

SANDWELL COLLEGE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Governors  
held on Wednesday 22nd October 2014,  
in Room G/09, at Central Sixth,  
commencing at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-	Mr. J. Tew	(Independent)	(in the Chair)
	Mr. M. Bailey	(Independent)	
	Mr. J. Britton	(Independent)	
	Mrs. A. Brook	(Independent)	
	Mr. J. Elsmore	(Independent)	
	Mrs. T. Hurst	(Independent)	
	Mr. R. Nugent	(Independent)	
	Mr. G. Pennington	(Principal)	
	Mrs. L. Pitsillides	(Staff Member)	(part of meeting)
	Ms. H. Randall	(Staff Member)	(part of meeting)
	Mr. A. Scott	(Independent)	
	Mr. M. J. Uddin	(Independent)	

Also in Attendance:-

Miss J. Berry	Corporation Secretary	
Mr. D. Holden	Vice-Principal (Teaching and Learning)	(part of meeting)
Mr. D. Hawkins	Director of Finance	(part of meeting)
Ms. K. Whiting	Director of Human Resources	(part of meeting)

B14.87     Welcome     B14.87

The Chairman welcomed Ms. Randall, Staff Member, to her first meeting of the Board of Governors.

B14.88     Declarations of Interest     B14.88

There were no declarations of interest.

B14.89     Apologies     B14.89

Apologies were received from Messrs. Beardsmore, Javid, Johal and Miss Bushell, Student Member nominee.

B14.90     Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors held on Monday 14th July 2014     B14.90

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on Monday 14th July 2014 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved.

B14.91     Matters Arising     B14.91

i)     Financial Year 2014/15 (Vide Minute B14.67 (c ))

The Director of Finance informed members of discussions that had taken place with the bank regarding an overdraft facility. A further meeting would take place within the next few weeks.

The Principal presented a report updating members on issues, activities and developments.

Members were informed of 16-18 student numbers for the current year, which were above target and showed an increase compared to 2013/14. The College was aiming to increase student numbers further moving forward. Members were reminded that 19+ learners were recruited throughout the year; the College expected to achieve its 19+ funding target.

Results for 2013/14 were showing positive trends and actions had been implemented to improve areas of under-performance. Members were pleased to be informed that A2 results had achieved a pass rate of over 97%.

The Principal informed members that a review of the curriculum would take place to ensure it met the needs of learners, employers, stakeholders and the community.

Members noted the successful open evening that had taken place at Central Sixth, the launch of the Arts Café, and the Higher Education Fair, which had involved a number of universities.

A member congratulated the College on the forthcoming best practice visit by OfSTED in relation to the College's ESOL provision.

In response to a query, members were informed of A level recruitment numbers and were reminded of the changes that had taken place in relation to A levels and the need for all learners to achieve a Grade C in GCSE English and maths. Members were informed of the ways in which the College benchmarked its success rates and tracked progression routes, which were reported to the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee.

In response to a further query, members were reminded of the College's involvement in the Health Sciences UTC and the implications for the College moving forward. The UTC's first year curriculum offer was outlined.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

The Vice-Principal (T&L) presented a report detailing success rates for 2013/14 and explained, in detail, the College's performance in relation to the national averages. Members noted the improved success rates compared to 2012/13. The focus that had been placed on the quality of teaching and learning and student welfare to improve success rates and learner outcomes was explained.

With regard to apprenticeships a discussion took place regarding ways in which the College could support apprentices who were made redundant before their apprenticeship was completed, which had had an impact on 24+ apprenticeship success rates.

Members were informed that a Quality Improvement Plan would be presented to the next meeting of the Board of Governors with the Self-Assessment Report. The monitoring and support provided to curriculum areas was outlined, together with the way in which external scrutiny of the College's operations would be undertaken.

The Vice-Principal informed members of visits that had been made to 'outstanding' colleges in order to share best practice. The College was planning to implement a 'Licence of Observe' initiative, which was explained to members. It was agreed that members of the Board of Governors would be invited to undertake related training.

RESOLVED:

- a) that members be invited to undertake the 'Licence to Observe' training.
- b) that the report be received.

B14.94 Strategic Plan 2015-2020 – Timeline for Preparation

B14.94

The Principal presented a report outlining the planned process for reviewing the Strategic Plan and a suggested timeline for the involvement of the Board of Governors. In response to a query, the Principal informed members of his plans for consulting with staff and students.

RESOLVED: that the proposed timeline for the preparation of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 be approved.

B14.95 Finance and Resources

B14.95

a) Management Accounts for the Period ended 31st July 2014

The Director of Finance presented the management accounts for the period ended 31st July 2014 and outlined the main variances against budget. It was noted that the forecast year-end out-turn had improved from that reported to the previous meeting.

RESOLVED: that the management accounts be received.

b) Management Accounts for the Period ended 30th September 2014

The Director of Finance presented the management accounts for the period ended 30th September 2014 and explained the main variances against budget. It was noted that the forecast year-end out-turn was in line with the budget.

Members were reminded of the challenges facing the College during 2014/15 and the tight financial controls that had been implemented.

The Principal informed members that the College had received confirmation from the Skills Funding Agency that it considered the College's financial health to be 'satisfactory' for 2013/14 and 2014/15 based on its financial plan, which was same as the College's self-assessed grade.

The Principal reminded members of the positive impact that increasing learner numbers and retention would have on the College's financial position.

RESOLVED: that the management accounts be received.

c) Three Year Financial Plan Monitoring Report

The Director of Finance presented the three-year financial plan monitoring report.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

d) Central Sixth Form –  
Progress Report on Construction Works and Financial Update

The Director of Finance informed members that construction works had been completed and hand-over had taken place on 29th August 2014. The cost of the construction works in relation to the sixth form centre was below estimate.

The Board of Governors asked that members' congratulations be conveyed to all those who had been involved in the development of the sixth form centre. Members asked that the support from the Council and the collaborative working that had taken place also be recorded.

RESOLVED: that the verbal report be received.

B14.96

Human Resources

B14.96

a) Framework for Pay and Conditions of Service Update

The Director of Human Resources (HR) presented a report updating members on changes to the pay and conditions of employment and informed members that the union's local dispute with the College had been lifted.

With regard to the payment of increments a member queried the process by which the College would evidence that performance standards had been achieved. The Director of HR explained that the College would be working with the unions to identify and agree performance criteria.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

b) Annual Report 2013/14

The Director of HR presented the Human Resources Annual Report for 2013/14.

The staff profile was outlined in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and disability. It was noted that the staff profile was largely unchanged compared to 2012/13. Sickness absence rates had reduced and steps were being taken to achieve further improvements.

A discussion took place during which members were reminded of the work undertaken by the Equality and Diversity Committee and it was suggested that this could be cross-referenced to the Human Resources Annual Report.

A query was raised in relation to the number of support staff detailed in the report and members were reminded that this included staff that directly supported teaching and learning. It was suggested that in future staff numbers should be reported as teaching, non-teaching and teaching support.

The Director of HR informed members of the human resources priorities for 2014/15 onwards.

In response to a query, members were informed of the additional staff that had been recruited to deliver English and maths.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

B14.97

Appointment of Student Members

B14.97

The Corporation Secretary presented a report detailing a nomination received for the appointment of Student Member to the Board of Governors. It was noted that a second nomination was expected from a sixth form student.

Members were reminded that the Student Members would also serve as members of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee. The Student Member nominee had attended the meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 1st October 2014.

A member emphasised the need to ensure that a second Student Member was appointed to the Board of Governors in order to ensure that students were effectively represented.

RESOLVED:

- a) that Miss Stacey Bushell be appointed as Student Member on the Board of Governors with immediate effect until 31st July 2015.
- b) that the Board of Governors note that the Student Member would serve as a member of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee.
- c) that steps be taken to ensure that a second Student Member be appointed to the Board of Governors.
- d) that the report be received.

B14.98 Minutes of the Meeting of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee held on Wednesday 1st October 2014

B14.98

The Chairman of the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee presented the minutes of its meeting held on Wednesday 1st October 2014 and commented that a number of its discussions had also been discussed earlier in this meeting.

Members were informed that the focus of the next meeting of the Committee would be 'employability'.

Members were reminded that curriculum areas were invited to make presentations at meetings of the Committee. The Committee was now considering other ways in which members could be involved with curriculum areas, possibly through a governor link initiative. Proposals would be presented to a future meeting of the Board of Governors.

The Committee was reviewing its role and terms of reference with a greater emphasis being placed on impact rather than actions. The Committee was monitoring how the College would move from 'good' to 'outstanding' within the next 18 months.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be received.

B14.99 Minutes of the Meeting of the Search Committee held on Monday 6th October 2014

B14.99

The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting of the Search Committee held on Monday 6th October 2014 and outlined the discussions that had taken place.

The Chairman reminded members of the governance review that he had initiated, the outcome of which would be presented to the Board of Governors.

Members were informed that there was currently a vacancy on the Search Committee and the Chairman asked that anyone interested in serving on the Committee contact the Corporation Secretary.

RESOLVED:

- a) that any member of the Board of Governors interested in serving as a member of the Search Committee contact the Corporation Secretary.
- b) that the Board of Governors note that the Search Committee had undertaken a review of the Register of Corporation Members' Interests.

- c) that the Board of Governors note that the Search Committee was satisfied with the progress that had been made in implementing the Governance Self-Assessment Report action plan.
- d) that the minutes be received.

B14.100 Any Other Business B14.100

1. Association of Colleges' National Conference - 18th to 20th November 2014

Members were reminded that the Association of Colleges' National Conference would take place in Birmingham from 18th to 20th November 2014. Any member wishing to attend the conference was asked to contact the Corporation Secretary.

RESOLVED: that any member wishing to attend the Association of Colleges' National Conference contact the Corporation Secretary.

2. Governors' Events Calendar 2014/15

A Governors' Events Calendar for 2014/15 was tabled and members were asked to inform the Principal's Personal Assistant of any events they wished to attend.

RESOLVED: that members inform the Principal's Personal Assistant of any events they wished to attend during 2014/15.

B14.101 NOT FOR PUBLICATION B14.101  
(NFP) (NFP)

B14.102 Annual Report - Board of Governors/Senior Postholders' Expenses B14.102

The Corporation Secretary presented a report detailing expenses claimed by members of the Board of Governors, the senior postholders and the Corporation Secretary during 2013/14 compared to 2012/13.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

B14.103 Determination of Confidential Items B14.103

Members were asked to confirm which items of discussion should be minuted confidentially. It was agreed that discussions relating to agenda items 15, 18 and 19 should be minuted confidentially.

RESOLVED: that discussions relating to agenda items 15, 18 and 19 be minuted confidentially.

The Staff Members and managers left the meeting.

B14.104 NOT FOR PUBLICATION B14.104  
(NFP) (NFP)

B14.105 NOT FOR PUBLICATION B14.105  
(NFP) (NFP)

B14.106 Date of Next Meeting

B14.106

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was planned to take place on Monday 8th December 2014, commencing at 5.00 p.m., at Central Campus.

The meeting terminated at 7.42 p.m.