

Minutes of the Corporation Special Meeting

held on Saturday 14 January 2017 at Aston University Conference Centre

Present Ian Jewkes (*Chair*), Helene Jones (*Vice Chair*), Joanne Williams (*Interim Principal*), Karen Cocker, Jamie Fox, Mark Johnson, Allison Matthews, Harvey Owen

In attendance Jacquie Carman (*Director of Finance and Corporate Services*)
Julia Stevens (*Organisational Development Director*)
Louise Craddock (*Faculty Director, A Levels*)
Julie Edwards (*Faculty Director, Business and Professional Services*)
Sarah Dobson (*Faculty Director, Creative Arts*)
Elizabeth Skipper (*Faculty Director, Health and Science*)
Daniel Grant (*Dan Grant Associates*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Jane Chan, Peter Mitchell, Geoffrey Elliott and Monika Zilionyte.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Strategic Plan 2015–2020: Progress and Annual Plan 2016/2017

Ian Jewkes set the scene for the Corporation's engagement in reviewing the Strategic programme and development. He stressed that the College should continue to strive to be an 'outstanding' provider, with inclusivity not an obstacle. The focus was on having the strategic aims in place to support the students, their progression and in adding value.

There had been considerable change across the previous year. However, a stable platform was in place from which to continue.

The Corporation needed to further consider Apprenticeships and the political landscape, be more aware of Multi Academy Trust development and consider if changes needed to be made. In all considerations governors needed to ask 'what is the benefit to students?'

Programme and Planned Outcomes

Joanne Williams outlined the shape of the planned programme highlighting the need to preserve what is good at the College, while continuing to move forward and make progress. Joanne Williams recognised that Halesowen College fosters a good culture which should be better demonstrated and celebrated. Recent direct action taken by the senior management team in talking to students on attendance for English and Maths lessons had yielded positive results and illustrated the power of rewards. Students were outstanding and this must remain at the heart of the College. Furthermore, being 'outstanding' did not conflict with continuing to improve.

Progress and Annual Plan

Groups A and B reviewed progress against the Core and Enabling Strategies for 2016/17. See Annexe A.

Ian Jewkes concluded that moving forward governors would like to see more evidence underneath progress and performance management reported, particularly the impact on students. Members discussed that this involved hard measurement, however it was recognised that in some instances this would be less quantifiable.

Factors Influencing Strategies

Joanne Williams gave a PowerPoint presentation on *The Curriculum and Policy Agenda* covering key headings of Qualification Reform, The Skills Plan and Apprenticeships.

Under Qualification Reform members were updated on GCSE, A Level and Skills qualification (which included the timetable for A and AS Level changes) that affect the students and the timing and grading for new GCSEs.

Ian Jewkes asked if staff were comfortable with the new A Level approach. Joanne Williams outlined the continued delivery of AS level and staff adaptation to changed delivery regarding the two year linear A Level.

Karen Cocker asked about staff confidence in preparing for new exams. Louise Craddock explained the use of sample papers and staff contribution to A level reform steering groups.

Jamie Fox explained that schools had been using an exams modelling system through PiXL.

Action 3a	It was agreed that Joanne Williams would supply an update on the PiXL resources for the 1 March 2017 meeting of the Corporation.
------------------	--

Ian Jewkes asked about language course offer and collaboration with other providers. Joanne Williams responded that the right course offer was being considered.

Members also asked a number of questions about the new GCSE, particularly clarity on what constituted a pass and where students would be required to do a further course and resits at College. Joanne Williams noted that as much preparation as possible was being undertaken, however, uncertainty remained.

Joanne Williams explained the basis of The Skills Plan, how technical and academic course offer would work, the fifteen Technical Education routes and Apprenticeships which were being developed from the current base.

Members noted the range of new apprenticeships planned for delivery in September 2017 in addition to the current offer. Other possible areas, opportunities and threats to consider were also provided. Health and Social Care and Nursing were highlighted as potential areas for development.

Karen Cocker asked how proactive the College was being on developing Apprenticeships. Joanne Williams explained the work of the lead member of staff regarding the Apprenticeship levy and promoting apprenticeships to

companies. Jacquie Carman noted potential for staff development and succession work in this area to mitigate risk.

Jacquie Carman gave a PowerPoint presentation on *Economic and Political Factors* emphasising a lack of detail and continued uncertainty. The College retained its 'Outstanding' financial health grade. In light of governor questioning, it was appropriate to consider if the financial strategy remained the best approach to support College's objectives and the best possible outcomes for students.

Data on local, regional and national unemployment, qualification and job type was imparted, with a notable high skills gap in IT and Science.

Jacquie Carman recapped on the skills agenda, funding provision, cost pressures including pensions and National Living Wage and noted that the College marketing must be proactive to secure student numbers. The importance of staff skills remaining relevant was also highlighted.

Potential change of direction under Apprenticeships and Traineeships and modes of delivery was provided for consideration.

Jacquie Carman also outlined the work of South Black Country Education.

Mark Johnson asked about collaboration on course delivery, and Ian Jewkes responded that the Black Country Colleges Consortium included providers who were further ahead with Apprenticeship delivery. Joanne Williams also noted the apprenticeship delivery through schools. Jamie Fox responded that these were limited by work placements in some curriculum areas.

Jacquie Carman also responded that data on areas of employment need was available and Dan Grant emphasised that use of labour market information was critical.

Jacquie Carman provided details in looking forward with regards to Apprenticeships, funding across all areas and relationships with employers before noting potential further actions to take these forward.

Action 3b Joanne Williams agreed to provide an update for members at the 1 March 2017 meeting, addressing MATs and Shared Services.

4 Strategic Plan Priorities and Annual Plan 2017–2018

Strategic Priorities for College

Members of staff left the meeting.

4a Update on the Appointment of a Principal

Jennifer Sunter outlined the basis for the previous process being halted. Timescales for the process to commence again were outlined. Members discussed the difficulty of timescales in relation to contracts and periods of notice.

Action 4a In considering the proposed planning and ongoing use of contracted consultants, members agreed that detailed arrangements be provided for approval on 28 January 2017.

4b Investment and Property Strategy Update

Jacquie Carman outlined the College progress with plans for Block 8 additional social space. Jacquie Carman also reported on budget, planning and a preferred option for redeveloping the Whittingham Road Frontage.

Architects drawings were shared with members.

Campus frontage changes were planned to improve student safety regarding access and egress onto the site, to relieve congestion particularly around students getting on and off coaches, to provide clearer signage and increased parking.

Plans had been shared with the Whittingham Road Action Group and a local Councillor. It remained important to stress that further work under both schemes was not about College expansion.

Planning advice had been received regarding separate applications to address the required stages of work. Circulating a leaflet and hosting a website regarding changes had been advised.

With regards to local residents' concerns it was noted that the parking bays recently provided on Whittingham Road were to be taken away, that the College coaches were being moved on more quickly and that action was being taken against students who were parking improperly.

Jacquie Carman emphasised that the projects were time sensitive and careful management was required. An elemental cost breakdown was provided which would be the core of the 2017/2018 Capital Programme.

Harvey Owen asked about assurance on affordability and Jacquie Carman explained that the schemes were budgeted, however, an element of risk regarding professional fees incurred for tender and planning consent should consent not be received, should be recognised.

The Corporation resolved to proceed with the plans for Block 8 and the Frontage to Halesowen College, including the new reception. This included progressing tender issue drawings and conducting a competitive tender whilst applying for planning consent

4c Formal Agreement to execute a charge over deposit agreement in favour of Lloyds Bank plc

The Chairman reported to the meeting that the College had agreed with Lloyds Bank Plc ("the Bank") in October 2015 that the Bank would issue a guarantee/ performance bond (the "Guarantee") in favour of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council (the "Council") in the sum of £1,059,000 to cover the College's performance obligations in respect of a grant agreement dated 15 June 2015 and made between the Council and the College for a Black Country Growth Deal project. The Guarantee had been issued by the Bank on 5 October 2015. The Bank had agreed to issue the Guarantee subject to the College granting a counter indemnity in favour of the Bank and in addition depositing with the Bank in a blocked deposit account the sum of £1,059,000 (the "Deposit"). The Deposit was charged to the Bank as security for the College's liabilities pursuant to the

counter indemnity referred to above by virtue of a charge over deposit agreement dated 2 October 2015 (the “Existing Charge”).

The Bank had now agreed to increase its liability pursuant to the Guarantee to the sum of £1,759,000 and would issue a letter of amendment to that effect to the Council. This agreement was subject to the College depositing into the blocked deposit account further sums of £700,000 to increase the Deposit to £1,759,000 (the “Increased Deposit”) as security for the College’s liabilities pursuant to the counter indemnity referred to above.

Due to the wording contained in the Existing Charge the Increased Deposit has to be charged to the Bank by the College executing a new charge over deposit agreement in its favour.

Security

The form of charge over deposit agreement was tabled at the meeting (the “Charge”).

The Chairman reported that this created a charge over the Increased Deposit in favour of the Bank and that the Charge had to be executed as a deed by the College.

The form of charge also included a negative pledge from the College confirming that the College will not create or permit to subsist security over the Increased Deposit and will not dispose of the Increased Deposit.

Resolutions

1. The Governing Body confirmed its approval to the College creating the charge over the Increased Deposit and executing the form of Charge.
2. Any two of the Principal, the Chief Executive, the Chair of the Corporation and the Vice Chair (or any other Officer or Governor as may be authorised by a resolution of the Governing Body of the College) (“the Authorised Signatories”) be authorised on behalf of the College to:
 - a) agree any amendments to the Charge; and
 - b) to execute and deliver on behalf of the College any other document, deed, notice, letter or other communications required in connection with the Charge, including without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to do all other things which any of the Authorised Signatories deem to be necessary in connection with the Guarantee and Charge.
 - c) cause the common seal of the College to be affixed to the Charge and that the Principal and any other member of the Governing Body be authorised to witness the affixing of the College’s seal to any such document.

4d Annual Plan 2017/2018 Priorities

Groups C and D reviewed priorities against the Core and Enabling Strategies for the Annual Plan 2017/18. See Annexe B.

4e Summary – Moving Forward Reflections

Daniel Grant provided a summary of his reflections:

1. The current period was one of significant change in leadership, funding and curriculum. Going forward it was important to record in detail the decisions made.
2. Developments should be sustainable with focus also on sustainable succession planning.
3. A glossary of terms should be provided for governors.
4. Governor prompt cards to focus on key questions for challenge in meetings, for example the impact on the most vulnerable learners could be provided.
5. A greater understanding of what 'outstanding' is under the Common Inspection Framework should be developed.
6. The College's good work and success narrative should be more visible. The evidence base to illustrate work being done should be increased.
7. Celebration of success should be continued and this focus kept to maintain motivation as governors.
8. In reviewing the Annual Plan governors should ensure it contains clear evaluation of progress against targets, including why and how.
9. Clearer and more visible links between LEP objectives and Strategic Planning need to be made.
10. PiXL benchmarking could be investigated.
11. Apprenticeship opportunities in light of sufficiency of resources and speed of development need to be considered.
12. Early discussion on budget and outcomes for learners should take place.
13. Being clear about governor overview and attention to progression of the most vulnerable learners which is done well at an operational level is needed. Governors should continually ask about the impact on these learners.
14. Use of straplines in forms of performance, planning and progress could be pursued.
15. Commitment in moving from good to outstanding needs to be demonstrated. One action plan which illustrates this trajectory and draws everything together would be beneficial.
16. The College should embrace the value of seeking wider accreditation through awards and competitions.

Mark Johnson asked about risk, if striving for 'outstanding' could be a distraction. Dan Grant responded that the College was moving forward in and upward trajectory and that this would not compromise the current position. It was,

however, important that the current period of changes not be allowed to be destabilising. He emphasised that the endeavour remained to always keep the learner at the heart.

Ian Jewkes noted that there continued to be work on governance to move forward.

Governors were reminded about the opportunity to undertake Learning Walks which would be organised through the Clerk.

Ian Jewkes and Joanne Williams thanked staff, governors and guests for their time and commitment in participating in the strategic planning meetings.

6 Date of next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Corporation is the Annual General Meeting on Saturday 28 January 2017 at 10am.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm

Actions from meetings			
Ref	Agenda item and action	Date/item for review	Reported by
Corporation Meeting 23 March 2016			
10.3a	Budgeting Policy It was agreed that a key review report would be provided for the Corporation in August or September 2016. Revised date.	Aug/Sept 2016 30 Nov 2016	JCa
Corporation Meeting 28 September 2016			
8.1 8.1a	Report from Faculty Director - A Level Director, Louise Craddock Joanne Williams agreed that results to be provided by Faculty Area would provide a different view.	Sept 2017	JWi
Corporation Meeting 9 November 2016			
6.3 6.3a	Staff and Accommodation It was agreed that summary evaluation of teaching room assessments would be provided as part of the Estates Plan for the Corporation meeting on 30 November 2016.	30 Nov 2016	JCa
Corporation Meeting 30 November 2016			
4.1 4.1.1a	Recommendations on Appointments It was agreed that the Search and Governance consider the meeting structure going forward.	9 Feb 2017	JSu
6.1a	College Self-Assessment Report and Development Plan It was agreed that more detail about grades for pass and fail and value added would enhance governor understanding.		JWi
Corporation Meeting 14 January 2017			
3a	Strategic Plan 2015–2020: Progress and Annual Plan 2016/2017 It was agreed that Joanne Williams would supply an update on the PiXL resources for the 1 March 2017 meeting of the Corporation.	1 March 2017	JWi
3b	Joanne Williams agreed to provide an update for members at the 1 March 2017 meeting, addressing MAT and Shared Services.	1 March 2017	JWi
4a	Strategic Plan Priorities and Annual Plan 2017–2018 In considering the proposed planning and ongoing use of contracted consultants, members agreed that detailed arrangements be provided for approval on January 28th 2017.	28 January 2017	JSu

Halesowen College Corporation Residential 2016

Progress and Annual Plan - Notes

Group B looked at **Core Strategies**

- **Apprenticeships:** increased focus on tailored offer for employer need, increased understanding of what students were seeking and marketing courses accordingly. Concentration on progression opportunities.
- **HE:** maximising opportunities and pathways and potentially widening the audience.
- **Ofsted:** promote the inclusive model, provision of in year data relating to the overall progress of students, mock exam and resit results.
- **Student assessment and tracking:** a governor session using STaRS and extension of student destination tracking by developing 'keep in touch mechanisms'.
- **English and maths:** to increase engagement on expectations and commitment at Admissions stage. Greater clarity on what grades 9-1 will be.
- **Safeguarding:** Continued feedback from student focus groups and action plans.
- **MAT:** reporting on the impact of MAT on learners.
- **HE Engagement:** LEP engagement and packaging what employers want, providing case studies and collaborating with other providers regarding areas of specialism.

Group A looked at **Enabling Strategies**

- **50th Anniversary Celebration:** further promotion and external engagement opportunities with the community, such as change of approach on Open Days.
- **Relationships with Schools:** continued monitoring to understand the changing landscape of how and when students apply and what makes them want to come to Halesowen College.
- **New Performance and Access Centres:** Block 3 Access Centre is being promoted in January 2017.
- **Workforce Development:** increased range with outcomes around College, Governors to be provided with examples of Staff Development outcomes across the range of provision.
- **Management Development:** noted a focus on progression planning is needed.
- **Shared Services:** targets and measure to make clear what the benefits of shared services are.
- **Investment and Property Strategy:** could the centre of Halesowen be used more? Development of a Farm site?
- **Professional Services:** efficiency savings.

Halesowen College Corporation Residential 2017

Annual Plan 2017/18 Priorities - Notes

Group C looked at **Core Strategies**

That delivering the core objective of delivering the most extensive range of high quality learning and progression opportunities should no longer stipulate the 14-25 age range.

- **Curriculum changes:** that curriculum strategy is subject to continuous review.
- **Quality:** that focus on Gifted and Talented students not be detrimental to other students.
- **English and maths:** that the strategy be strengthened with regard to literacy and numeracy with expectation and support to embed this in lessons.
- **Learning and Pastoral Support:** that these be dealt with separately.
- **Multi Academy Trust:** that focus be on impact on students.
- **Community Engagement:** that this be extended.

Group D looked at **Enabling Strategies**

Pursuit of Excellence: move towards 'outstanding', state that this is what we want to achieve and action plan to do so.

- **Skills Development:** not be complacent about staff up-skilling and having a management succession plan.
- **HR Infrastructure:** use of myhalesowen and managers having better sight and overview of the staff they manage.
- **Investment and Property Strategy:** focus on making the College work better.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** focus on making more accessible for students and staff to use and get maximum benefit.

Corporation Residential Notes

Friday 13 January 2017

Present Ian Jewkes (*Chair*), Helene Jones (*Vice Chair*), Joanne Williams (*Interim Principal*), Karen Cocker, Jamie Fox, Mark Johnson, Allison Matthews, Harvey Owen

In attendance Jacque Carman (*Director of Finance and Corporate Services*)
Julia Stevens (*Organisational Development Director*)
Louise Craddock (*Faculty Director, A Levels*)
Julie Edwards (*Faculty Director, Business and Professional Services*)
Sarah Dobson (*Faculty Director, Creative Arts*)
Elizabeth Skipper (*Faculty Director, Health and Science*)
Daniel Grant (*Dan Grant Associates*)
Priscilla McGuire (*Dan Grant Associates*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

Apologies were received from Jane Chan, Peter Mitchell, Geoffrey Elliott and Monika Zilionyte.

Introduction and Welcome

Ian Jewkes welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Dan Grant outlined the plan for the meeting incorporating an update on the revised Common Inspection Framework, its application through short and long inspections, and requirements for governance.

In considering inspection the focus on a positive impact for the learner and learner progress was the focus. Performance management remained key.

As a 'good' College, it was noted that there would be an expectation of striving for excellence.

The focus remained on the underlying question of whether an inclusive College could be an 'outstanding' College. To explore this the governors participated in a role play inspection interview.

Members asked a range of questions about governor interviews, effective governance and being 'outstanding'.

The College culture and practice of inclusivity, which was visible to anyone visiting the College, was noted of great value and as something to be preserved going forward.

The session closed at 7.30pm.