

**SANDWELL COLLEGE**

**Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting  
held on Monday 9 December 2019  
at Sandwell College at 4.00pm**

Present: K Ellis (Independent) (Chair)  
G Bassi (Independent)  
D Chuhan (Staff – Teaching)  
N Grace (Independent)  
N Makin (Independent)  
G Pennington (Principal)  
J Tew (Independent)  
M J Uddin (Independent)

Apologies: A Banford (Staff – Cadbury)  
J Francis (Independent)  
S Hackett (Independent)  
T Lawrence (Student)  
P Murphy (Independent)

Also in attendance:

J Bailey Executive Director, Finance & Resources  
B Beaty Executive Director, HR and Organisational Development  
D Holden Vice Principal  
R Islam Prospective Student Governor, Cadbury College  
S Griffiths Executive Director, Apprenticeships and Skills Division  
A Sheridan Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Student Services  
E Scottford Clerk to the Corporation  
J Stevens Executive Director, Quality & Academic Standards, and Principal, Cadbury College

		<b>Action</b>
B19.86	<b><u>Welcome and introduction</u></b>	
	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and introductions were made.	
B19.87	<b><u>Apologies</u></b>	
	Apologies were received from Amie Banford, Jayne Francis, Simon Hackett, Tiantie Lawrence and Peta Murphy and were accepted by Governors.	
	RESOLVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That apologies be accepted</li> </ul>	
B19.88	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
B19.89	<b><u>Board membership update</u></b>	
19.89.1	<b>Governor resignation – Richard Youds</b>	
89.1.1	Governors were advised of the resignation of Richard Youds with immediate effect due to work commitments.	

89.1.2	The Chair would send a letter of thanks on behalf of the Board to Mr Youds.	
89.1.3	A replacement representative from West Midlands Police would be sought.	
89.1.4	RESOLVED THAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board accepted Richard Youds' resignation</li> <li>• A replacement representative from West Midlands Police would be sought.</li> <li>• The Chair would send a letter of thanks on behalf of the Board to Mr Youds.</li> </ul>	
19.89.2	<b>Independent Governor vacancies x 3</b>	
89.2.1	The Chair advised that there were currently 3 Independent Governor vacancies on the Board.	
89.2.2	Two potential candidates were to be seen by the Principal and Chair early in the new year, one of whom had a finance specialism.	
89.2.3	The Search Committee meeting postponed from November 2019 to early January 2020 would review committee membership and vacancies.	
89.2.4	RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the update on current Board vacancies.	
19.89.3	<b>Student Governors</b>	
89.3.1	<b>Sandwell College – Tiante Lawrence</b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Following the Student Governor election process, Governors approved the appointment of Tiante Lawrence as Student Governor representing Sandwell College and member of the Learners Quality and Curriculum Committee (LQCC) for an 8-month term of office to 31 July 2020.	
89.3.2	<b>Cadbury College – Raisha Islam</b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Following the Student Governor election process, Governors approved the appointment of Raisha Islam as Student Governor representing Cadbury College and member of the Learners Quality and Curriculum Committee (LQCC) for an 8-month term of office to 31 July 2020.	
B19.90	<b><u>Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on 14 October 2019</u></b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.	
B19.91	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b>	
	There were no matters arising.	
B19.92	<b><u>Principal's Report</u></b> Presented by the Principal.	
19.92.1	The College has hit its target for enrolment as figures currently stand at 5,700.	

19.92.2	Other income streams are healthy with no concerns.	
19.92.3	Apprenticeships continue to prove challenging.	
19.92.4	The College has continued to enrol students.	
19.92.5	The main challenge to success rates is improving outcomes at Cadbury which is reflected in their results. Results were strong for Sandwell College overall.	
19.92.6	Applicant numbers are healthy for this point in the year. The main challenge relates to A levels and Central St Michael's. The College is increasingly looking at a broader programme. The offer of a Combined programme is increasingly popular as many students find it difficult to progress to A levels. Any dip in numbers at Central St Michael's is compensated for by numbers at Central Campus.	
19.92.7 NFP		
19.92.8	College events listed in the report were noted by Governors.	
19.92.9	The Black Country Colleges' Principals' Forum met with the main themes being: safety – with input from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office; feedback on HE – many colleges are experiencing similar problems to the College in their dealings with the Office for Students (OfS).	
19.92.10	FE Skills and Productivity Group – collaborative discussions are underway on how to approach the West Midlands Combined Authority.	
19.92.11	Birmingham City Council is receptive to the 'Cadbury in the City' proposal.	
19.92.12	Further information on the new Talent Studio will be brought back to the Board on how to progress need.	
19.92.13	Conversations have taken place with the NHS regarding the Health project.	
19.92.14	HE – problems with the QAA visit were outlined. The College was making representations regarding its unfair treatment however this was unlikely to result in any change. A decision will be needed in due course on how the College develops HE moving forwards.  The College is meeting Wolverhampton University with a view to offering Wolverhampton University accredited and validated degrees.	
19.92.15 NFP		
19.92.16	Future plans were outlined. The closest near fruition term project is 'Cadbury in the City'. The College can afford the investment but it requires BCC's approval of the initiative.	
19.92.17	The Principal clarified that a rise to the base rate funding of £188 would mean a new rate £4,188 per learner was dependent on various other changes were being proposed including extra funding for certain courses and maths and English. The College will be able to model this at some point.	

19.92.18	In summary, the College is in a strong position in a poorly funded sector. The proposed increase is little compensation for funding cuts over the past 10 years. Therefore, a successful Ofsted outcome is key.	
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19.92.19	<p>Governors requested clarification of the 4-5 management vacancies mentioned in the report and if any critical posts needed to be filled.</p> <p>The Principal advised that some areas, e.g. Computing and Engineering, were difficult to recruit to from a small talent pool.</p> <p>Governors asked that future reports detail the nature of such vacancies.</p>	
19.92.20	Governors commented that the growth in Cadbury was very healthy, helped by its renewed reputation and the new leadership team in place, as well as the hard work of the team in recruitment.	
19.92.21	The Chair pointed out that for succession planning purposes there needed to be an additional 1-2 SLT members. There were a number of internal opportunities which would develop leadership skills and support to SLT. Governors would be involved in the interviews.	
19.92.22 NFP		
19.92.23	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Principal's report.	
B19.93	<p><b><u>Teaching &amp; Learning Report (incl. final results 2018/19)</u></b> Presented by the Vice Principal</p>	
19.93.1	Success rates are strong, particularly at Sandwell. There is some work to do at Cadbury but overall the results were higher than National Average (NA). Ofsted use published success rates as a risk assessment tool in determining its inspection calendar. The College does not envisage any risk of an early inspection based on these success rates. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) will focus on retention rates.	
19.93.2	Detailed information on results was included for information. Governors' questions were welcomed and would be channelled through the LQCC.	
19.93.3	<p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors received and approved the Teaching &amp; Learning Report (incl. final results 2018/19).</li> <li>• Governors' questions would be channelled through the LQCC.</li> </ul>	
B19.94	<p><b><u>College SAR</u></b> Presented by the Exec Director, Quality &amp; Academic Standards, and Principal, Cadbury College</p>	
19.94.1	The new Ofsted framework applied from September 2019.	
19.94.2	The College updated the SAR based on last year's Ofsted framework with a view to developing the whole college version alongside the new Inspection Framework. Cadbury was integrated by including the need to improve achievement and retention rates. College achievement is still very good. The provisional self-assessment grade is Good.	
19.94.3	An updated version of the SAR will be brought to the next Board meeting.	
19.94.4	The format of inspections under the new Framework was outlined.	

19.94.5	In response to a Governor's query on environmental data for Sandwell and Cadbury, JS reiterated that this had been addressed for Cadbury with its integration into areas for improvement. This year's SAR will focus on quality and how the College defines its students and population.	
19.94.6	Governors queried the ethnicity breakdown and achievement comments. The Vice Principal explained that each ethnicity group has its own National Average. The local community served by the College does not reflect the Sandwell community as it has students from Birmingham and those students who study at Central St Michael's. Governors recommended this be clarified in the SAR. The Vice Principal advised that a full Equality and Diversity report would be taken to the next LQCC meeting and would include a full breakdown of each of the ethnic groups, their achievement and action plans to improve achievement.	DH
19.94.7	Governors suggested that the next LQCC meeting look at areas of teaching and staff development, priorities and outcomes for learners. Clerk to note for agenda.	Clerk
19.94.8	In response to a Governor's query, JS clarified that the main group not achieving now was Black Afro Caribbean students rather than those of Pakistani heritage as reported in May 2018. This was taken from the College's equal opportunities monitoring data.	
19.94.9	RESOLVED THAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors received and monitored the College SAR.</li> <li>• An updated version of the SAR will be brought to the next Board meeting.</li> </ul>	
B19.95	<b>Cadbury Action Plan</b> Presented by the Exec Director, Quality & Academic Standards, and Principal, Cadbury College	
19.95.1	Due to the large growth in student numbers, the first half term had focused on settling students into college life. The second half term had focused on classroom support and individual staff development.	
19.95.2	The findings from the last Ofsted report had been used as the basis. A range of strategies to improve outcomes is underway.	
19.95.3	Data is now available which enables comparisons to be made with the previous year so that the distance travelled can be identified. The trend shows a levelling out of achievement across all categories: gender, ethnicity, etc. The College is more balanced now.	
19.95.4	Governors commented that there was a noticeable difference now in perceptions of Cadbury and complimented the Cadbury and Sandwell teams involved in developing the infrastructure and look of the site which had had a significant positive effect on the culture of the College.	
19.95.5	Governors asked for the Cadbury Student Governor's observation of her first year. RI advised that she had seen a huge improvement in the physical appearance of the College between the Open Day and enrolment.  RI drew attention to the issue that, because of the size of the first-year cohort and the effect on the timetable, Wednesday afternoons were no longer free for enrichment activities.	

	<p>JS advised that the College was presently focusing on more teaching and learning activities and acknowledged that the enrichment activities which were in place needed to be better publicised.</p> <p>Governors asked if students were being stretched in their subjects. RI confirmed they were and extension questions were given to those students completing their work early, e.g. in Maths.</p>	
19.95.6	RESOLVED THAT: Governors monitored the Cadbury Action Plan.	
B19.96	<b><u>Policies/procedures</u></b>	
	The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, explained that various policies needed to be approved by the Board as required by various agencies.	
	The role of Roxana Pal, Exec Director, MIS, was clarified.	
19.96.1	<b>Data Protection</b>	
	<p>RESOLVED THAT: Governors reviewed and approved data protection related policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection Policy</li> <li>• Privacy Policy</li> <li>• Privacy Policy – Employees</li> <li>• Document Retention Schedule</li> </ul>	
19.96.2	<b>IT Security</b>	
	<p>RESOLVED THAT: Governors reviewed and approved IT security related policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT Security Policy</li> <li>• ILT E-safety Policy</li> </ul>	
19.96.3	<b>IT Acceptable Use</b>	
	<p>RESOLVED THAT: Governors reviewed and approved IT acceptable use policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptable Use Policy</li> <li>• Social Media Policy</li> </ul>	
B19.97	<b><u>Students Union Accounts 2018/19</u></b>	
19.97.1	The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, presented the Student Union accounts and explained that a separate bank account is in place to ensure funds put aside for these activities are ring-fenced.	
19.97.2	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Student Union accounts 2018/19.	
B19.98	<b><u>HR Update</u></b> Presented by the Exec Director, HR and Organisational Development	
19.98.1	Recruitment continues to be the department's significant activity. The number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) is significantly lower. The number of posts is not a concern.	
19.98.2	More information on management posts will be included in future reports. The number of vacancies has reduced as one post has now been filled.	

19.98.3	The College is evaluating the impact of the Morgan Hunt managed service with a view to making further improvements.	
19.98.4	Employer relations are positive, with useful initiatives put in place last year including a number working groups, the work of which will be scrutinised to take forward.	
19.98.5	Governors noted staff development activities and believed it was important for the HR and Quality team to work together to ensure quality improvement.	
19.98.6	In response to a Governor's query on future plans to enhance recruitment practice, BB advised that the department now needed a dedicated recruitment focus distinct from an HR generalist approach. A new dedicated role was therefore planned.	
19.98.7	Governors noted that staff absence was significantly higher than NA. BB advised that absence levels were not a concern and were managed closely. The College benchmarks against national figures. This term there had been a spike in absence. Most work was needed at Cadbury which had slightly higher absence levels than was ideal but the individuals concerned were being monitored. BB pointed out that NA data was annual whereas data reported for Cadbury and Sandwell related to the autumn term only.	
19.98.8	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the HR update report.	
B19.99	<b><u>Register of the use of the College Seal</u></b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the updated Register of the use of the College Seal.	
B19.100	<b><u>Governors Expenses Annual Report</u></b>	
19.100.1	The Clerk presented the Governors Expenses Annual Report.	
19.100.2	In response to a Governor's query, it was explained that the Financial Regulations include mileage expenses and limits for hotel and other expenses.	
19.100.3	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Governors Expenses Annual Report.	
B19.101	<b><u>Governors Code of Conduct (16<sup>th</sup> edition) – signature sheet</u></b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors signed to confirm they had read, understood and agreed to abide by the Governors Code of Conduct (16 <sup>th</sup> edition).	
B19.102	<b><u>Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on Monday 2 October 2019</u></b>	
19.102.1	The minutes were taken as read. The meeting had focused on: a presentation on HE including student representation; provisional results for 2018/19; annual reports relating to T&L, Student Services, Complaints, Employer Survey, Student Disciplinary Actions; the Risk Management Monitoring Report; considered and recommended the Safeguarding Policy for approval by the Board; details of preparation for the QAA audit.	





19.102.2	RESOLVED THAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors received the minutes of the LQCC meeting of Monday 2 October 2019.</li> <li>• Governors approved the Safeguarding policy.</li> </ul>	
	Staff Governor and Student Governor left the meeting	
	<b><u>**CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**</u></b>	
B19.103 NFP		
B19.104 NFP		
B19.105 NFP		
B19.106 NFP		
B19.107 NFP		
B19.108 NFP		
B19.109 NFP		
B19.110 NFP		
B19.111	<b><u>Determination of Confidential Items</u></b>	
	Minute Nos. B19.92.7, B19.92.15, B19.92.22, B19.103, B19.104, B19.105, B19.106, B19.107, B19.108, B19.109, B19.110	
B19.112	<b><u>Date and time of next meeting</u></b> <b>Monday 9 March 2020, 4.00pm</b>	

Meeting ended at 5.55pm