

SANDWELL COLLEGE

**Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting
held on Monday 12 October 2020 at 4.00pm
Virtual meeting**

Present: K Ellis (Independent) (Chair)
A Banford (Staff – Cadbury)
G Bassi (Independent)
J Francis (Independent)
N Grace (Independent)
S Hackett (Independent)
N Makin (Independent)
P Murphy (Independent)
G Pennington (Principal)
A Taylor (Independent)
J Tew (Independent)
M J Uddin (Independent)

Apologies: None

Also in attendance:

J Bailey Executive Director, Finance & Resources
B Beaty Executive Director, HR and Organisational Development
N Bostan Associate Principal
C Demetrios Associate Principal
P Geary Vice Principal
S Griffiths Executive Director, Projects, Innovation & External Engagement
D Holden Vice Principal
A Sheridan Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Student Services
E Scottford Clerk to the Corporation
J Stevens Executive Director, Quality & Academic Standards, and Principal, Cadbury College

| | | Action |
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| B20.73 | <u>Apologies</u> | |
| | There were no apologies | |
| B20.74 | <u>Declarations of Interest</u> | |
| | AT declared an interest as Chair of the Smethwick Towns Fund. | |
| B20.75 | <u>Minutes of previous meetings</u> | |
| 20.75.1 | Board meeting – 6 July 2020 | |
| | RESOLVED THAT: the minutes of the Board meeting held on 6 July 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record for signing by the Chair. | |
| 20.75.2 | Board meeting – 22 September 2020 (Special) | |
| | RESOLVED THAT: the minutes of the (Special) Board meeting held on 22 September 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record for signing by the Chair, subject to the correction of one minor amendment. | |

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| 20.76 | <u>Matters Arising</u> | |
| 20.76.1 | Board meeting – 6 July 2020 | |
| | There were no matters arising. | |
| 20.76.2 | Board meeting – 22 September 2020 (Special) | |
| | There were no matters arising. | |
| B20.77 | <u>Principal's Report</u> | |
| 20.77.1 | Funding | |
| | Enrolment numbers are higher than ever and currently stand at approximately 6800-6900. | |
| | Success rates were based on Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) therefore it is difficult to make year on year comparisons. Grades have now been verified by the awarding bodies who are satisfied the College applied a robust process. The College has worked hard to support students during this time. The Government's ambition for exams to take place this academic year will be monitored. | |
| 20.77.2 | Covid-19 | |
| | There have been some cases of Covid-19 amongst staff and students but numbers are low at the moment. At 12 October 2020 there was one positive staff case and 4 students. 168 students were self-isolating, a reduction on the previous week. | |
| 20.77.3 | Initiatives | |
| | Governors noted positive progress has been made, update given on the initiatives for West Bromwich, Smethwick and Cradley Heath. | |
| 20.77.4 | Student events and achievements | |
| | Governors received details of recent events and achievements. | |
| | The College hosted Liam Byrne, candidate for the Combined Mayoral Authority. Mr Byrne's father is a former Principal so he has an understanding of and sympathy for the sector. | |
| | There have been a number of funding announcements recently but little money has been received yet. | |
| | The Principal met with, Kissing It Better, an organisation which supports people in a variety of contexts and works with health services. Money was raised for the organisation through the 'Enrolathon'. | |
| | Andy Street, West Midlands Mayor, visited the College in the summer. | |
| 20.77.5 | Financial | |
| | The accounts show a surplus for last year. College finances were judged outstanding by the ESFA. | |

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| | Funding for the extra students will be significant when received. | |
| | Governors noted the current positive picture regarding the College's management of the Covid-19 situation, results and finances. | |
| | Governors were pleased to note the College's support of World Mental Health Day and its areas of focus. | |
| 20.77.6 | Covid update | |
| | Four working groups have been set up: 3 staff and management and one advisory group, to build on earlier successful work since the start of the Covid situation. Information from the groups will be shared. | |
| | Each department has its own tailored plan for how it will deal with confirmed cases of Covid – each department has its own online resources and physical resources. A new high-volume photocopying and document management machine has been purchased which has assisted. | |
| | Governors to be invited to join SLT meetings every 4 weeks – meeting link to be forwarded via the Clerk. | |
| | RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Principal's report. | |
| B20.78 | <u>West Plaza</u> | |
| 20.78.1 | The College has taken a couple of floors in the building to accommodate adult learners and provide extra space for social distancing. This is a sensible arrangement for the future as the lease arrangement does not expose the College to demanding financial or contractual commitments. The area was fitted out quickly and lessons are going well. The arrangement had been well received by teachers and students. | |
| 20.78.2 | Governors sought clarification on whether the College was still using a number of smaller venues around the borough which were used by smaller numbers of students. The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, explained that it was helpful to have extra space close to the College rather than pockets of space in various places. | |
| | AT joined the meeting | |
| 20.78.3 | Governors asked why one floor had been leased for 12 months and one for 3 years. The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, advised that Floor 2 was available immediately and had previously been used by an educational provider so was a straightforward arrangement to lease for 3 years. It became known through the negotiations that Floor 8 was soon to become available. This was taken on a shorter term because it is an additional financial commitment and it is unknown how long the Covid factor and requirement for this additional space will last. | |
| 20.78.4 | Governors referred to funds being made available by government during the Covid situation, and asked if there were any grants or extra finance the College could access to help cover the extra costs incurred because of Covid. | |

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| | <p>The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, explained that there was additional finance to help. Colleges have been asked by the ESFA to log their Covid costs as it is monitoring the situation and will report back to the Government on the financial impact of Covid on the sector. It is hoped the opportunity will then arise to request extra financial support. The Principal has lobbied various parties and the College is doing everything it can to access what extra financial support is available.</p> | |
| 20.78.5 | RESOLVED THAT: Governors received details of West Plaza. | |
| B20.79 | <p>College Projects Report Presented by the Exec Director, Projects, Innovation & External Engagement</p> | |
| 20.79.1 | The project summary table included expectations and timescales. | |
| 20.79.2 | In real terms, the only funding confirmed and received at present is the £1.67 million. | |
| 20.79.3 | The College is working actively to secure the other funding. The feedback from all parties is positive but proposals have not yet been signed off. | |
| 20.79.4 | Governors noted that one of the Board's previous concerns was how the College would manage such a large number of projects but now appreciated that the timescale would evolve with not all projects underway at the same time. | |
| 20.79.5 | Further Education Capital Allocation (FECA) is part of the Government's financial support offered to FE, a £200 million tranche has been released for colleges to spend by March 2021. | |
| 20.79.6 | <p>Governors asked if the project had started at Cadbury.</p> <p>The Exec Director, Projects, Innovation & External Engagement, confirmed that AA Projects had been appointed. There was now the opportunity to redevelop the site as a whole. Areas around the East Block have been identified as suitable for the Phase 1 of the project. AA Projects have to identify if it is deliverable between now and March 2021 when the funding needs to be spent.</p> | |
| 20.79.7 | Governors thanked the Exec Director, Projects, Innovation & External Engagement, for all his hard work in attracting this funding. | |
| 20.79.8 | <p>Governors sought clarification regarding the low/medium likelihood rating.</p> <p>The Exec Director, Projects, Innovation & External Engagement, explained that the College will continue to work on the proposals but the final outcome is out of its control. The likelihood of each project is therefore estimated. The LEP will not know the outcome of the Towns Fund bid until November/December and the final outcome may not be communicated to other parties until January.</p> | |
| 20.79.9 | Governors appreciated the level of detail provided in the papers which outlined the opportunities and aspiration which would arise from this exciting project. | |

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| 20.79.10 | The Exec Director, Projects, Innovation & External Engagement, advised that confirmation of funding from the Government was awaited but the College had a number of suitable projects in the pipeline to attract the funding. | |
| 20.79.11 | Governors were informed that the bid had been voted on and approved at Super Board level in the Towns Fund board structure. | |
| 20.79.12 | Consideration was being given to how best to involve the voice of young people in development of the various projects in the Towns Funds bids, particularly establishing a university campus in the area. This was important as it would help raise children's aspirations. | |
| 20.79.13 | Governors were pleased to note such exciting and ambitious projects which were important to the College's local communities to help enhance their life chances. | |
| 20.79.14 | RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the projects at this stage and approved the College pursuing these funding opportunities in their current planning stages. | |
| B20.80 | <u>Cadbury in the City</u> Presented by the Exec Director, Finance & Resources | |
| 20.80.1 | Since the July Board meeting, plans had evolved and the proposal was now for a totally separate building under the College's control on Bennetts Hill. | |
| 20.80.2 | A number of sites had been explored previously including the Central Library and the Temple Street building. The Temple Street building had subsequently been sold. The College has progressed interest in a new building for Cadbury in the City (CiTC) which is imminent. | |
| 20.80.3 | The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, outlined the advantages of the new building: attractive terms for the lease arrangement had been negotiated; the position of the building in a prominent city centre location would be a great launch pad for CiTC; it is in the heart of the business and professional district which will help raise students' aspirations and encourage them explore the career direction they want to take. This was the original concept for the project. Bennetts Hill would provide a base for the students on work experience. Some classes would be held there to support them to. | |
| 20.80.4 | The building also provides more of a commercial frontage to attract those adults thinking of retrain and career/job changes. The College can support people through their learning journey whatever their age. | |
| 20.80.5 | CiTC is an exciting project which will benefit young people at Cadbury and adults in the city, especially post-Covid. | |
| 20.80.6 | Governors were pleased to hear the College's passion for the project and how far it had developed and believed that the location would be particularly useful to enable collaboration with local professions and businesses in Birmingham. | |
| 20.80.7 | Governors asked how this initiative would be communicated to professional city centre companies, e.g. accountants, lawyers, etc., pointing out it could give the College valuable access to offering training for their companies. The College advised that employers had been approached and a | |

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| | considerable amount of work had been done before lockdown, with communication maintained since then. There had been a high level of interest from some top companies in Birmingham including Eversheds and PWC. | |
| 20.80.8 | The College pointed out the link to T levels. | |
| 20.80.9 | Governors asked if students at all campuses would have access to CiTC or was it just for Cadbury students. The College confirmed it would be available to all students. | |
| 20.80.10 | Governors sought clarification on the timescale for plans to progress. The Exec Director, Finance & Resources, confirmed the College was looking to take on the building from 1 January 2021 in order to make it fit for purpose for opening in March time and recruiting for September 2021, in time for post-Covid progress and development in the city. | |
| 20.80.11 | RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Cadbury in the City report. | |
| B20.81 | <u>Cadbury Science City Proposal</u> Presented by the Exec Director, Finance & Resources | |
| B20.81.1 | The FECA money has been received. Firm plans are in place for the work planned at Cadbury. The exact rooms to be refurbished are to be decided. | |
| B20.81.2 | Governors asked if the College's interest in Terry Duffy House had ended or would it still be interested if a reply was eventually received from the current owners. The College advised that a feasibility study would have to take place at that time. | |
| B20.81.3 | RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the report on the Cadbury Science City proposal. | |
| B20.82 | <u>Provisional Success Rates 2019/20</u> Presented by the VP, Curriculum | |
| 20.82.1 | The VP, Curriculum, explained the difference between an achievement rate and a pass rate. | |
| | JF left the meeting | |
| 20.82.2 | Overall success rates were pleasing with no cause for concern. Only one level had reduced, i.e. L2 16-18, these are forecasted to increase to last year's level. It looks low at the moment as L1 usually take a few short courses to add to their achievements but these were not able to run during lockdown. Students usually achieve a 100% pass rate for these courses. | |
| 20.82.3 | Governors thanked the College for detailed subject breakdown results. The VP, Curriculum, advised that the complete set would be available at the December Board meeting. | |
| 20.82.4 | Governors noted that apprenticeships improved timely, asking if there was any particular reason why apprenticeships improved significantly for timely. | |

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| | The Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Student Services, explained that, over the last 12-18 months, the College had improved its monitoring of students to ensure they were on target, completing modules, and reviews were taking place on a monthly basis with assessors including students at risk. This has helped to ensure timely was higher. This work will continue. | |
| 20.82.5 | Governors referred to apprenticeships and noted a detailed update would be presented to the January LQCC meeting. | |
| 20.82.6 | RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the provisional success rates 2019/20. | |
| B20.83 | <u>Policies/Procedures</u> | |
| | Freedom of Information | |
| | RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Freedom of Information policy. | |
| B20.84 | <u>Minutes of Committee meetings</u> | |
| | LQCC – 30 September 2020 | |
| 20.84.1 | The minutes were to follow. | |
| 20.84.2 | The Committee had received a presentation from the Programme to Employment team. Details of the presentation were outlined. | |
| 20.84.3 | The Committee had also received: the 2019/20 provisional results; annual reports on: student services, student disciplinaries, teaching and learning, complaints and safeguarding; outcomes of visits by external verifiers; the Risk Management report. | |
| 20.84.4 | The Committee had approved the Quality Strategy 2020/21. | |
| 20.84.5 | NM, the new Link Governor for Gatsby, advised he had been in contact with Angela Tombs, Director of Student Services, to take the role forward. | |
| 20.84.6 | RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the verbal debrief of the LQCC meeting on 30 September 2020. | |
| B20.85 | <u>Any Other Business</u> | |
| | There was no other business | |
| | AB left the meeting | |
| | <u>**CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**</u> | |
| B20.86 NFP | | |
| | JU left the meeting | |
| 20.86.12 | | |
| B20.87 NFP | | |

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| B20.88 NFP | | |
| B20.89 | <u>Determination of Confidential Items</u> B20.86, B20.87, B20.88 | |
| B20.90 | <u>Date and time of next meeting</u> Monday 7 December 2020, 4.00pm | |

Meeting ended at 5.30pm

Signed: (Chair)

Date: 7 December 2020