

Minutes of the meeting of the South Bank Colleges Board

held at 4.00pm on Wednesday, 16 September 2020

Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Present

Ruth Farwell (Chair)
Andrew Owen (Vice-Chair)
Steve Balmont
Nigel Duckers
Jacqui Dyer (until 5pm)
Shakira Martin
Mee Ling Ng
Adesewa Ogunyomi
David Phoenix

Apologies

Sue Dare

In attendance

Michael Broadway
Richard Flatman
Paul Ivey
Fiona Morey
Jacqueline Mutibwa
Ralph Sanders (item 6)

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed the trustees to the meeting. The above apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Interests

Shakira Martin declared that she has been appointed as a trustee of Villiers Park, Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) and University Centre Peterborough. The Board authorised these interests.

The Board noted the following continuing declarations of interest: Steve Balmont is Chair, LSBU Pensions sub-committee; Mee Ling Ng is a director of LSBU; Sue Dare is senior lead at National College Creative Industries Ltd and interim CEO at National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure; David Phoenix is a director of LSBU and SBA.

3. Minutes of the previous meetings

Meeting held on 14 July 2020

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020 as an accurate record and their publication, as redacted.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting.

Appointment of Lambeth College Chief Financial Officer

The Board was informed about the appointment of Rachel McCafferty as the new Chief Financial Officer of Lambeth College and that she would start on 21 September 2020.

5. Executive Principal's Report

The report provided an update on the key areas of the college since the last meeting in July 2020, including 2019/20 student achievement and 2020/21 recruitment.

The Board discussed:

- the 2019/20 student projected outcomes. It was an exceptional year and the qualifications awarding process had been adapted in light of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Outcome for BTECs had not been released. The known outcomes showed an improvement from the previous year's performance especially in GCSE English and Maths. The Board would be provided with a full and final set of achievement data at the next meeting in November 2020. The Board noted the challenges due to the delayed qualification outcomes.
- the annual self-assessment report (SAR) which was being developed and would be validated by an external Ofsted inspector with the college Leadership team and the Chair of the Quality & Improvement Committee in October 2020. The final 2019/20 SAR would be presented to the Board at the meeting in November 2020.
- that Ofsted would resume visiting colleges from 28th September 2020 and its priority were those colleges with ratings of 3 and 4; full inspections would resume from January 2021. It was noted that the Ofsted inspection themes would include the delivery of an appropriate curriculum offer which was adaptable to changing circumstances and safeguarding risks posed by the wider digital access.
- 2020/21 enrolment report and that the current figures were slightly below the budget target. However, the target was achievable and the outcome for 2020/21 would be known after the first 6 weeks of the term. An update on student recruitment would be provided at the next meeting in November 2020.
- an update on the development of the curriculum plan which had been discussed at the last meeting in July 2020. The offer had been adapted in light of the pandemic, and that the college was working with Lambeth Council, GLA and JCP on the provision of new courses to support young

people into employment and those impacted by redundancies. It was noted that this was an area for potential growth and new income.

- that the College had received a ESFA capital fund of £1m to support IT infrastructure, equipment, improved wi-fi and access process. IT infrastructure was poor due to outdated equipment and software due to under-investment for some years. The IT upgrade would be undertaken as part of the LSBU group IT Investment project with a SBC contribution of £650k from the ESFA capital fund. The Board agreed that management should prioritise expenditure of the capital fund on the IT upgrade project.
- a number of positive achievements set out in the report including a very positive College Matrix re-accreditation report for students' academic support and guidance; the college's innovative project with Spirals social enterprise group supporting eighty 16-18 year old ESOL students with access to work experience.

There was an update on the pension consultation which had commenced on 16 June 2020 and was due to close on 30 September 2020. The recommendations from the consultation would be considered by the Board at its meeting of 18 November 2020.

6. 2020/21 Budget and Financial Position

Ralph Sanders joined the meeting

The report provided an update on the Lambeth College 2019/20 year-end financial position.

The Board discussed:

- the 2019/20 year-end financial position. The budget deficit for the full year was £2,785k, the forecast outturn for the year showed a deficit of £3,784k an adverse variance of £999k. The key reason for the adverse variance and the movement from the May 2020 forecast position (£2,806k deficit) was due to an LPFA Pension adjustment that affected both Staff costs and Interest Payable. The position in respect of operating expenditure suggested strong financial control. The 2019/20 year end accounts had not yet been finalised and audited.
- the 2020/21 budget which was approved by the Board at its last meeting in July 2020. The budget was modelled on a budget deficit of c. £1.7m which was £700k better than the CFADS model. However, pension costs were now forecast to exceed the budget.

The Board was concerned about the 2020/21 budget position and its impact on future years. The Board noted:

- that delivering the budget would be a challenge due to the need to achieve the DfE financial target and the uncertainty of future recruitment patterns.

- that further measures to achieve the required savings in staff costs would be implemented as soon as possible.
- that an update on the budget position would be provided at the next meeting in November 2020.

The Board noted the 2019/20 year end position and the potential impact on the budget for 2020/21 and future years.

Jacqui Dyer left the meeting

7. Update on Estates Programme

The Board was provided with an update on the Nine Elms STEAM Centre (NESC) and progress associated with the SBC Estates Programme (Vauxhall site).

There was an update on the demolition of buildings on the Vauxhall site. The Board noted that a verbal agreement on the ongoing party wall dispute with the adjacent housing development had been reached.

A progress report on the NESC project was provided. The Board noted:

- that a revised contract with the DfE on the SBC estates strategy was being negotiated. The Board at its meeting on 14 July 2020, agreed to delegate authority to a sub-committee of the Chair of the Board, an Independent Trustee and the Accounting Officer to authorise execution of a revised grant agreement and/or any related arrangements with the DfE. The delegation of authority was subject to the agreement not committing SBC to unfunded expenditure.
- The Board agreed to delegate authority to the sub-committee that had been set up on 14 July 2020 to approve the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the main construction work (phase 2). It was noted that other Trustees who wished to participate could attend the meeting. The meeting would be scheduled to take place on 26th or 27th October 2020.

The Board noted a progress report on the SBC Development Appraisal being undertaken by Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) consultants.

8. Corporate Risk Register Review

The Board reviewed the updated risk register (August 2020) and that the key change since the last report was the financial risk which had gone up and would be closely monitored.

The Board noted that the risk register would be reviewed in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting in November 2020.

9. Updated Health & Safety Policy 2020/21

The Board discussed the updated Health & Safety policy and noted that the annual report 2019/20 had been reviewed at its meeting in February 2020. It was noted

that the policy had been developed in partnership with LSBU and aligned with the Group approach.

The Board approved the updated Health & Safety Policy 2020/21.

10. Safeguarding & Prevent Policy 2020/21 and Review Annual Report 2019/20

The Board was presented with the updated policy, which had been discussed in detail and recommended to the Board for approval by the Quality & Improvement Committee on 9 September 2020.

The Board noted the annex to the policy – Covid19 changes, which set out some of the adjustments that were being adapted in line with government guidelines and local agencies.

The Board:

- approved the updated Safeguarding & Prevent Policy 2020/21 subject to a minor amendment.
- noted the College's safeguarding provision and impact for the 2019/20 academic year.

11. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy 2020/21

The Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy set out the College's vision for teaching and learning in terms of ethos and aspirations and creating a culture of mutual learning for both teachers and students.

The Board noted that the Strategy had been discussed in detail by the Quality & Improvement Committee at its meeting on 9 September 2020 and recommended to the Board for approval. It noted the annex to the strategy, a guide on Teaching & Learning in the time of Covid19.

The Board approved the updated Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy 2020/21.

12. College Partnership Contracts 2020/21

The Board discussed two proposed GLA Adult Skills partnership services contracts, which were budgeted for in 2020/21 and were integral part of delivering the Adult education courses. It was noted that there were no concerns on the quality of provision and the partnership arrangements.

The Board:

- approved that SBC continues with the partnership arrangement with The Skills Centre for the delivery of construction courses.
- approved that SBC enters into a partnership arrangement with The Green Man, a local social enterprise that supports those furthest from education and employment to access a range of courses via outreach work.

13. College Wider Reopening

The Board was provided with an update on the arrangements in place in preparation for the wider re-opening of the College. It was also provided with a report on the LSBU Group work in managing health and safety in relation to COVID including the Groups Compliance unit's oversight of work undertaken to date.

The Board noted the arrangements in place which were in line with government and DfE guidance i.e. risk assessments and control measures, health & safety arrangements. The extensive work that had been undertaken to ensure the health & safety and wellbeing of students and staff who had returned to college including the re-opening of the nursery facility.

The Board acknowledged that staff had responded well to the significant demands of the pandemic situation and their ability to adapt and deliver a flexible approach to course delivery. The Board expressed its gratitude for the way the majority of staff have positively responded to the current covid19 challenges.

The Board noted the LSBU Group Covid19 Outbreak Response Plan which set out the approach to responding and managing Covid19 incidents.

Date of next meeting

4pm, Wednesday 18 November 2020

Confirmed as a true record

(Chair)

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