



Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Held on 13 December 2022 at 6.15pm via MS Teams

Present

Gideon Schulman (GS) (Chair)
 Jean Lammiman (JS) (Vice Chair)
 Annette Cast (Principal) (AC)
 Sundeeep Bhandari (Acting Chair) (SB)
 Kate Parsley (KP)
 Terry Butland (TB)
 Amelia President (AP)
 Ramin Hashemian (RH)
 Sweetsan Manijam (SM) Student
 Tianna Smith (TS) Student

In Attendance

Bob Pattni (DP Finance and Planning) (BP)
 Lois Vassell (VP C&Q) (LV)
 Robert Heal (Director of Governance) (RoH)

Observer

Mike Bluestone (Potential Governor)
 Ying Kay (Potential Governor)

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

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and gave a special thank you to both Governors and staff for their work this Autumn term. He welcomed observers, Mike Bluestone and Ying Kay both candidates for membership. He added for the benefit of Staff, Student Governors and Observers that Part 2 covers College legal and confidential items that regulations guide us can only be shared with independent external Governors, at which point they will be asked to leave.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Viresh Paul, Carlton Downie and Ramya Vadivel RV due to work or other commitments.

3. Declaration of Interests

None

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022

These were accepted as a true record and approved.

4ii. Action points review

Action points from the previous meeting were reviewed and noted as complete

5. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising not noted on the agenda

6. The Principals Report

The Principal presented the report. During 2022/23, Stanmore had recruited 1,416 learners against a funding target of 1,482 (16-18 learners), being 66 learners below target, noting that this number is always subject to withdrawals. Comparison was drawn to previous years and a declining trend was identified. This trend was being addressed by an offer of 16-18 enrolment 'Get back on Track' study programmes.

Enrolment, progression, marketing and achievement declined, however we are mindful that previous data was during Covid and Teacher Assessed Grades, and this is first year that many learners have sat an exam. Our result was 84.5%, being 2% under national average. However the London Principals group generally say achievement has dropped back to 2018 data levels.

Our priorities for 22/23.

- The College has introduced a 'Get back on track' programme which has recruited well in the current year with 30 currently enrolled on it. This can be expanded for the next academic year.
- Discussions with the Director of Education at Harrow Council revealed an opportunity to grow SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) provision and this is being addressed with a view to increasing the number of SEND students at the College.
- The Executive Team is working closely with Marketing to increase working relationships with schools by reaching out to Headteachers and Principals in addition to the Marketing Team's communications with careers advisers and heads of year eleven; this has already shown results with several face-to-face meetings with headteachers diarised to discuss ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), ACL (Adult and Community Learning) and other provision. This, in turn, will increase the diversity of the curriculum at the college and make it less dependent on the 16-18 cohort.
- More flexibility in relation to delivery and locations of delivery i.e., planned provision in more schools for the convenience of community members.
- Liaison with external bodies such as The Ukrainian and Eastern European Hub, Community Development, various Consul departments, the Ukrainian Institute, Harrow Law Centre for Immigrants, Citizen's Advice Bureaus, and community groups has led to referrals for ESOL in particular but with the potential for wider provision.
- The College is working more in partnership with other educational establishments including colleges to support unique provision not offered in one establishment but available in another; these improved working relationships will lead to more referrals and more community and student centered provision.
- A review of the curriculum and a more timely business planning process to aid timetabling, staffing, marketing, and preparation of schemes of work.
- A focus on quality and provision of a curriculum that meets the needs of future jobs including Green Skills.
- A full review of the Enrolment process with a view to considering other methods tried and tested elsewhere.

Governors challenged the student enrollment progression data, which had dropped to 68% and enrollment timeline. The Principal responded that progression wasn't done well at the end of last term, and that it is better to enroll before they finish, so next year we will change to enrollment before they break up for summer. The College is changing its recruitment of students strategy, by mentoring staff, culture change, staff training in enrollment practices and ensuring the right learner is on the right course.

Governors sought feedback on why students don't join Stanmore College. The Principal talked of the local competition for 6th Form and explained that we are developing a 14-16 provision vocational pathway to replace A levels, broadening our offer and targeting local employer needs. This was clarified to include a rebranding of the College.

Governors appreciated the in depth report, but requested an appreciation of national issues to be included in future.

Governors noted that a key College strength was ESOL.

Governors clarified understanding of enrolling over summer holidays and impact on staff. The Principal confirmed that other Colleges are doing enrollment over the summer. Clearly staff need a rest and we have a responsibility to staff, so we will be encouraging staff planned absence to be spread across the year and allow for enrollment activity; which Governors supported.

The Governors noted the Principals Report

7i. College Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

The VP Curriculum explained, that after several reviews with both Governors and external verifiers, we have completed and graded all 9 key judgement areas as a Good, with a caveat for one area, HE, where we had 100% achievement. Therefore, we grade ourselves overall as Good. The summary is:

- Learners benefit from a well-planned and designed curriculum implemented through high-quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Behaviour is consistently good in all curriculum areas, although improvements in learner attendance is still required.
- The good quality support for learners has been maintained, as identified by the proportion of learners undertaking enrichment and work placement, leading to very good personal development, and good rates of progression to higher level courses, employment or Higher Education. However, improvements are required in some Centres.
- Leaders and managers have developed a secure learning environment for learners, establishing a shared vision and culture of high expectations.
- The improvements made since the last Ofsted inspection have continued in all areas of management, including the quality of provision and finance.
- High grades (9-4) for English for young learners is good and above national average.
- Safeguarding at the College is effective. The College priorities safeguarding in all its operations.

The external verification had an HMI inspector give opinion and we received good input. We have Joe Pretty, from the FE Commission who is supporting the College with writing the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The VP Curriculum sought Governor approval to publish the SAR to the DfE.

Governors noted that the SAR verification process was a series of good and robust meetings; and that this has been a more thorough SAR preparation for Governors than previous, with greater data and detail included.

Governors asked that we thank the external verifier and approved the SAR for publication

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT TO PUBLISHED TO DfE

7ii. Strategy Update

The Principal talked through a presentation update which overviewed the background and development of the strategic objectives in conjunction with Staff and College SLT; and summarised the new strategic direction in 3 key slides:

To ensure ACCESS

- Provide learners with the skills and qualifications
- To continue to develop the widening participation agenda
- To develop a community college
- To provide strong leadership and governance
- To lead and develop robust local regional and national partnerships
- To maximise the learning and skills landscape

To ensure SUCCESS

- Deliver a demand led curriculum that has at least 80% synergy with local and LEP skills and priorities
- Drive ambitious student centres of quality and learning
- Be a lead provider for 3 curriculum specialisms in North West London
- Establish a new college campus that provides future proof safe inclusive high quality learning environment

To ensure PROGRESS

- To maintain outstanding financial health
- To create lean corporate services allowing resources to be focussed on service delivery
- To develop systematic engagement with employers to meet employer needs and maximise progression into employment
- To become a first-choice employer for post 16 education in North West London

Governors challenged that these points should be developed into key measurable actions. The Principal agreed to develop a **paper on associated KPI's for presentation in March Board – Action Item**

Governors appreciated the development from the Strategy Day and the inclusion of Staff and SLT in its development. The Principal confirmed that the SLT are now more driven to own and deliver on the strategy.

Governors challenged the timeline for implementation. The Principal confirmed that we have yet to develop the KPI's that sit behind this to relate to the white paper first choice and that this would follow.

Governors challenged the strategy development alongside the Capital Build, and the likely impact of the disturbance. The Principal noted that the build was planned over 7 years, however we are looking at mitigation through decamping to speed up the build to 3 years.

The Governors noted the Strategy update.

8i. C&Q Committee Report

The Chair of the C&Q Committee gave a summary of the C&Q meeting noting that all outstanding actions were completed on time. There were reports on:

- HE which highlighted the issues encountered with late validation of courses with UWL, and that we are working on how best to develop this partnership with them.
- Apprenticeships, are 6% over national benchmark, but down on last years results, noting there were end point assessment issues and we will be looking into this further.
- Marketing & Destination. We have more competition from local 6th form and we were then 66 learners below target for enrolment. Plans are in place to reach out to schools earlier and the marketing budget is being well utilised.
- Video from Student Governors who will talk further on this on the next agenda item.
- KPI's & Risk register were reviewed.
- Updated Curriculum Plan noting that all the changes presented minimal risk and gave a good platform to go forward.
- The SAR was reviewed, and we noted an overall Good grading. It has since gone on to have external validation and is presented in the agenda for approval.
- The Teaching & Learning report highlighted a high level of student satisfaction and achievement; and that the key strengths were:
 - 95% of lessons meeting expectation
 - 89% student satisfaction
 - 91% lessons well planned
- And we have now purchased software to measure progress and value add.
- We reviewed the Staff CPD, which was well organised and focused; and demonstrated that everyone is a learner.
- The various surveys and complaints reports were all good feedback.
- We noted the revised Ofsted framework changes.
- And finally, we tasked the executive to develop an environmental sustainability plan as part of our Outstanding Governance Plan.

Governors asked about the apprenticeship program. The principal responded that we will work with employers to assess need and maximise funding. We have had issues with Apprenticeships, and it is a challenging environment at the moment. We want to keep apprenticeships on the College portfolio, but be demand led. So, it is not high on the agenda.

The governors supported this and a desire to re-focus on T levels and create alternative routes to university.

The Governors note the C&Q Committee Report

9. Student Report

Student Governors verbally reported that they attended the AoC festival of Governance, it was a good experience, very enjoyable, and they met many college student governors and sector senior leaders. Particularly learning skills on chairing meetings, managing issues, building agendas and how meetings run. From the promotional stands they recommend the dyslexia poster and tuition support for GCSE retakes. (Leaflets were handed to the Principal). The principal responded that both ideas are great and we are very keen to support them.

The Student Video was overviewed and key messages regarding college rules implementation and consideration of fairness, were expanded upon. The Principal responded that this was behaviour led and that they had seen a significant improvement from the rule introduction. In respect of fairness, tutors have discretion for those with genuine needs.

Student governors challenged the mandatory rules for tutorials and ability to undertake college work during them. The Principal explained the revisions to the Tutorial program by the Head of HE and the Tutorial team and noted the Students points.

Student Governors questioned the use of agency staff and their effectiveness. The Principal explained that in an average college the staffing ratio to income is 70%, our staff ratio is >70% which is not good, meaning we are effectively overstaffed. The use of agency staff is often the result of unplanned staff absence which is being managed. Students were assured that this matter was being dealt with and that a cover policy existed.

The Chair thanked the Student Governors and appreciate their strong character. This was echoed by the Principal as good positive and constructive feedback. Noting, we will review further with you offline.

The Governors noted the Student Report

10. Audit Committee Report

The Audit Committee Chair noted that this is the 4th year we have seen another set of clean accounts. The college financial assessment is outstanding and we recommend the financial statement to the Board. (Approval in Part 2). The Committee strongly highlight satellites and direct delivery for review as part of the strategy development of the College. The committee reviewed the cyber action plan and had good assurance on safeguarding. Of note was the governors attendance which is at the lowest point we have seen. We should also not underestimate the government involvement following the ONS announcement and the challenges on the sector. Finally, well done to the College on the latest outstanding accounts.

Governors challenged the FE emerging issues paper highlighting that the ESFA may need governance reviews every 3 years. The Director of governance explained that we have an internal audit scheduled in January and a full review pending.

The Governors noted the Audit Committee Report

10ii Policies recommended from the Audit Committee

Risk Management Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Governors reviewed and approved all policies

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

POLICIES

11i. Resources Committee Report

The Chair gave the report on behalf of the Resources Chair. All actions were up to date. The Committee selected VP as Chair and GS as Vice Chair. The full year HR report showed that sickness has increased and an action plan was requested of the HR Director. The financial statements were thoroughly examined and it was noted that turnover has increased, it matches previously reported outcomes and that Audit Committee had approved them. The management letter & letter of representation are dealt with in Part 2, but the external auditors gave an unqualified opinion that the college was a going concern. It was noted the ESFA Financial Assessment was recognised as Outstanding for last year and forecast as outstanding for next year. The KPI's and Risk Register were reviewed. The monthly management accounts and monitoring report are only for the last month, but healthy and showing a surplus, with a small forecast full year surplus. The Treasury Management policy was approved and allows for investment in the Barclays fixed deposit treasury market. Bank loans were reviewed and there is a consideration to repay loans in future. The College sub-contract policy was reviewed and we have asked for a strategic paper on direct delivery at the next meeting. We overviewed the property matters and the bidders day; and noted we have been awarded a further GFE Grant for Green Skills.

The Governors noted the Resources Committee Report

11ii. Policies from Resources Committee

Sub-Contract Policy

DBS Policy

H&S Policy

Governors reviewed and approved all policies

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

POLICIES

12. Verbal summary of the Governance Committee meeting

The Chair of the Governance Committee reported that the interview of 4 candidates and that 3 had been brought forward for approval for Board membership.

- Mike Bluestone – Exec Director of Corp Security proposed to be a co-opted Resources committee member
- Ying Kay – Chief Financial Officer, Richmond American University
- Kevin Moir - Head of Strategic Portfolio & Projects, London Borough of Enfield

In addition, the College has been working with Deputy FE commissioner to recruit 2 further governors via Peridot; and been appointed a National Leader of Governance (NLG), Rob Lawson to support the Chair.

The committee noted the Office of National Statistics Review of the FE Sector and the announcement that it has reclassified colleges into the Central Government Sector and the impact this will have working towards the managing public money regulations.

The committee will work on their Red objective in the Outstanding Governance Plan, to create a Board Succession Plan which includes new Governors and committee chairs.

Governors questioned the ONS letter regarding its impact on **insurance for Governors against actions they take and any revision to the rules on setting senior staff pay. ACTION ITEM**

The Governors noted the Governance Committee Report

Observers were asked to retire.

The Board was then asked to approve the appointment of:

Mike Bluestone as co-opted Governor to Resources Committee

Ying Kay as Board member

Kevin Moir as Board member

**RECOMMENDATION
APPROVED
BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

13. Meeting Review and Evaluation

TB, good meeting, biggest online

SB, all good

KP, all good. Liked the student governors input

AP, Good

BP, All good

LV, Good

JL, thank you to AC, good context and strategy

RH, thank AC

TS, good meeting

SM, thank you for the feedback
 MB, good roadmap
 YK, thank invite, a very full agenda
 AC, good meeting

14. Any other Business

No other business

15. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 28 March 2023

Meeting ended at 8:05 pm

Signed

Chair

Date

**Staff and Students were asked to retire and the meeting continued with Part 2
 Confidential**

Action Points arising

| Item | Action | Responsible | Deadline |
|-------------|--|--------------------|-----------------|
| 7ii | Strategy paper developed further with associated KPI's | AC | March 2023 |
| 12 | Governor Insurance and senior pay setting under revised ONS regulations | BP | March 2023 |
| 20 | Advise HR of College pay award £500 non-consolidated for all staff (inc SPH) | RoH | Dec 2022 |