

**Minutes of the meeting of the South Bank Colleges Board
held at 4.00pm on Tuesday, 27 September 2022
Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

Present

Ruth Farwell (Chair)
Andrew Owen (Vice-Chair)
Steve Balmont
Sue Dare
Nigel Duckers
Jacqui Dyer
Moriām Folawiyo
Shakira Martin
Mee Ling Ng
David Phoenix

In attendance

Benjamin Baker
Michael Broadway
Richard Flatman
Monica Marongiu
Fiona Morey
Jacqueline Mutibwa
Ian Rule
Wayne Wright

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed the trustees to the meeting.

The Chair noted that the recent group strategy day had been useful to understand the opportunities and challenges across the group and that some of the themes from the day would be discussed during the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the previous meetings

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising

The Board noted the update on matters arising from the previous meetings. The information requested for by the Board on Guided Learning Hours and figures on management savings as a percentage of the total cost of these roles would be circulated to the Board (Board meeting 12 May 2022).

5. Update from the Students' Union President

The Students' Union (SU) President gave a report on the recent and upcoming activities. The SU President also reported on the student dissatisfaction caused by the disruptions to learning due to the industrial action.

SU activities included celebrating national inclusion week and raising awareness of neuro diversity and the support available. Events had been organised to celebrate Black History Month in October and guest speakers invited to share their knowledge, journey and inspiration. Trustees expressed their interest in attending some of the events, the programme would be shared with trustees and arrangements made for those who wanted to attend.

The programme of activities for the academic term was being prepared and would be presented at the next meeting in November 2022.

6. Update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Matters

The Board received an update on the recent EDI work being undertaken by the College. This year's focus was on LGBT+ and Disability in teaching and learning which would form part of the annual CPD programme.

The Board noted the annual staff teaching and learning conference (17 August 2022) session on the experience of black boys in society and education by Jeffrey Boakye which was well received and staff supported the ongoing conversations on how the college responds to this agenda.

The Leadership programmes for black staff and students were noted. Ruth Farwell and Shakira Martin would be attending the Black FE Leadership Group development session at the end of this month.

The Board discussed some other EDI work that should be considered by the group such as decolonising the curriculum, SU EDI work and Gender Identification issues. The Board emphasised the importance of regularly monitoring the action plan which would be presented along with the EDI report.

7. Executive Principal's Report

The report provided an update on SBC developments.

The Board discussed:

- the 2021/22 predicted achievement. There were delays in finalising the achievement data which was due to the College's re-organisation of the curriculum areas. The final 2021/22 achievement data would be presented to the Board at the meeting in November 2022. Apprenticeships outcome remained an area of concern, the performance was mainly due to the number of apprentices that lost their jobs during the pandemic and changes in leadership and management.

- 2022/23 student enrolment 16-19 year olds (ESFA) and that the current figures were an improvement on those for 2021/22 but below the budget target. However, the target was achievable and the outcome would be known after the first 6 weeks of the term (mid-October) and an update would be provided at the next meeting in November 2022. Initiatives and support were in place to help retain students especially during the current economic climate and the issues raised by the SU President on the matter would be progressed by the Principal of Lambeth Gateway College.
- the 2021/22 annual self-assessment report (SAR) which was being developed and would be reviewed and validated by the Chair of the Board, Chair of the Quality & Improvement Committee, an external specialist, the College Leadership Group and the SU President in October 2022. The final 2021/22 SAR would be considered by the Quality & Improvement Committee and presented to the Board for approval at the meeting in November 2022. There was an update on quality improvement and that a new SBC education framework had been developed and the areas of focus were noted.
- the industrial action relating to a national claim for a 10% pay award for 2022/23 as the trade unions felt that the recommended AoC award of 2.5% was not adequate in light of the current inflation rates and cost of living. Discussions had been held with the trade unions about the College's financial situation and its continued deficit budget. Industrial action was scheduled for 10 days until the end of October 2022. A working group looking at staff workload was being set up.
- an update on the workforce transformation. The College reorganisation had been completed and had achieved the 2021/22 staff cost savings of £1.7m through voluntary redundancies. Staff costs would be monitored closely to ensure that they are in line with business plans, deliver income within the agreed staff cost budget and the KPI target of 50% contribution. The new organisation structure was noted.
- Level 4 offer which would not be delivered this year due to low applications, the process was being reviewed with LSBU to ascertain the issues.
- an update on Lambeth Gateway College and the additional funding from the GLA for the Multiply project which focuses on the delivery of maths programmes for hard-to-reach groups and the 14-16 year old offer.

Jacqui Dyer joined the meeting

- an update on the developments at London South Bank Technical College (LSBTC), the expected completion date was 17 November 2022 when the transition programme would commence for staff and students. The full and final move into the new building would be on 12 December 2022 and the new building would open to students for the Spring term in January 2023.
- an update on IT performance and SBC's successful achievement of cyber-essentials accreditation which was an ESFA requirement and would support growth in apprenticeships and eligibility for grant funding applications.

There was discussion about the partnership work with Lambeth Council which needed to be delivered in a joined-up way and that a strategic framework was in place though more work needed to be done at the strategic level. Jacqui Dyer would share with the trustees the Lambeth Council's 3-year employment strategy and its expectations from stakeholders. The Board was reminded about the new duty on colleges to review how well the College's offer meets local needs.

It was noted that future Executive Principal's reports would include separate reports from the two colleges i.e. LGC and LSBTC. The Board received a presentation on:

- the overview of the new Lambeth Gateway College by Monica Marongiu, Principal. The design, vision and curriculum were noted.
- the update on LSBTC block B and D by Wayne Wright, Principal. Block B was Health and Life Sciences and block D was Business and Enterprise. The vision and curriculum were noted.

8. Chief Financial Officer Report

The Board discussed SBC 2021/22 year-end financial position and 2022/23 current financial performance.

The Board discussed:

- the 2021/22 year-end financial position which was in line with the May 2022 forecast. The budget deficit for the full year was £2,524k before pension costs and £4,540k after pension costs. Therefore, the remaining Transaction Unit grant funding (£3.4m) would not cover the entirety of the budget deficit and for the first time a reported deficit of £1,140K had been included in the group consolidated accounts which had an impact on the group surplus. The main variance was income in relation to the provision for High Needs Students which was £200k below budget. The staff cost savings of £1.7m had been achieved by the workforce restructure. The 2021/22 year end accounts had not yet been finalised and audited.
- the 2022/23 budget which was approved by the Board at its last meeting in July 2022 and modelled on a projected deficit of £2.991m including £2m of non-cash pension costs.
- the cash flow projections and Going Concern considerations. The cash flow problem was due to the delayed completion of the sale of land at Clapham which was anticipated for early 2023. SBC would need an additional borrowing facility of £5m from LSBU by November 2022 to manage cash flow for the estates programme. The terms of the borrowing facility including the interest rate would be circulated to trustees. LSBU would provide a letter of support regarding year-end assurance on going concern.
- the key risks to delivering the 2022/23 budget and the mitigations in place. These included 2022/23 recruitment targets for 16-19 year olds which had not at

this point been achieved and due to the lagged funding would have an impact on 2023/24 income, income risk of approx. £1.7m in relation to apprenticeship (£500k) and fees due to late opening of the LSBTC (£1.2m), challenge on staff pay award, rising energy costs (£1m) and budget shortfall in fit-out of Vauxhall (£2.5m). Resulting in a 2022/23 projected budget shortfall of approx. £4m. A clearer financial position would be known in November and a revised forecast for 2022/23 presented at the Board meeting in November 2022. Efficiency savings were being reviewed to mitigate rising costs. The Board requested that the project working group oversee this work.

- interest rate rises and the impact on the College. Interest rate scenario analysis is being undertaken and would be circulated to the Board.

The Board noted the progress made on improving IT and estates services. It also noted SBC quarterly performance reports to the ESFA Performance Management Oversight team.

The Board:

- noted the financial risks which were due to the current economic climate and needed to be fully assessed.
- was concerned about the College's financial position and the challenge in delivering the 2022/23 current budget.
- noted that despite the financial challenges, there were also some positive developments for SBC.

Fiona Morey left the meeting

9. Accounting Officer's Report

The Board received an update on key matters at the College.

The Board discussed:

- the College's challenging financial situation, a significant concern which was due to a shortfall in income, increasing energy costs and the current economic climate and the impact on operation and project costs.
- a progress report on Phase 1 estates programme. NESC project (Block A) was near completion but due to slippage, completion was expected on 17 November 2022 with the new college opening in January 2023.
- an update on Phase 2 estates programme Block B and D. There was a separate report on the agenda (item 10). The scheme would be redesigned due to the project cost risk as a result of Brexit, situation in Ukraine and the current economic climate.
- an update on health & safety matters and IT performance. The IT improvements were noted, especially the significant achievement of the Cyber Essentials accreditation.

Jacqui Dyer left the meeting

David Phoenix left the meeting

10. Block B and D Procurement for the Design and Build

The Board discussed the procurement options for the appointment of a contractor for Blocks B and D at Vauxhall and that the Group Estate Development Team commences the procurement process.

Having considered the options outlined in the report, the Board approved the commencement of the procurement/appointment of a contractor for Blocks B and D, using a recognised framework, on a two-stage design and build contract. The contractor engaged to deliver the current NESC Project at Vauxhall was procured using this method.

11. KPIs for 2022/23 and Review 2021/22

The 2022/23 KPI targets would be presented to the Board at its next meeting in November 2022.

12. Updated Health & Safety Policy 2022/23

The Board discussed the updated 2022/23 Health & Safety Policy.

The Board noted the changes to the policy including the updated Health & Safety objectives for 2022/23. The SBC Health & Safety Policy 2022/23 was approved subject to a further review in light of the current health & safety audit recommendations which would be reviewed at the next Audit Committee meeting.

13. Updated Single Equality Scheme 2022/23

The Board approved the updated Single Equality Scheme 2022/23.

14. Safeguarding & Prevent Policy 2022/23 and Review Annual Report 2021/22

The Board was presented with the 2022/23 updated policy, which had been discussed in detail and recommended to the Board for approval by the Quality & Improvement Committee on 21 September 2022.

The updated policy 2022/23 had been reviewed against the updated statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022 (KCSIE Sep 2022). The Board noted the key changes and updates to the policy.

The Board:

- approved SBC Safeguarding & Prevent Policy 2022/23.
- noted the Safeguarding & Prevent Annual Report 2021/22.

15. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy 2022/23

The Board was presented with the updated Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy 2022/23, which had been discussed in detail and recommended to the Board for approval by the Quality & Improvement Committee on 21 September 2022.

The strategy had been reviewed and updated to include specific focus areas for 2022/23 which were noted.

The Board approved the updated Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy 2022/23.

16. Declaration of Interests - Update

The Board authorised the new declared interests of Steve Balmont, LSBU nominee trustee and David Phoenix, Accounting Officer. The Board noted the updated trustees register of interests 2022/23.

17. Board Annual Work Plan 2022/23

The Board noted the annual work plan and meeting dates for 2022/23.

18. Report from Committees

The Board noted the report from Committee meetings held since the last meeting in July 2022.

19. Any other business

Project Working Group Meetings

The group would continue to oversee the estates strategy especially the finances and the next meeting would be held in October 2022.

**Date of next meeting
4.00 pm on Tuesday, 22 November 2022**

Confirmed as a true record

(Chair)

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