



Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Held on 14 December 2021 at 6.15pm via MS Teams/in Oak 122

Present

Gideon Schulman (Chair) (GS)
 Sarbdip Noonan (Principal) (SN)
 Terry Butland (TB)
 Sundeep Bhandari (SB)
 Ramya Vadivel (RV)
 Kate Parsley (KP)
 Simon Radford (SR)
 Ramin Hashemian (RH)
 Divyesh Kamdar (DK)
 Asal Safari (AS)

In Attendance

Bob Pattni (DP Finance and Planning) (BP)
 Joanna Swindells (VP Curriculum and Quality) (JS)
 Robert Heal (Director of Governance) (RoH)

Observers

Terry Butland (TB)

1. Chair's Opening Remarks and report of any Chairs Action taken since the last meeting:

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and last meet of 2021 and thanked everyone for their hard work and keeping the College going during the ongoing pandemic situation, especially the SLT and staff.

A short festive message was shared by both GS and RV.

To advise that Part 2 will be taken later for confidential and legal matters and that regulations guide us that these can only be shared with independent external Governors; and will therefore require some student and staff members will be asked to withdraw.

Papers were taken as read

GS noted that this was the final meeting for our VP Curriculum, JS, who is leaving us at end December. GS wished her well and presented her with a bunch of flowers from the Board. JS thanked everyone for her time and support at the College and was sad to be leaving. All Board members offer their thanks.

JS left the meeting

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from VP, JL, CD, AO, ShR, OC and RB due to exams, work or other commitments.

3. Declaration of Interests

None (Senior Post Holders for Part2)

4i. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021

These were accepted as a true record subject to a single correction highlighting that TB was no longer the Vice Chair. The minutes were signed.

4ii. Action points review

All action points have been completed or included in this meeting.

GS asked that we **remove completed column from mins part of action items to prevent any confusion- Action RoH**

5. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising not noted on the agenda

6i. Principals Report

SN said the College is constantly changing and improving. It is in a brilliant position academically, financially and with its significant capital grant approval. There are no other Colleges working as closely and positively with 4 regulatory bodies in the last term; being the ESFA, GLA, Ofsted and the DfE.

The report is a long report, but it has been a busy term. Highlight key points are: The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) this will be subject of a later agenda item, our Quality Manager, Paul Cannon, is commended for bringing this together. It is an open, honest, self-critical overview of our position, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Overall student achievement continues to increase above national average and meet our target of 91%; a minor date error was noted which should read 2018/19 and not 2028. Along with College growth, this is a fantastic achievement especially under the current climate of Covid, missed learning, low prior attainment and knowledge gaps. The overall achievement rate for 16-18 students has increased by 0.2% from the previous year to 85.7% and is now 2.3% above the national average, and for adult students the achievement rate is above the national rate at 96.4%, some 6.5% above the national average.

These good results are commendable bearing in mind the prior attainment of students joining Stanmore College is lower than for similar colleges. These difficulties are particularly evident in GCSE English and maths, where since 2016/17, the number of students taking GCSE English has increased by 83% and by 198% for GCSE maths. However, the overall high-grade achievement for both maths and English are above the national average, with an improvement in high grades significant, increasing from 26.7% to 38.0% in English, and from 22.2% to 33.2% in maths. But we have much more to do in Functional Skills (FS), with the overall QAR for FS English increased marginally this year but still 25.8% below the national average, and for FS maths it has dropped by 7.6% and is now 17.1%, below the national average. These issues are currently being addressed by managers.

The overall students' retention for all ages has declined by 0.3% but is still 2.9% above the national average. The overall pass rate for 16-18-year-olds has increased by 1.2% and

is now slightly above the national average and for adults it was the same as the previous year and is 2.4% above the national average.

Staff observed lessons achieved 96% are good /outstanding, student engagement is high at 89%, and student achievement is at 91%.

Areas for improvement have been identified through the SAR and have flowed into the annual Teaching, Learning and Assessment Action Plan can be summarised as literacy & numeracy around functional skills. These are:

- To ensure a consistent and innovative approach to technology enhanced learning and teaching.
- To develop learners' independent learning skills to give them more accountability and responsibility for their learning.
- To ensure that there is extensive use of developmental feedback.
- To improve achievement in GCSE and Functional Skills English and maths.
- To enable effective and timely monitoring and tracking of individual targets

One of the largest challenges for the college is target setting for students, tracking progress and setting smart targets. This is coupled with the elements on page 4, relating to CPD of students & staff. Being

- Improving the digital literacy skills of all learners through dedicated training sessions with Study Coaches and an emphasis on the routine use of digital technologies by learners within the majority of lessons.
- Further training in the use of digital tools and the implementation of innovative approaches to 'Blended learning'.
- Improving the proportion of learners who improve a grade in GCSE maths and English, specifically for learners with a starting grade of '2'.
- Improving the qualification pass-rate for 16-18-year-olds in maths and English Functional Skills.
- Achieving consistently high levels of attendance across all elements of the study programme and in all curriculum areas.

Also on Page 4, our financial position against ESFA and GLA contracts. The total income planned value is £12.6m against a contract allocation of £11.1m. The remaining income relates to bursaries, Free School Meals (FSM), Tuition fees etc; and we are in a good position to achieve the total planned income.

Recruitment of 16-19 missed target and is currently fluctuating, but will not hit its target. This will impact 2022/23 contract values. We continue to recruit towards the GLA contract throughout the year. But, the ESFA contract will be reduced next year. There is no [in year] clawback and we will try to mitigate any funding reduction. Efficiency scenarios are:

- Best Case would deliver a £150k surplus
- Worst Case would deliver a £200k deficit
- Likely Case would deliver a £80k surplus.

Regarding the ESFA stance on Apprenticeships, really good news, they have articulated a pathway to reinstate Apprenticeships at the College in the 2022/23 year. Additional GLA funding is being sought through business cases, especially adults learning. We have regular DfE weekly meetings to discuss the capital work scope for the rebuild of the campus. We have also been contacted by Ofsted to take part in T level implementation survey in January, helping DfE develop best practices and areas for improvement. This is an exciting time for the College.

We continue to work in partnership with our parent & carers, with attendance at parents' evenings above target. The Open Evening event was the first face to event since Covid and the College showcased its curriculum offer. A productive event. Due to the safety & wellbeing concerns related to Covid, the student awards is now online with video introductions from the Chair and Principal, and this will take place this week.

Sector updates:

Changes to T Level Policy and the post-16 qualifications review timetable. Until now, T Level students have been required to achieve either a grade 4 in English and maths GCSE or level 2 in functional skills in order to pass their T Level. This exit requirement prevented many young people who currently study other Level 3 courses from starting a T level. The exit requirement has been removed with immediate effect for all T Level students, bringing T Levels into line with other level 3 post-16 programmes, such as A levels

Ofsted announced plans this week for a three-year inspection cycle from September 2022 to July 2025 involving the full inspection of every college and school regardless of their previous grade.

Removal of established Level 3 vocational qualifications in BTEC; still in consultation, but designed to promote T Levels.

The London Skills Improvement Plan which is driven by employers, and takes into account the local social & economic factors and must include climate change.

Regarding Adult Skills reform in funding and accountability. This benefits student, employer, and society; and is outcome focussed.

The Code of Good Governance has been revised and this has already been adopted into the Governors strategic operational plan, there will be further changes as the 16-18 bill is implemented. The most obvious change is the development of a robust environmental and sustainability strategy.

There has been updated careers guidance published by the DfE on CEIAG pathways, that allows external providers to present impartial vocational careers advice.

In addition, the Autumn budget and spending review included elements of education resilience, catch up funding, budget changes and FE skills funding.

GS noted the weekly update to all staff and Governors from SN. GS asked when the staff awards would take place. SN noted this was the next Friday and staff nominate in categories, the most votes are given award. GS approved.

TB noted there are many Government initiatives and funding possibilities, it is tough to keep on top of all these. Also, a well done for excellent academic results and financial position.

No other comments.

GS thanked SN for a comprehensive report

NOTED THE PRINCIPALS REPORT

6ii College Seal Report

RoH highlighted the seal report carried over from the previous meeting. It can be confirmed that there has only been one use in the period, advised to the Board in March 2021, and this was related to a contract between the GLA and the College. Recommendations are to have a register of use record kept with the Seal and a note of authorised users attached to the Seal.

This was approved by the Board.

NOTED THE COLLEGE SEAL REPORT

7i. College Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

SN highlighted that the SAR is co-ordinated from all staff, collated by senior leaders and moderated by C&Q Governors & independent advisers. It is a rigorous and balanced view of the College against the current frameworks. It captures Covid / lockdown actions eg virtual meetings and communications. It is data rich and well evidenced, leading to accurate and robust judgements that can be used to inform. The SAR accurately identifies strengths and areas for improvement and it shows a journey of improvement over last 4 years. All areas are 1, outstanding, except for "Behaviour and Attitudes".

The main subject areas that have improved are:

- Engineering, moved from Grade 3 "Requires Improvement" to "Good".
- GCSE Resits improved from Grade 2 to Grade 1
- Apprenticeships went from Grade 2 to "Outstanding"

The only drop was Pre Access – went down from Grade 2 Good to Requires Improvement

Overall SAR outstanding. The overall grade profile supports the judgement of an outstanding grade. However, if asked "Why is education for young people [only] good", you can see that the areas within that show a great improvement but remain only overall Good. Despite this it is overall Outstanding.

GS noted he was part of the moderation, whilst we can always be critical of ourselves, it is balanced and fair; we should be proud of the work and the achievement.

SN noted we are better than National, but need to focus on functional skills grade 2 to make ourselves even better. GS responded that just because we are better than national is no reason not to continue improving.

TB noted this was discussed at C&Q committee meeting and the committee has recommended it to the Board for approval. It was thoroughly reviewed page by page and by assessed by an external critical eye. SN confirmed the moderation.

TB (on behalf of Chair of C&Q) asked for the Board to endorse it.
All approved.

APPROVED THE COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

7ii. Strategic Operational Plan (SOP)

SN noted this was a progress update for December on actions taken and outcomes. The Report was taken as read. Of note was GCSE Maths & English functional skills results both finished above national average for Entry, Level 1 and Level 2. However, Maths level 1 still needs a little work to improve. The report will be updated monthly.

GS asked are targets realistic? SN yes and these targets take into account the Green Agenda. By end year we will make progress on all areas, whilst currently some are amber, as expected, the RAG rating will improve over time.

GS noted items 2.1 / 2.2 already passed dates, SN we are awaiting final figures to conclude some of these items. Also, in some cases we did not hit the College target, so they remain amber. GS confirmed that some are locked and some are still rolling.

KP noted this was a good overview, easy to follow and very useful.

GS noted this keeps all on track.

NOTED THE STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

8i. Draft minutes & verbal summary of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting on 9 November 2021

JD gave an overview. Noted that TB chaired and Jan learnt from an expert. JD thanked TB for support. Key points were:

- All outstanding actions were completed on time.
- The Committee approved the SAR for recommendation to the board
- Learner Outcomes were reviewed and the College achieved 91% target; and consolidated gains from previous years. Achievement has gone up a small step 0.7% despite the pandemic. Observed a need for functional skills to be targeted, particularly at satellite centres.
- We reviewed the Strategic Operational Plan (as per previous Board agenda item)
- KPI's, Risk register and BCP were reviewed and we had a deep dive on safeguarding risks.

- Teaching & Learning report highlighted a high level of student satisfaction and achievement; and that the priorities developed from the quality assurance activity was:
 - Consistent and innovative approach to technology enhanced learning and teaching
 - Further development of learners independent learning skills
 - Further use of developmental feedback
 - Improve achievement in English GCSE and Functional Skills English & Maths
- We reviewed the CPD, which was well organised and focused.
- HE is also becoming a strong proposition for the College with worksteams being developed with University of West London
- The students gave a good report from the Festival of Governance and good input into student concerns, particularly surrounding the canteen
- We reviewed marketing & enrolment which is down on target and called for a marketing strategy paper for next meeting.
- The various surveys and complaints reports were all good feedback
- And finally, we approved policies of which the, the Board is asked to ratify that approval of the complaints policy.

GS noted it was a very thorough and detailed meeting. GS called for questions , there were none. TB thanked everyone and confirmed it was a pleasure to Chair.

NOTED

REPORT OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

8ii Approval of Complaints Policy

The Board considered the noted changes to the Admissions Policy which the Curriculum & Quality Committee had recommended to the Board for approval.

GS asked if policy users commented on the policy? SN said students were not using the policy.

SN discussed an example where a concern was raised of an abuse of use of the multi faith room. SN explained the misuse and reasons why it was closed, noting that students complained via email rather than follow a Complaints policy. In this instance SN met with them to explain reasoning and added that this term it will remain closed. Noting that there is no formal complaint.

AS questioned the closure of the multi faith room. SN suggested students suggest how they could self-manage to prevent misuse. **AS to take to Student Parliament for suggestions - Action**

TB noted that at the last C&Q meeting, there was an annual report on complaints, it was thorough, and all complaints had been dealt with and resolved. Those who put in complaint were satisfied with the process.

GS noted that policies are fit for purpose only where used.

Policy was approved.

APPROVED THE COLLEGE'S COMPLAINTS POLICY

9i. Draft minutes & verbal summary of the Audit Committee meeting on 23 November 2021

SB reported that the committee had endorsed the auditors annual report and accounts and that it was noted that this was a clean report for the 3rd year. SB commended the executive. The committee noted the Regulatory Self-assessment had no observations and the auditors did not raise any questions on this assessment. The pension report was noted and SR provided a helpful paper on the LGPS [of which he is a committee member]; and the position was positive, but not within colleges ability to effect change. There was an open conversation with the external auditors on the ESFA letter [regarding Government directed external auditor retender policy] The College remains satisfied with the quality of the auditors work and their skills, we also draw comfort from their Partner rotation. Internal audit plan was noted with inclusion of safeguarding and an update on cyber was tabled. The quality of our papers was challenged with auditors and feedback was complimentary, stating they were comprehensive and detailed. Internal Audit was challenged to reflect on Governance and whether they should periodically observe other committees to effectively audit Governance. Management accounts were reviewed with no material adverse comments. The Committee noted KPIs, reviewed Risk Register and sought clarity on Teaching risks for a deep dive.

The Gift, Auditor's appointment and Risk Management policies were reviewed, there was a noted change in threshold of gift policy discussed with Auditors and all policies were approved.

GS noted it was reassuring that clean auditor reports were challenged, and that the Auditors opinion was validated.

TB commented that in the FE emerging issues paper circulated by the committee, on sub-contracting control increased requirements, are we fully compliant? SB responded, we did discuss the issues and it was audited 3 years ago. There are none that cross the threshold for audit. SN added, we are fully compliant, none cross the threshold and we have reduced subcontract to <5% level. BP added, we only have 2 subcontracts now, it was £1.8m but is now £200k. We now control quality of all our sub-contracts through the satellite centres. SN confirmed we are now in predominantly house via direct delivery, meaning we are responsible, there is little subcontract.

SB discussed with BP **plan to have an audit meet at a satellite centre. To be arranged – Action**

NOTED REPORT OF THE AUDIT & ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

9ii Approval of Policies

SB proposed the Risk Management Policy, approved by the Audit Committee. The Board considered the Risk Management Policy and approved.

APPROVED RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

10i. Draft minutes & verbal summary of the Resources Committee meeting on 30 November 2021

KP reported for the Resources Committee:

- All actions were up to date and we noted that an anti-slavery policy was not required as the theme runs through all our policies.
- We selected Shameem Rahman as Chair and Kate Parsley as Vice Chair
- We heard the full year HR report and noted gender equality and ethnicity gaps; we are predominantly female, British, and generally an aging workforce. There is wellbeing training in progress for all staff; and noted difficulties in recruiting engineering & maths tutors.
- The financial statements were thoroughly examined and we noted that there is a strong surplus, all ratios are better than sector benchmark and the auditors have given a clean audit opinion. The balance sheet cash balance is increasing and we are showing strong positive reserves
- We will discuss management letter & letter of representation in Part 2 , but can say the external auditors gave an unqualified opinion that the college was a going concern.
- We noted the ESFA letter to accounting officers of 25 October and the target that Colleges are reminded that they must submit their 2020/21 financial statements and supporting documentation to the ESFA by 31 December 2021.
- We reviewed Simon Radford's Local Government Pension Scheme report; Simon was thanked for the report. The outcome was better than forecast; but shows they have a risk adverse investment strategy and questions about future environmental led investments.

KP commented on LGPS ethical investment policy suggesting that other pensions had been known to invest in Arms and Tobacco industries and this may need to be questioned.

- We reviewed KPI's, Risk register and took a deep dive on a climate risk.
- The Management accounts and monitoring report were early days, healthy and showed positive surplus, but had a shortfall of about £11k surplus. The management team are working to address. A copy was included with the agenda.
- The College sub-contract policy was reviewed. We have reduced the sub contract delivery to 4% and are keeping Hair & Beauty retained as they deliver strong outcomes and quality processes.
- Direct Delivery now has 6 satellite centres and approx. 450 learners. Mainly in sport, football and personal training. Staff are being developed and we are making sure it is a quality and viable delivery model. This will give us an additional opportunity to diversify the curriculum offer in future.
- We overviewed the property matters and discussed progress on the capital build transformation grant. We have since learned we have been successful in negotiating a campus wide re- building plan with the ESFA representative.

Finally, **policies are also recommended for board approval** as per the agenda

GS asked BP to comment. BP added it was a successful year financially, pleasing all round, he noted comments on risk register and that the challenge for pensions was still present. He added that the first quarter was good.

SB noted that KP referred to ethical investment questions and asked for clarification. It was noted that this was not directly related to our Pension scheme but was worthy of review. GS suggested we question the LGPS on their ethical investment policy to complement our green agenda. **SR agreed to ask LGPS about their investments whether there are other categories e.g., tobacco, arms, gambling. - Action**
SB stated we should take a cautious approach as there was a need for a reasonable return and recognise that good investments the fund could underperform to detriment of the investors. BP suggested that they should have an ethical investment strategy.

NOTED REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

10ii Resources Policies

The Board considered the Sub Contract , Exams, First Aid and Pay Policies approved by the committee

All approved

APPROVED SUB CONTRACT, EXAMS, FIRST AID, PAY POLICIES

11i. Chair's Report of the Governance Committee meeting 23 June 2021

GS reported, that we were to interview a candidate, but he failed to attend and has not contacted us since. We approved changes to the Code of Conduct to include attendance, these will be distributed now you have all seen them. We reviewed the Board skills analysis and noted a shortfall in estates and legal skills across the Board. SN suggested that it didn't delve deep enough into Governor skills and proposed that we redefine categories in future. The committee approved the **chairs performance review template, this will be sent out to the Board in March for return and presentation at the July meeting - Action.**

We reviewed the following and recommend that the Board approve.

NOTED REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

11ii Governance Policies

The Board considered the Conflict of Interest, SPH Grievance, Disciplinary and Capability

All approved

APPROVED CONFLICT OF INTEREST, SPH GRIEVANCE, DISCIPLINARY AND CAPABILITY POLICIES

JD gave apologies and left the meeting

12i. Skills for Jobs White paper

RoH explained the interim guidance from DfE on the strengthening of Governance
GS noted we are ahead of every action on the paper, he was proud that we are ahead of game and suggested that there was very little left to do.

SN noted that governors are likely to be made accountable for feedback on interviews as a future change to policy.

NOTED THE SKILLS FOR JOBS WHITE PAPER

12ii. Guidance on External Reviews

RoH explained the guidance on external Governance reviews has been set at 3 years

SN asked who conducts external reviews.

RoH suggested that AoC is our best choice.

TB suggest we do this sooner rather than later as Ofsted might have a benefit from this to support delivering an Outstanding assessment.

GS suggested we plan for Nov 2022 - Action

NOTED THE GUIDANCE FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS

13. Meeting Review and Evaluation

GS ask all to respond to survey monkey, all fill in.

Add survey monkey after each committee meeting.

TB – good, well communicated

DK – appy and good content

SB – good

KP – good /

RV – thumb up

SR - very good,

RH - thank you

OC - good session, concise

BP – robust challenge, good reports

SN - pleased

GS noted we are heading in the right direction

14. Any other Business

No other AOB

15. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 29th March 2021

Meeting ended at 7.40pm

Signed

Chair Original signed

Date 29/3/2022

Action Points

Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline
4ii	Remove Completed column from minute Action Points	RoH	March 22
8ii	students to suggest how they could self-manage the Multi Faith room to prevent misuse. AS to take to Student Parliament for suggestions	AS	March 22
9i	Arrange to have an audit meet at a satellite centre.	RoH / BP	March 22
10i	SR agreed to ask LGPS about their investments whether there are other categories e.g., tobacco, arms, gambling.	SR	March 22
11i	chairs performance review template, to be sent out to the Board in March for return and presentation at the July meeting - Action.	RoH	July 22
12ii	Plan for Governance review by AoC	RoH / GS	Nov 22
	From Confidential Minutes		
20	Pay award in January pay and announce to staff Friday 17 December	BP	Jan 22
	Bonus targets for 21/22 to be proposed for March Board	JL	March 22

