

SANDWELL COLLEGE

**Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting
held on Monday 6 December 2021 at 4.00pm
Cadbury College**

Present: K Ellis (Independent) (Chair)
A Banford (Staff Governor – Cadbury)
N Grace (Independent)
Z Hussain (Student Governor – Cadbury)
N Makin (Independent)
P Murphy (Independent)
G Pennington (Principal)
O Popek (Student Governor – Sandwell)
P Stanaway (Independent)
A Taylor (Independent)
J Tew (Independent)
M J Uddin (Independent)

Apologies: J Francis (Independent)

Absent: G Bassi (Independent)

Also in attendance:

W Baidoe-Anseh Consultant
J Bailey Executive Director, Finance & Resources
R Barrett-Price Director of Estates Development and Capital Projects
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
E Scottford Clerk to the Corporation
A Sheridan Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Student Services
J Stevens Executive Director, Quality & Academic Standards, and Principal, Cadbury College

		Action
B21.77	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
77.1	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jayne Francis. Gurvinder Bassi was absent.	
77.2	RESOLVED THAT: apologies were approved by Governors .	
B21.78	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest beyond the standing register of interests.	

B21.79	Training session: Ofsted Presentation by William Baidoe-Anseh	
21.79.1	<p>The presentation gave an overview of the EIF and its implications for governance and quality improvement.</p> <p>The presentation covered: the different focus of the EIF; how governance would be inspected; the kind of activities inspectors would undertake during inspection regarding governance; the types of questions inspectors would ask.</p>	
21.79.2	The aspects of effective leadership and management were outlined, with specific focus on the need to demonstrate: the impact of those responsible for governance; how Governors ensured the provider met its statutory responsibilities; Governors understanding of their responsibilities and ensuring that these were carried out appropriately within the provider.	
21.79.3	Meeting statutory responsibilities focused on 3 main points: response to Covid; safeguarding, particularly with regard to mental health and sexual harassment; and equalities duties and responsibilities.	
21.79.4	Governors recognised the characteristics of good governance were: understanding their role and carrying this out effectively by ensuring the provider had a clear vision and strategy and resources were managed well; holding leaders to account for the quality of education and training and helping to ensure continuous and sustainable improvement; ensuring that the provider fulfils its legal duties and responsibilities.	
21.79.5	Governors would demonstrate compliance with their responsibilities by: ensuring the website reflected governance oversight; their activity and engagement in the College; Governors' challenge which would be reflected in the minutes; ensuring they received reports on safeguarding and equalities and responded to them; providing examples of their impact on leaders and managers and thereby on learners; demonstrating how they triangulated the evidence they received.	
21.79.6	<p>Discussion took place on how the evidence could best be triangulated.</p> <p>Options were discussed including: Governors meeting and interacting with students and staff. Link Governor roles would assist. It was noted that the Governors Annual Strategy Day included representations from students and staff. There were Student and Staff Governors on the Board. Student and staff representatives also presented to the LQCC meetings.</p>	
21.79.7	Governors noted that inspectors, as part of looking at the curriculum, would look at how Governors interacted with employers in line with the White Paper responsibilities. This was part of intent, the quality of education judgement.	
	NG and AT arrived	
21.79.8	<p>The College pointed out the difficulties Governors had faced in attending college sites over the past 2 years because of the Covid situation and were concerned that Ofsted should take that into account.</p> <p>Governors' knowledge of the effective way the College had managed the Covid situation would be important. It was hoped that Ofsted would take account of the circumstances of the past 2 years.</p>	

B21.80	<u>Board membership</u>	
21.80.1	Governor resignations	
	<p>RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the following Governor resignations:</p> <p>Simon Hackett w.e.f. 17 October 2021 Peta Murphy w.e.f. 31 December 2021</p> <p>Governors approved that Ken Ellis would temporarily chair the LQCC in lieu of new Governor appointments.</p> <p>Governors approved that John Tew would join the Remuneration Committee to replace Ms Murphy.</p>	
21.80.2	Governor reappointment	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the reappointment of Neil Makin for a new 3-year term of office w.e.f. 10 December 2021.	
21.80.3	Student Governor appointments	
	<p>RESOLVED THAT: Governors confirmed the appointment of:</p> <p>Oskar Popek as Student Governor, Sandwell, until 31 July 2022 Zeeshan Hussain as Student Governor, Cadbury, until 31 July 2022</p>	
B21.81	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 October 2021</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 October 2021 for signing by the Chair.	
B21.82	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
21.82.1	Minute No. B21.64.13 – Ofsted preparation session to take place at the December Corporation meeting – actioned, see agenda item 3.	
21.82.2	Minute No. B21.73.4 – Nova training – update to be given to the next Finance & Strategy Committee meeting – actioned.	
B21.83	<u>Principal's Report</u>	
21.83.1	There were currently 6580 students on role, 400+ more than last year. A further 100+ were likely to be recruited by the year end: a total of 6700 students as per target. This would lead to extra funding for in-year growth.	
21.83.2	Apprenticeships and adult funding was on track. Apprenticeships in particular were starting to show potential from the College's investment in this area. Bennetts Hill was now in operation and was proving helpful in engaging employers.	
21.83.3	Other projects were proceeding well. Local authority sign-off of the West Bromwich project was awaited. Planning for Cadbury Phase 2 had been applied for with extra funding now being received.	
21.83.4	Ofsted preparation and the new approach to Ofsted was a current area of focus. The vital role of Governors in inspection was highlighted.	

21.83.5	The Principal had been active in lobbying on L3 qualifications reforms and was interviewed on national TV to highlight the problems with the current proposals. Meetings had been held with a number of MPs. The challenge continued and some movement in thinking was starting to be seen.	
21.83.6	<p>This term had been one of the most challenging ever experienced. Covid continued to impact. There were fewer precautions because of current government advice which was a concern. The College was trying to encourage students to wear masks but it was a challenge.</p> <p>Students had responded well to being in college, particularly new first year students who were keen to study and enjoyed the social interaction with their peers at college.</p> <p>Governors reflected on the hard work of staff this term. Chair to send email of thanks and appreciation to all staff on behalf of the Board.</p>	Chair
21.83.7	<p>Governors asked, if the College's eventual Ofsted grading was lower than hoped, was that a risk to projects and growth and should Governors be concerned given the costs involved in the projects.</p> <p>The College explained that Ofsted was a qualitative judgement on the quality of education not finance. There was a possibility it could impact on future bids, e.g. some capital bids included caveats which stated that only Good rated providers were allowed to bid, examples given.</p>	
21.83.8	Governors noted that all indications were that the College as 'Midlands College of the Year' was Outstanding and this was supported by a strong evidence base.	
21.83.9	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Principal's report.	
B21.84	<u>College Projects Report</u>	
21.84.1	Cadbury Phase 2 and 3 – the project had been put out to tender for the main contractor week ending 3 December 2021 with a deadline of end January 2022.	
21.84.2	Engineering Centre – the full business case had been approved by the Council and was now due to be approved by Cabinet. There were options in place to ensure the project was completed on budget.	
21.84.3	Centre of Excellence and Cradley Heath Training Centre – paperwork was due to go out this week.	
21.84.4	All projects were on track and on budget at present. There were risks as the construction industry and associated costs were volatile at the moment. Risks would be built into the Risk Register to ensure budgets were adhered to.	
21.84.5	Governors found the RAG rating of the report helpful.	
21.84.6	<p>Governors asked if there was a risk of projects overrunning given construction lead times for products and how that might impact on the costs, the business plan and recruitment.</p> <p>The College acknowledged there were risks and consequently had adjusted its working approach. Services installation were having to be planned much earlier than they would ordinarily be in the process, e.g.</p>	

	increased from 4 weeks to 8-10 weeks. Dates on the dashboard included contingency plans. The College would have to place orders for equipment very early, e.g. catering equipment. However, the projects remained on track currently despite the challenges and the situation continued to be closely monitored.	
21.84.7	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received and monitored the College Projects update.	
B21.85	<u>General update</u>	
	See Principal's report.	
B21.86	<u>Teaching & Learning Report</u>	
21.86.1	Update on TAGs given. Student retention was key to achieving good success rates. An excellent set of results was achieved. The College was well above National Average (NA) on all its measures. A detailed breakdown was included. Governors would have an opportunity to challenge the results in depth at the January LQCC meeting.	
21.86.2	<p>Governors noted there was considerable detail in the information and asked if the areas of significant difference, both positive and negative, could be highlighted to assist Governors to focus on the key areas of concern.</p> <p>The College agreed to RAG rate the information and, at Governors' request, would include commentary and explanation for those areas of concern.</p> <p>Governors recognised that Ofsted would look at trends over the last 3-5 years and the College was on an upward trajectory.</p>	
21.86.3	The College highlighted the mental health short course which had been completed by students as part of induction and had been very well received by students.	
21.86.4	The College took a zero tolerance approach to peer on peer abuse and sexual harassment. This was embedded throughout the organisation.	
21.86.5	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Teaching & Learning report.	
B21.87	<u>Policies</u>	
21.87.1	Public Interest Disclosure Procedure (Whistleblowing)	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Public Interest Disclosure Procedure (Whistleblowing).	
B21.88	<u>Student Union Accounts 2020/21</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the Student Union accounts 2020/21.	
	Staff and Student Governors left the meeting	

	<u>**CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**</u>	
B21.89 NFP		
B21.90 NFP		
21.90.2		
B21.91 NFP		
B21.92 NFP		
B21.93 NFP		
B21.94 NFP		
B21.95 NFP		
B21.96 NFP		
21.96.1		
21.96.2		
B21.97	<u>Audit Committee Terms of Reference</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the Audit Committee Terms of Reference.	
B21.98	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
	<p>Governors asked that their thanks be passed on to staff for their excellent work and commitment in helping the College go from strength to strength.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Governors and the Clerk for all their hard work this year.</p>	
B21.99	<u>Determination of Confidential Items</u>	
	B21.89 - B21.96	
B21.100	<u>Date and time of next meeting</u> Monday 14 March 2022, 4.00pm	

Meeting ended at 6.20pm