April

Present	Helen Birchenough (Chair), Mark Lello, Harry Adam, Amanda Burnside, Faith Butt (for items 1 – 8 and 10 to 11), James Bilzon, Martin Clark, Jon Downing, Carolyn Godfrey (for items 4 to 8 and 10 to 11), Liz McKee, Karl Simpson, Venetia Summers
In Attendance	<i>Adrian Ford, Vice Principal Resources, Iain Hatt, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (from item 9 onwards) Heather Cross, Clerk to the Corporation, Charlotte Corfield, Assistant Principal (for item 9), Denise Lloyd, Assistant Principal (for item 9), Ian Revill, Assistant Principal (for item 9), Chris Whittaker, Assistant Principal (for item 9), Tony Basham – Director of Business Development (for item 9), Matt Wall, Assistant Principal (for item 9), Pauline Odulinski, Consultant (from item 9 onwards)</i>

	Minute	Action
8/1	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies for absence were received from James Hayes, Ben Permutt, Jack Wills, Hannah Granger and Dan Lomax for the conference, and also Faith Butt and Carolyn Godfrey for the next morning's session.	
8/2	Declarations of interest	
	None	
8/3	Chair's Opening Remarks	
	The Chair welcomed all governors to the conference and looked forward to the discussions to take place, to develop governance further and review the Strategic Plan. She commented that it was a shame no student governors had been able to attend and the Board may need to reflect on how to involve them more effectively.	
8/4	Principal's Report	
	<p>The Principal's report had been circulated previously and provided an update on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP); progress in new curriculum development; discussions with Swindon College; the proposed new staffing structure in Additional Learning Support; the draft HE Strategy; English and Maths GCSE national picture; a finance update; the Showell Farm outcome and the Salisbury and Lackham LEP projects.</p> <p>There was discussion about the RoATP. Although colleges not yet on the register had been informed that the situation would be satisfactorily resolved, the position remained that this college was not yet on the register and had apprentices it was waiting to register, with a significant increase in numbers compared to the previous year. . The Principal paid tribute to the support received from the local MPs, but they were also not able to obtain answers from ministers and the SFA Head office did not seem able to address the situation. There was also disappointment that the AoC seemed to be ineffective</p>	

	<p>in addressing the situation. A further letter requesting that the situation be corrected had been prepared by the college's lawyers. An audit trail of action taken had been kept in order that judicial review could be undertaken if necessary, although the latest information was that matters were supposed to be resolved in the following week. Governors gave their continued support to the Principal in pursuing this matter, as the college was entirely in the right. It was agreed that the college should continue to recruit apprentices and that all means possible to support them be identified if necessary.</p> <p>Good progress in developing the LEP projects' scope was being made including scaling the curriculum offer appropriately, although there was more work to do. New HE programmes were being pursued in the Life Sciences sector for introduction at Salisbury. Both Oxford Brookes and Bournemouth universities were interested to support these developments. Similarly the good progress in developing engineering at Salisbury, with employer and UTC support was noted. A presentation on these developments would be made to the Board in due course.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the proposals for collaborative working with Swindon College, following a meeting of its Chairs and Principals. It was agreed that the establishment of working groups to explore the collaborative offer and joint marketing of HE and apprenticeships should be taken forward, noting that streamlining of infrastructure would be the next area of exploration, which may lead to closer working in future. Governors agreed that it was not sensible for Wiltshire, Bath and Swindon Colleges to offer the same HE courses. It was understood that Swindon College Governing Body warmly welcomed the proposals when it had met the previous evening.</p> <p>The intention to restructure staffing in the Additional Learning Support area was noted.</p> <p>The draft HE Strategy which had been circulated was welcomed. Although further work was required, the draft had been requested by Oxford Brookes University. A governor suggested that level 4 and above should be the focus of the strategy. There would be further governor discussion once the strategy was more developed.</p> <p>Changed government policy on English and Maths was noted, with regret. Colleges would have to continue to enter large numbers of students for exams under the arrangements which were policy.</p> <p>A staff survey had recently been launched. Results would be published in due course. A target of 65% completion had been set.</p> <p>The Colleges Partnership was discussed. Growth plans and targeting large contracts were being discussed with the other partner, Bridgwater College. Exploration was underway concerning relocating the company back to an army base on a no cost basis. Discussion was ongoing concerning how the surplus of the company was distributed. The company would revert to Wiltshire College in its entirety should the other college's financial health cause any difficulties. Governors noted the position.</p>	
8/5	Quality Improvement Plan	
	The meeting noted the latest Quality Improvement Plan update which had been circulated and agreed that discussion of the item be deferred until the next meeting.	VPCQ

8/6	Presentation on Budget Implications 2017/18	
	<p>Adrian Ford commented on the likely out-turn position for the coming year and gave a short presentation on the key budget features for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>The projection for the current year was at least a £100K surplus. An overage payment of £625K from the site sale at Showell Farm was still anticipated on top of this, but this was not yet secure. Planning permission for the site had been granted, subject to appeal.</p> <p>The budget for 2017/18 would be finally presented at the July Corporation meeting. A prudent view was being taken in its preparation. Income allocations had been indicated. An operating position of £585K was projected. Whilst careful planning was taking place on non-pay costs it was expected that more would be required on exam costs. On pay, there would be an increased budget because the additional high needs numbers would require more staffing resource, however the college was conscious of the suggested sector figures of 60% expenditure on staffing. A growth in HE was anticipated for the following year.</p> <p>Governors asked how these figures compared to the original five year plan – it was expected that the college could exceed this and be a £50m college in that time, but to do so some significant action would be required such as an acquisition. There were some positive developments with business including the signature of a Memo of Understanding with Qinetiq. It was noted that since 2009 the college had lost numbers the equivalent of the size of a campus, which should be targeted for replacement and also more economies were needed in running more buildings currently than were warranted overall in student activity.</p> <p>The current position was noted and governors looked forward to the final presentation of the budget at the July 2017 meeting.</p>	VPCR
8/7	Minutes of the last meeting held 21 March 2017	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2017 which had been circulated were approved as a true record.	
	AWAYDAY/RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES	
8/8	Review of Governance 1 – Governance Wheel	
	<p>Governors carried out an exercise led by the Chair to assess its positioning under various headings on the 'Governance Wheel', an assessment tool developed by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations.</p> <p>The results of the exercise have been recorded in appendix (1).</p>	
8/9	Strategic Plan Review	
	<p>Governors took part in a carousel discussion on each aspect of the current strategic plan, considering how it had operated to date and how each aspect might be developed further, also what further or replacement Key Performance Indicators were appropriate for recording performance against the plan.</p> <p>A summary of the feedback in the plenary session is given in appendix (2) .</p>	

8/10	Review of Governance 2 – Results and Discussion of AoC Governance Questionnaire	
	<p>Governors had completed in advance an AoC questionnaire concerning governance activity and a session was held to feed back on the results.</p> <p>A summary of discussions concerning critical success factors is given in appendix (3).</p>	
8/11	Conclusion of Residential	
	<p>The Chair thanked everyone for their participation and looked forward to seeing the developments to the Strategic Plan and discussion about making further improvements to governance at forthcoming meetings.</p>	

Appendix 1 Governance Wheel

Understanding Board Role – 8

- Use a light touch method to assess performance of the Board regularly – how could we have done that meeting better?
- Understand better SMT's activity with external organisations – how should governors engage with that?
- Balance between specialist understanding and strategic oversight

Delivery of purpose – 8

- Understanding the needs of stakeholders – take the opportunities the college provides
- Focus on different stakeholder groups one at a time

Board effectiveness – 7-8

- Have appraisals
- Network with those outside
- All Board members to be familiar with the Board's skills matrix
- Look at the way 'link' governors work
- How much and what style of challenge? And don't forget the power of the 'dumb' question!

Board in Control – 9

- There are already good systems in place with KPIs, use of risk register...
- What about the solvency outside our control?

Board Integrity - 9

- Feedback from staff and students – build in meetings with staff and students

Open and accountable Board -6 - 7

- Find ways to get stakeholder input to decisions – explicit question as to what would stakeholders think?
- Build in opportunities for meetings with students and staff systematically
- What can be done to improve student governor input?

Trustee satisfaction – 6 or 8

- Positive experiences in being involved with the college
- Is a strong buzz from meetings

External Leadership – 8

- Check the awareness of Governors presence around college
- Examples of individual excellence turn into collective competence

Appendix 2 – Strategic Plan Review

Beacon

More information- destinations, careers

Outward-looking (KPIs don't capture enough)

Something to show how we stand out

Market strengths

Sustainability

Action more work with parents, active presence/show days

Governor interaction with stakeholder groups

Ahead of pack, not just keeping pace with the pack

Create a 'Greenhouse'/ think tank

A risk not to take chances – missed opportunities

Need KPIs to be more dynamic

Dynamo

Significant challenge and unlikely to be achieved without the other plan aspects eg joint ventures

Progress checking needed
Record businesses more effectively
What are we trying to do to reach success/sustain success – need innovation

Livewire

IT is a very good tool to provide evaluation
Measure progress – need to review how we feed back to governors
Technology – measure of engagement

Drivers

CPD – needs a KPI – impact reward and recognition
Exit interviews
Identify future leaders
Equal pay

Rock

Estate plan/view progress?
What do we need to do to track and monitor the complex/multi stage projects?
35 to 52 week delivery – what does this mean for resources/challenges/sustainable?
How do we measure horizon scanning?
Provision for staff to ‘look outward’
Careers- progression

Appendix 3 – AoC Governance Questionnaire

Governors role in horizon scanning

- Comprehensive spread of skills and influential and well-connected people
- Training/development to use their skills/abilities
- Harness their global thinking
- Equip ourselves to ask powerful questions and develop critical thinking
- Feed in intelligence from the wide networks associated with governors’ background

Understanding and engaging with stakeholder views – positive promotion of the strong reputation of the college

- Critical appraisal of the corporate brand strategy
- Ditto marketing strategy
- Critical appraisal of the top 5 estimates for growth (reword this)
- Governors as ambassadors – with the aid of the supply of regular information to inform networking

Hearing and understanding the student voice

- Understanding when we need to hear about key events in student journey (set programme and ensure it is completed)
- Determine what we want to hear about and when
- Identify how we wish to hear the voices of students
- Issues and concerns have been addressed effectively
- ?Gov’s links...

Supporting the development of a coherent estate plan

Board has confidence in SMT – through documentation and reports