

Governors Present: Gill Slater (Chair)
Matthew Adams
James Adnett
Paul Cumming
Sean Devlin
Phil Douce
Tom Gregory

Beth Hallam
Sheena Payne-Lunn
Wendy Pickess
Ed Senior
Caroline Shaw
Paul Tamas

In Attendance: Jane Jenkins (Vice Principal)
Luke Moseley (Vice Principal)
Jo Payne (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)
Ken Hopkins (Trust Chair)

The Chair of the Trust thanked the Chair of the Local Governing Body for her leadership and contribution to the success of the College over the past 14 years. These sentiments were echoed by the Principal who thanked the Chair for her supportive challenge.

1. Apologies: Alex Gwinn, Sam Lifford.

2. Opening Standing Items

- (i) Sheena Payne-Lunn declared that she worked for the planning department of Worcester City Council and, therefore, declared an interest in the South Worcestershire Development Plan.
- (ii) Those parts of the agenda, which referred to individual students or members of staff were identified as confidential to the Local Governing Body.
- (iii) An item of business relating to site security was identified as urgent.

3. Governor Training – ‘Curriculum Changes – Introducing T Levels’

The Vice Principal (Curriculum) delivered a presentation to governors on the background to T Levels, the current College provision and considerations for the future. The following points were noted:

- Given the money the government had spent on T Levels, it was unlikely that there would be a u-turn although it is not yet known which applied courses will be defunded;
- T Levels were two year level 3 qualifications with a requirement for significant hours in a relevant workplace setting;
- The College will introduce its first T Level in Education and Childcare in September 2023. The College already has teaching expertise and existing links with employers to ensure the requirements of this qualification can be met. This course will replace the existing Children’s Play, Learning and Development course;
- It is intended to deliver the Health T Level from 2024, however, this required a specialist clinical skills room so the College needed to review whether it is possible to respond to this requirement. Similarly, the introduction of other T Levels required a review of teaching expertise, resources, facilities and whether there are sufficient links with employers to be able to provide the placement hours;

- The introduction of other T Levels would need to the College to decide whether these were offered alongside existing Applied courses e.g. Health and Social Care. Given how hard T Levels are in terms of demanding content, it will not suit all young people currently enrolled on the applied course who are historically very successful;
- The College entry requirements for the Education and Childcare T Level is that students must have Maths and English GCSEs at grade 4 or above on entry;
- The SFCA continues to lead a campaign around protecting student choice and are lobbying and working with awarding bodies to get the government to reconsider defunding applied courses;
- Some providers had experienced significant teething problems with the rollout of T Levels so it is important to reflect on lessons learnt.

In response to questions it was noted that:

- It was not yet clear how universities would view T Level qualifications and information on the destinations of students completing a T Level qualification nationally has not yet been shared;
- The requirement for Maths and English GCSE passes was not a change from the current CPLD as students require these qualifications to achieve their licence to practice.

Governors **noted** the information provided and thanked the Vice Principal (Curriculum) for an information presentation.

4. **Minutes**

(i) Minutes of the meeting on 14th September 2022

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** as an accurate record and the action points updated.

(ii) Minutes of the Student Exclusion Appeal Panel

The Clerk presented the public minutes of the SEAP and advised that no recommendations were made to the Local Governing Body on this occasion. The Local Governing Body **received** the minutes.

5. **Management & Strategic**

(i) Principal's Update Report

The Principal presented his report and the following key points were noted:

- The NEU are planning strike action for teaching staff on 30th November. The action is in response to a dispute with the Secretary of State rather than the College. Whilst the frustration of colleagues was legitimate given twelve years of below inflation pay settlements, it is disappointing that, once again, students will face disruption to their learning. It was also disappointing that the NEU action is only in sixth form colleges which negates the potential impact and also singles out the College;
- The College will remain open as usual on 30th November with senior staff managing supervision of students where teachers are striking. Given that teachers do not have to let the College know whether they are taking strike action, it was not possible to quantify the scale of the disruption;
- The new Worcester high school would be run by Oasis Community Learning Trust which consists of 52 academies including 11-18 schools. The College is keen to forge links and work with the Trust as it prepares to open the school in 2024;
- The latest iteration of the South Worcestershire Development Plan includes reference to a post-16 college/sixth form in the new village planned in Norton. There had been no discussion or consultation with the College about this and a meeting with Worcester and Wychavon planners was not helpful;

- The College was subject to a Quality Visit and the report identifying key strengths and areas for development was shared. The importance of such feedback was highlighted in terms of driving improvement;
- The Science Centre project is continuing with the full support of the Trust despite significantly increased cost and associated risks. Contractors are due onsite on 1st December to install their compound before work begins on 5th December. The contractors were front loading the purchase of supplies to assist with meeting ESFA spend deadlines with materials to be stored on the College site;
- A CIF bid would be submitted in relation to fire safety. In preparing for this, the College was advised to produce an Estates Vision and this was included for governors information.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the update.

(ii) Strategic Development Plan

The Principal presented the updated Strategic Development Plan and reported that the format has been adapted to align with that used by the Trust and to cross-reference to the Trust's values and visions whilst retaining the College's strategic aims. The inclusion of a progress update report will enable governors to be routinely updated on actions identified within the plan.

The Local Governing Body **approved** the new format and content of the Strategic Development Plan with a progress report to be shared at the next meeting.

(iii) Reviewing Local Skills Need

The Principal advised that further to the focus on the local skills need at the October conference, the next stage was to review College provision and how it responds to local need. In particular, the College is looking to develop the digital and IT skills of students, focusing on those considering an apprenticeship route meaning that they will be entering the workplace sooner.

The Clerk noted that although the statutory guidance on meeting local skills need is aimed at FE and sixth form colleges, it is difficult to conceive how 16-19 academies would not be held accountable in the same way. With this in mind, governors were asked to consider the draft responses to the questions that need to be considered. These will form the basis of a report to be published on the website. Feedback was invited via the Clerk before the end of the autumn term.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the contents of the report.

6. Finance and Resources

(i) Finance and Resources Committee meeting minutes: 9.11.22

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee presented the minutes and noted the following:

- The Student Union accounts were recommended for approval.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the minutes and **approved** the Student Union accounts. In response to a question from the Student Governors it was **noted** that any underspend from the Union accounts was carried forward into subsequent years.

7. **Quality Assurance**

(i) Curriculum & Quality Committee minutes: 2.11.22

The Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee presented the minutes and noted the following:

- The targets for 2022-23 were considered and the Committee agreed to recommend the same targets including attendance 84% given the ability to join meetings remotely and that this figure was the sector benchmark;

The Local Governing Body **noted** the minutes and approved governor targets for 2022-23. Asked for an update on transport, the Principal noted his thanks to governors for raising this matter with councillors, and suggested that issues were still ongoing in terms of capacity. The Student Governors suggested that student raised concerns about the buses. It was suggested, that should opportunity arise, that Student Governors raise this matter directly with the relevant councillors.

(ii) College Self-Assessment Report

The Vice Principal (Curriculum) presented the key strengths and areas for improvement from all sections of the Self-Assessment and the Leadership and Management section in its entirety. It was noted that the areas of the SAR have purposefully not been graded so as to focus on bringing about improvement.

In response to questions the following was noted:

- Whilst the College's learning support department are strong, the Quality Visit identified that teachers would benefit from additional training to help them best support students with SEND;
- Given the increase in mental health issues amongst students, January training will focus on strategies teachers can use to support students;
- The expectation in relation to homework is that something is set in every lesson. Student Governor feedback suggested that this differed by subject and was not the case in all areas.

The Local Governing Body **approved** the contents and conclusions reached in the SAR.

8. **Trust Policies**

The Clerk presented four Trust policies recently approved by the Trust Board and noted the following:

- The Communication and Engagement Strategy aimed to make clear the lines of reporting between the academies and the Trust and vice versa. This did not supersede an existing local policy;
- The Trust complaints policy should be followed if the complaint is in relation to an academy Head/Principal, the CEO, Trustee etc. Local policies remain in place and should be used for complaints concerning academy staff or provision;
- The Data Retention and Protection policies supersede local policies.

The Local Governing Body noted the Trust policies and were pleased with the progress being made in this area.

9. Governance

(i) Stakeholder Voice

The reports from the designated safeguarding governor and governors who attended as part of the Quality Visit were noted.

(ii) Appointments

The Clerk presented her report noting the following:

- Both committees had been given opportunity to consider the proposal for succession of the Chair and it was recommended to appoint Sean Devlin as Chair and Sam Lifford as Vice Chair effective from 1st January 2023;
- A nomination for a parent governor candidate had been forthcoming and a second, had the attributes identified for one of the external governors roles, therefore, it was recommended to appoint Kelvin Hard as external governor and Duncan Clark as Parent Governor;
- Following an election for the Student Governor post, Beth Hallam was duly appointed as Student Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee having secured two-thirds of the student vote.

In relation to the recommendations, the Local Governing Body approved:

- The **appointment** of Sean Devlin as Chair of the Local Governing Body effective from 1st January 2023;
- The **appointment** of Sam Lifford as Vice-Chair of the Local Governing Body effective from 1st January 2023;
- The **appointment** of Kelvin Hard as External Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee for a period of four years;
- The **appointment** of Duncan Clark as Parent Governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee for a period of four years.

10. Closing Standing Items

(i) Chair's Action

There had been no use of the Chair's action since the last meeting.

(ii) Health and Safety

None.

(iii) Risk Management

Governors noted the increased financial risk associated with the capital project, however, this is already reflected in the risk register.

(iv) Impact

Governors consideration of the Quality Visit recommendations and the response of the College to meeting local skills needs were identified as ensuring the best provision and outcomes for students.

(v) Any Urgent Business

The Principal presented a report on site security and noted the following:

- The recent Quality Visit found that safeguarding was generally effective although identified one clear risk in that the College does not mandate students to wear lanyards. It was noted that all visiting institutions, with the exception of Hereford SFC, require the wearing of student lanyards;
- Current access arrangements require students to swipe in at the turnstile. A recent incident involved a student entering legitimately and then handing their card to a 'non-student' through the rear fence to facilitate illegitimate access. It was suggested that lanyards would not have prevented such an incident and, in fact, then would make it more difficult to identify those who should not be on the College site;
- In response to this breach of security and, following disciplinary action, a student has been excluded and others issued with warnings;
- A second security officer has been appointed which means that there will always be a presence at the front turnstile to deter such action, the turnstile from the recreational area has been made exit only and the perimeter gate permanently closed;

- Feedback from institutions who mandate the wearing of lanyards report lack of compliance and conflict with students and the need to issue warnings to teachers who fail to ensure compliance in lessons;
- Feedback from a recently inspected sixth form college who do not require student lanyards was that this was not deemed a safeguarding issue assuming that other measures are sufficiently robust.

Governors were invited to discuss the issue. Whilst there was a feeling that the wearing of lanyards would prepare students well for future employment where this was often a requirement, there was a consensus that the current security measures were sufficiently robust. In response to student governor feedback in relation to what students understood to be acceptable, Senior Leaders identified a need to visit tutor groups to provide clarity.

(vi) Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 1st March 2023 at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.07pm.

Signed:
Gill Slater (Chair)

Date:

LGB ACTION POINTS FROM MEETING ON 23RD NOVEMBER 2022

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/23.11.22/5ii	Populate Strategic Development Plan progress report and share at the next meeting.	EYS	March 2023	
LGB/23.11.22/5iii	Feedback to the Clerk, as appropriate, on the review of the College response to meeting local need.	Governors	December 2022	
LGB/23.11.22/5iii	Prepare and publish on the website a report on how the College is responding to local skills needs.	JJP	March 2023	

ACTION POINTS BROUGHT FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/14.09.22/6iii	Confirm conference programme with Chair and circulate.	JJP	ASAP	✓
LGB/08.06.22/9	Expressions of interest in relation to Vice-Chair and Safeguarding Link role to be shared with the Clerk.	Governors	September 2022	✓

* Denotes amended action point.