

SANDWELL COLLEGE

**Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting
held on Monday 11 October 2021 at 4.00pm
Cadbury College**

Present:	K Ellis	(Independent)	(Chair)
	A Banford	(Staff Governor – Cadbury)	
	N Grace	(Independent)	
	N Makin	(Independent)	
	G Pennington	(Principal)	
	P Stanaway	(Independent)	
	J Tew	(Independent)	
Apologies:	J Francis	(Independent)	
	S Hackett	(Independent)	
	P Murphy	(Independent)	
	A Sheridan	Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Student Services	
	J Stevens	Executive Director, Quality & Academic Standards, and Principal, Cadbury College	
	A Taylor	(Independent)	
	M J Uddin	(Independent)	
Absent:	G Bassi	(Independent)	

Also in attendance:

J Bailey	Executive Director, Finance & Resources
R Barrett-Price	(via Teams)
B Beaty	Executive Director, HR and Organisational Development
N Bostan	Associate Principal
C Demetrios	Associate Principal
S Griffiths	Director of Strategy and Projects
D Holden	Vice Principal
S Hunt	Managing Director, Employers, Skills and Innovation
J Kewin	Sixth Form Colleges Association (agenda item 3 only)
E Scotford	Clerk to the Corporation (via Teams)
A Tombs	Director of Student Services

		Action
B21.59	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
59.1	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jayne Francis, Simon Hackett, Peta Murphy, Alan Taylor and Jalal Uddin. Apologies were also received from Ann Sheridan and Julia Stevens. Gurvinder Bassi was absent.	
59.2	RESOLVED THAT: apologies were approved by Governors.	
B21.60	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest beyond the standing register of interests.	

B21.61	<u>Presentation: James Kewin, Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA)</u> Via Teams	
21.61.1	The work and membership of the SFCA representing institutions who supported 16-19 year olds was outlined, including support available to Governors and Clerks.	
21.61.2	<p>The SFCA's campaign on the future of BTECs was outlined. 21 organisations, including schools, colleges and universities, a broadchurch of organisations, were now involved. JK thanked Sandwell and Cadbury for their support in the campaign. The campaign was supported by letters from 118 parliamentarians, including 3 former Education Secretaries. The AoC had decided to take a different route.</p> <p>The SFCA CEO had a positive and constructive meeting with the new Secretary of State for Education w/c 4 October 2021 – there was cause for optimism as he was prepared to be led by the evidence on this issue.</p>	
21.61.3	<p>A funding update was given. The Spending Review was due to be presented on 27 October 2021, with predictions around catch-up funding. Pensions contributions were a significant cost, the SFCA had stressed this needed to be permanently covered by the Government and be part of the mainstream funding formula. There were a number of funding inequalities: NI, VAT and other funding.</p> <p>The SFCA had campaigned for a Capital Expansion Fund. Sandwell had bid for this, an announcement of the successful bids was expected w/c 11 October 2021.</p>	
21.61.4	The SFCA had identified that a high number of students were in need of catch-up funding and the best way to address that was to trust institutes and increase funding for them to provide more support but the SFA did not favour extending the school day or summer schools.	
21.61.5	Ofsted had a backlog of inspections as a result of disruption caused by the Covid situation and it was currently not possible to predict which institutions would be inspected although 2-3 colleges had now been inspected.	
21.61.6	There was now a sense of what would happen with 2022 assessment and exams and grade profiles. The SFCA had successfully lobbied for the results day to return to its usual date.	
21.61.7	Governors thanked JK for a very useful presentation and confirmed that a number of the matters were areas of focus for the College and Board.	
21.61.8	<p>Governors asked if the SFCA was in conversation with other organisations, e.g. the AoC.</p> <p>JK confirmed it was in contact with a large number of organisations including the AoC which was the only organisation not involved in the BTEC campaign but the SFCA was supported by the other 21 organisations involved.</p>	
	JK left the meeting	
21.61.9	The meeting adjourned for Governors to take a 10-minute tour of the new facilities.	

B21.62	<u>Minutes of previous meeting – 5 July 2021</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: the minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 July 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record for signing by the Chair, with one minor amendment.	
B21.63	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
21.63.1	Minute No. 56.1.1 – September should read October.	
B21.64	<u>Principal's report</u>	
21.64.1	Enrolment had been successful with approximately 7350 students enrolled, numbers would settle at around 6600. This was a very positive position compared to the funding target of 6300.	
21.64.2	<p>Many Covid restrictions had been removed by the Government. The College had relaxed its own measures: facemask wearing was now optional in social spaces, although people were encouraged to wear them. Temperature machines remained in place. There was an onsite vaccine centre. Cross college groups continue to be in place.</p> <p>There were a number of people off self-isolating but there had been no major increase in positive cases as yet. Teaching was back to face to face in its usual format.</p>	
21.64.3	TAGs results were very strong which was encouraging. The College pointed out that some qualifications had still undergone formal assessments so results were not just based on teacher judgment. This represented a robust set of figures, particularly for A levels and GCSEs.	
21.64.4	Ofsted preparation was a key area of focus, the College's new approach was explained. The process mirrored an Ofsted inspection.	
21.64.5	The difference in DH and JS areas of focus was outlined: DH was concentrating on quality assurance and meeting the requirements of the Education Inspection Framework; JS was focusing on aspects of improvement in the Outstanding College initiative which cascaded good practice throughout the organisation which would be made evident to Ofsted.	
21.64.6	Local developments were outlined. There was a move to reactivate the Black Country Colleges Group as a strand of the West Midlands College Group. A proposition for collaborative work had been submitted by the College.	
21.64.7	Projects were progressing well, including West Bromwich, see also agenda item 7.	
21.64.8	The College's financial position was strong with a surplus made last year.	
21.64.9	Qualification reforms were discussed. The new ministerial team and new Secretary of State for Education were more open to debate on some of the reforms and qualifications.	
21.64.10	The BBC was visiting the College on 12 October 2021 to film an article and meet with students and interview the Principal on the impact of defunding of BTECs on students. Defunding of qualifications was a major issue and would impact negatively on students as it took away	

	<p>student choice. Moving forwards, there would be much more emphasis on employers which would bring its own challenges.</p> <p>Governors supported the College's approach to the BTEC issue and were heartened to hear of the SFCA's campaign and the number of organisations involved.</p>	
21.64.11	The Skills White Paper was an area of focus for Governors and colleges taking into account new local skills plans. The College was focusing on its areas of strength, i.e. investing in facilities and new ideas to work with and bring employers on board.	
21.64.12	<p>Governors pointed out the figures for English and Maths were concerning but improving, National Averages reflected this concern.</p> <p>The College pointed out that individuals had achieved life-changing achievements and qualifications which would increase their opportunities in future. Ofsted and the education sector were querying why more students were not passing but colleges inherited students who had not achieve English and Maths qualifications at school. The College's success rates were well above other colleges thanks to the significant resources it had put in in place.</p>	
21.64.13	<p>The need to ensure Governors were informed and prepared for Ofsted was stressed.</p> <p>The College advised that a session was planned at the beginning of the December Corporation meeting run by a former senior HMI Inspector. A smaller group of Governors, i.e. Committee Chairs, would receive more intensive training. Clerk to note for agenda.</p>	Clerk
21.64.14	The College, via DH and the former senior HMI Inspector, was creating a repository of Ofsted information, including a section for Governors.	
21.64.15	Governors congratulated the College on its recruitment campaign, and were impressed with the visibility of recruitment posters around Cadbury and across Birmingham.	
21.64.16	Discussion took place on the Kickstart scheme which was due to end in March 2022.	
21.64.17	<p>Governors noted that Sandwell was a Kickstart gateway provider and asked what sort of impact Kickstart had made in the community and what sort of impact as the College made with this initiative.</p> <p>The College advised it had been totally committed to the Kickstart scheme and provided good quality opportunities and training for young people and had agreed to extend the Scheme by 3 months. 36 young people had benefited from the Scheme through the College. The College had recruited a number of them via the Scheme. It was a useful platform for qualified young professionals to gain valuable work experience.</p>	
21.64.18	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Principal's report.	
B21.65	College projects report	
	Update given on college projects.	
21.65.1	Cadbury in the City was now largely complete, plans and layout outlined. Sessions had been offered there for the last 2 weeks.	

	Approval of the letting of the top floor of Bennetts Hill to Right Time Recruitment was in its final stages.	
21.65.2	Cadbury Science City – phase 2 – plans included for the new building which would include a digital media flexible working space. Phase 2 was subject to funding. A planning application had been submitted for both sections 2 and 3.	
21.65.3	Governors asked if the plan was still to use Phase 3 as the new entrance to the building. The College was conscious of safeguarding issues so would maintain one secure point of entrance. Phase 3 would be an entrance for out of hours entry, particularly for catering and the restaurant.	
21.65.4	The College had taken advice but planners preferred not to change the traffic flow.	
21.65.5	Governors asked how the College envisaged the commercial kitchen and restaurant working and how it planned to publicise and attract use. Governors challenged what sort of demand there might be in the area for a commercial restaurant. The College advised that the plan was to start small and grow provision. If it proved popular it could be opened in the evenings.	
21.65.6	The mechanical engineering centre, Lower High Street, West Bromwich had progressed through its first phase with Towns Funding secured. The ground floor plan was work in progress. All curriculum areas to be delivered from this building would be included.	
21.65.7	Governors asked if, now the decision had been made on Shaftesbury, Phoenix Street would remain moth-balled. The College advised there were some complications to overcome but it made more sense to develop the Shaftesbury site.	
21.65.8	The Centre for Excellence and Health Centre in Smethwick was likely to come on board in 2025 and was going through the final business planning process. The College would train adults and 16-18 year olds from L1, L2 and L3. Universities would then provide education to take those students from L3 to HE.	
21.65.9	The final business case was being put together for the Cradley Heath centre. Final designs should be known by the December Board meeting. A public consultation would be needed. This site should be complete September 2024.	
21.65.10	RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the College Projects update.	
B21.66	<u>Provisional success rates 2020/21</u>	
21.66.1	The LQCC had discussed in depth the detailed version. The highlighted figures had changed since that meeting and had increased slightly. 16-18 apprenticeships figures were almost complete.	
21.66.2	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received and noted the provisional success rates 2020/21.	

B21.67	<u>Quality and Ofsted update</u>	
21.67.1	The importance of robust challenge by Governors was stressed to evidence appropriate levels of support and challenge to Ofsted.	
21.67.2	The format of the Quality Strategy had been refined and sharpened this year. A robust quality assurance system was in place to ensure students had a high quality learning experience.	
21.67.3	<p>Governors asked if the College ran surveys to gauge the student experience.</p> <p>The College confirmed it did in the form of: induction surveys, overall surveys, focus groups. This year a new methodology was in place for quality assurance, explanation given. The Quality team and Heads of Section talked to students in a number of different forums about their experience. JS's team would ensure staff and students celebrated what was outstanding about the College and cross reference this to all outstanding work on the Ofsted framework.</p>	
21.67.4	High levels of staff development were delivered with a 2-day training session planned w/c 18 October 2021.	
21.67.5	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Quality and Ofsted update and approved the new format Quality Strategy.	
B21.68	<u>Policies/procedures</u>	
21.68.1	<u>Safeguarding</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Safeguarding Policy.	
21.68.2	<u>Complaints Policy and Procedure</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Complaints Policy and Procedure.	
21.68.3	<u>Student Disciplinary Policy</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Student Disciplinary Policy.	
B21.69	<u>Minutes of committee meetings</u>	
21.69.1	<u>LQCC – 29 September 2021</u>	
	The Committee had received and considered: a presentation on safeguarding, particularly peer on peer sexual abuse and sexualised behaviour; the 2002/21 provisional results; annual reports on Student Services and student disciplinary actions; a quality update including the QIP, the T&L report 2020/21 including the Quality Strategy 2021/22; the annual Complaints report; an update on outcomes of visits by external verifiers; the safeguarding annual report; the Risk Register; policies - Complaints, Safeguarding, and Student Disciplinary.	
	Governors noted the need for the Board to monitor employer engagement. The list of employers actively involved with the College on apprenticeships was growing. The Cadbury College Advisory Forum was keen to secure a STEM employer in its membership but had received no responses to date.	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the LQCC minutes.	
B21.70	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
	There was no other business.	

	AB left the meeting	
	<u>CONFIDENTIAL SESSION</u>	
B21.71 NFP		
B21.72 NFP		
B21.73 NFP		
B21.74 NFP		
B21.75	<u>Confidential items</u>	
	Minute Nos. B21.71, B21.72, B21.73, and B21.74.	
B21.76	<u>Date and time of next meeting</u> Monday 6 December 2021, 4.00pm	

Meeting ended at 6.35pm