

Part A Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Corporation

17th December 2024, 16:30 - 18:30

Parkway Campus, Motor Vehicle Technology Centre

Present: Danny Alfaraj (Staff Governor, DAL)
 Tony Antonius (External Governor, TA)
 Andrea Arlidge (External Governor, AA)
 Steve Bennett (External Governor, SB)
 Steve Boardman (External Governor and Vice Chair, SBN)
 Neil Dimes (External Governor, ND)
 Julia Gray, Principal & CEO (Ex-officio, P&CEO)
 Marc Griffiths (External Governor, MG)
 Daniel Jones (External Governor, DJ)
 Shaista Mahmood (Student Governor, SM)
 Palie Smart (External Governor, PSM)
 Phil Smith (External Governor, Chair of the Corporation, PS)
 Shawn Smith (External Governor, SS)
 Zoe Taylor (External Governor, ZT)
 Steven Tunn (Staff Governor, ST)
 Jess Winkler (External Governor, JW)

In attendance: Catherine Howett, Deputy Principal (DP)
 Tim Peacock, Chief Operating Officer (COO)
 Hayley Shaw, Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (DHROD)
 Ben De Cruz, Haines Watts Western Limited (External Auditor) *For items 1-5*
 Lynette Wilson, Director of Governance & Clerk to the Corporation (Clerk)
 Jessica Thorne, Corporate Services Officer (CSO)

Min. No.	
1a	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND QUORUM Apologies were accepted from Judi Harper (JH). Apologies were received post-meeting from Sandra Gordon (SG).</p>
b	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY AGENDA ITEMS P&CEO was to withdraw for discussion of her appraisal. Nominees to withdraw for items 9a and 9b.</p>
c	<p>CONFIDENTIALITY OF AGENDA ITEMS It was noted that item 11 would be confidential to all except external governors, P&CEO and Clerk. The Board accepted the order and confidentiality of the agenda items.</p>

The auditor would also exit during discussion about their appointment.

2a

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 October 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record and **approved** by the Board.

b

REVIEW OF ACTIONS AND ANY MATTERS ARISING, INCLUDING WRITTEN RESOLUTIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The majority of actions were completed, or discussed within the meeting.

Action Log:

Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline
Consider how to manage crossover between areas of risk assurance between Audit and Finance and Resources Committee	21.10.24	Clerk	Marked as closed. Ongoing review.
Information about any impact on non-teaching staff, if change the teaching delivery model to 828 hours, to be brought to the Board when this proposal is presented.	21.10.24	DHROD	Completed
Further discussion about support for dyslexic students to be picked up at C&Q Committee.	21.10.24	Deputy Principal (DP)	Completed
Reserves Policy, correct typo.	21.10.24	COO	Completed
Code of Conduct, correct typo.	21.10.24	DHROD	Completed
Admissions policy stated that students would have 30 days to accept an offer. Governors asked if individuals would be reminded during the 30-day period? The Deputy Principal would check the process.	21.10.24	Deputy Principal (DP)	17.12.24 To be picked up by Clerk for discussion with DP.
Make recommended amendments to the Board Vice Chairs and Committee Chairs nomination processes	21.10.24	Clerk	Completed

The following matters arising were **noted** by the Board:

- i. Aramark Contract (Deed).

The College Seal had been used on a contract between CoBC and Aramark (Catering provider).

	<p>ii. Amendment required to Corporation Terms of Reference to align with the Companies Act 2006.</p> <p>The Clerk highlighted the changes made to the Terms of Reference to align with the Companies Act 2006 which clarified that the approval level for financial statements for the College’s subsidiary companies sat with the subsidiary Boards but would be submitted to the Corporation Board for monitoring purposes.</p> <p>Changes to the Corporation Terms of Reference were approved by the Board.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>PRINCIPAL & CEO’S REPORT</p> <p>The P&CEO provided a detailed report to the Board prior to the meeting and an update on their recent activities, which included a visit to the Houses of Parliament the previous week. Attendees had been invited to discuss the importance of positive integration of asylum seekers and refugees.</p> <p>The Board noted that the P&CEO attended the University of Bristol Court meeting in December and took part in the panel. They felt that the City of Bristol College was being highlighted as one of the educational leaders within the city.</p> <p>Governors discussed the value of these events as part of the eco-system within education and the need for alignment between colleges and universities, particularly in addressing the growth agenda.</p> <p>The P&CEO updated the Board about the Rapid Review. It was stated that the Labour Government had committed to reviewing Level 3 funding models. Letters of appeal, which the P&CEO signed, had been sent to central government to ask them to review the defunding of some level 3 qualifications.</p> <p>The Board were also updated that a new white paper is under discussion regarding devolution.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER</p> <p>The Risk Register, which had been reviewed by Audit Committee, was submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted that there had been a slight increase in risk relating to high-needs funding, as there is a Bristol City Council review underway which had impacted this.</p> <p>It was stated that the Audit Committee will carry out a deep dive into digital risk at its March meeting.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>a</p>	<p>ANNUAL AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023-24</p> <p>AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER (EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT)</p>

	<p>The Audit Management Letter had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following review by Audit Committee.</p> <p>It was recommended by the committee for approval by the Corporation Board.</p> <p>The external auditor addressed the Board and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Auditor are an independent organisation, and have no conflicts to declare. - the accounts are signed off on the basis that they represent a 'true and fair view'. -The College's accounts were materially correct, with a materiality threshold set at 1 million pounds. Any error made within accounting under 1 million pounds. - an error of £160,000 had been identified but the Audit Committee had recommended that this could be left unadjusted. - Audit testing and enquiries in all areas were carried out satisfactorily with no significant matters to bring to the College's attention. - There were some small weaknesses identified in accounting and internal control which have been referred to the Audit Committee to monitor via the audit tracker. - The auditor was happy that the Board would be signing a clean regularity report and audit report. <p>[CH entered the meeting]</p> <p>The Board confirmed their approval of the report.</p>
<p>b</p>	<p>GOING CONCERN ASSESSMENT</p> <p>The Going Concern Assessment had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following review by Audit Committee and Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p>The College had been assessed as a Going Concern and the committees were confident the College was a going concern.</p> <p>The Vice Chair noted that there was a marked improvement in the college's financial situation compared to a few years prior.</p> <p>The COO noted that covenants were being met and that there were improvements in the cashflow.</p> <p>The Board approved the Going Concern Assessment.</p> <p>[ZT joined the meeting]</p>
<p>c</p>	<p>LETTERS OF SUPPORT</p> <p>Letters of Support for two of the College's subsidiary companies SWAC (South West Apprenticeship Company) and BPS (Bristol Professional Services) had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following review by Finance and Resources Committee.</p>

	<p>It was explained by the COO that as part of the signing off of subsidiary financial statements, letters of support must be provided to SWAC and BPS because there is an inter-company balance owed by the subsidiaries to the College. These letters declare that there is no intention from the College to withdraw its support.</p> <p>The Board approved the signing of the Letters of Support.</p>
d	<p>LETTER OF REPRESENTATION</p> <p>The Letter of Representation had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following review by Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted that there was nothing of concern in the letter and that it was approved by the Audit Committee for recommendation to the Board.</p> <p>The Board approved the signing of the Letter of Representation.</p>
e	<p>REGULARITY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE</p> <p>The Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following review by Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee explained that this document captures the College’s compliance with the regulations, including compliance and procurement, and that the committee agreed with the statements in the document.</p> <p>The Board questioned whether it was thought there would be any further changes to regulations following the reclassification of Colleges on 2022. It was stated that there were no expected changes.</p> <p>The Board approved the signing of the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire.</p>
f	<p>SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (APPROVED BY SUBSIDIARY BOARDS)</p> <p>The Financial Statements for all three of the College’s subsidiary companies had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following approval by each of the subsidiary Boards.</p> <p>Finance and Resources Committee had also received the Financial Statements in their meeting.</p> <p>The Board noted the Financial Statements for monitoring purposes.</p>
g	<p>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE INCLUDING INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24</p>

<p>h</p>	<p>The Annual Report of the Audit Committee had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, following approval by Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Audit Committee Chair stated that each year the audit committee is required to submit a report to the Board which includes a summary of membership, self-review of the committee's effectiveness and summarises the internal audit programme undertaken in-year.</p> <p>The overall conclusion from the Internal Audit Report was highlighted, which stated that 'we are satisfied that, for the areas reviewed during the year, City of Bristol College has reasonable and effective risk management, control and governance processes in place'.</p> <p>It was also highlighted that the report stated that the Audit Committee believed that the College's frameworks for risk management, governance and the College's processes for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness remained adequate and effective during 2023/24.</p> <p>The Board questioned whether it could have some further information about the audit plan for this current year. ACTION: Internal Audit Strategy 2024-25 to be submitted at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>The Board noted the Annual Report from the Audit Committee.</p> <p>MEMBERS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 2024</p> <p>The Board approved the Members Report and Financial Statements.</p> <p><i>[The External Auditor exited the meeting]</i></p>
<p>6</p>	<p>CURRICULUM AND QUALITY: OVERVIEW OF C-SAR (College Self-Assessment Report) REVIEW</p> <p>The C-SAR was submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>CH stated that the report had been submitted to the panel for the validation exercise, which was attended by governors and an external panel member (Vice Principal from a London College). Following the panel, there would be some changes to the report before it was submitted to Ofsted by the end of January 2025.</p> <p>It was stated that the grades were agreed by the panel.</p> <p><i>[ZT exited the meeting]</i></p> <p>A governor who attended the review meeting highlighted page 6 of the report and in particular the 16-18 achievement rate which had risen to 84%. It was stated that this was the first time in their time as Governor that the College had delivered above their forecast for 16-18 achievement rate. It was stated that achievement rates are now in the top 10% of the Colleges in the country, which was a remarkable achievement. The actual impact means that 3-400 students have achieved their qualifications.</p>

	<p>The Executive Team and college staff were congratulated for the progress and the fact that the College could now forecast its educational performance and deliver against forecasts made. It was stated that there was felt to be strong leadership in the College at both a senior and middle level.</p> <p>[ZT re-joined the meeting]</p> <p>The Board approved the College’s Self-Assessment Report.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>a</p>	<p>COMMITTEES: KEY REPORTS, DECISIONS AND DISCUSSIONS FROM CHAIRS AND LINK GOVERNORS</p> <p>FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE FEEDBACK, INCLUDING REFERENCE TO THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Minutes ii. Management Accounts (P3) iii. Pay award iv. Proposal to amend annual teaching hours for lecturers v. Paternity Pay Proposal vi. EDI Annual Report vii. Health and Safety Termly update <p>The minutes from the Finance and Resources Committee were noted by the Board. They had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>SBN spoke about the visit to the independence living centre, following the last meeting, It was stated how positive it was to see students happy and confident in building their independence.</p> <p>It was noted that the residential provision with 19+ students are not regulated by Ofsted or the CQC, as there are no care needs. But they come under an Ofsted area review for SEND (by the local authority).</p> <p>It was noted that the committee had received the report that staff turnover was down in comparison to previous years and that sickness figures remained stable.</p> <p>A paper had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, with a proposal to amend the teaching hours for lecturers, as part of the negotiations with unions. The acceptance of the 3% pay award for staff by unions had been noted in the paper.</p> <p>The Finance and Resources Committee had recommended to the Board the change to teaching hours. The Board approved reducing the contracted teaching hours to 828 with effect from 1 September 2025. The hours will be worked over 36 weeks.</p> <p>The paper also outlined the proposal for a change in the Paternity Leave Policy. The proposal has come recommended from Finance and Resources Committee. The Board agreed to increase paternity leave from 2 to 4 weeks of paid leave.</p> <p>The affordability of the national insurance increase was discussed. The Board questioned when the financial support for College around this would be finalised and announced.</p>

	<p>It was stated that this announcement was expected in Spring 2025.</p> <p>The Annual EDI (Equity, Inclusion and Diversity) Report was made available to governors via the Finance and Resources Committee OneNote prior to the meeting. The Finance and Resources Committee Chair highlighted that the College had been included in the Top 100 employers list, based on the National Centre for Diversity Audit, which was completed in May. It was also stated that the EDI Link Governor had provided the committee with an excellent overview of how EDI is being incorporated as a strategic aim and monitored by the College.</p> <p>The Finance and Resources Committee updated the Board about the Cabot windows refurbishment contract. It was noted that there would be overspend as the stonework was in a poorer condition than expected. It was stated that there are other Capital Projects due to come in under budget, so the College was able to fund the additional spend from those projects.</p> <p>A space utilisation report had been received by the Finance and Resources Committee. SBN highlighted that the College was slightly under target for occupancy levels. However, it was noted the differences between sites and that there is an improvement in space utilisation; occupancy had increased from the previous year's report.</p> <p>The P&CEO stated that there are specific timetabling considerations. For example, trying to avoid Friday afternoon prayers as these religious practices are of importance to students.</p> <p>The Board questioned the significance of the College being able to demonstrate that it is effectively utilising its space. It was stated that this evidence is required for some of the College's funding bids. It was stated that changing uses to the campuses (e.g. the proposed changes at Parkway) would assist with improving the College's utilisation.</p> <p>The termly Health and Safety Report had been received by the Finance and Resources Committee and was available on its OneNote tab. SBN highlighted that there had been no RIDDOR incidents in the last reporting period.</p> <p>The Board questioned whether there were effective measures being put in place in response to the number of staff receiving injuries from SEND students. The P&CEO confirmed issues are being addressed promptly and that this was discussed at the H&S Committee this week.</p> <p>The P3 Management Accounts were submitted to the Board prior to the meeting. It was stated that these had been reviewed by the Finance and Resources Committee and the figures were in line with what was expected.</p>
7b	<p>AUDIT COMMITTEE, INCLUDING REFERENCE TO THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Minutes ii. Appointment of Auditors iii. Internal Audit Strategy 2024-25

	<p>iv. Annual Data Report</p> <p>i. The minutes from the Audit Committee were not yet ready to be submitted to the Board. They will be submitted at the next meeting.</p> <p>ii. AT stated that the Audit Committee had reviewed the performance of the external auditor and concluded that there was an improvement in their work and timely communications, in comparison to the previous year. It was stated that the College were happy with the work of the internal auditor and their reports. The Audit Committee recommended the reappointment of both the external and internal auditors for the following year.</p> <p>The Board questioned the fee of the auditors. It was stated to be approximately £40,000.</p> <p>The Board discussed the good value for money for their services.</p> <p>The Board approved the appointment of the external auditors for the next year. It was stated that the College has to retender for their external auditor every 5 years.</p> <p>The Board approved the appointment of the internal auditors for the next year.</p> <p>iii. It was noted earlier that the Internal Audit Strategy 2024-25 would be submitted at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>iv. The Annual Data Report had been received by the Audit Committee and was available to the Board on the Audit Committee OneNote tab. The Clerk confirmed the College was meeting its requirements in terms of FOI and Subject Access Requests. It was noted that Data Breach reporting had increased from the previous year; the Clerk and CSO would continue to raise the profile of the reporting processes to ensure that the College is managing a high-risk area and meeting its moral obligations regarding protecting personal data.</p>
7c	<p>CURRICULUM AND QUALITY, INCLUDING REFERENCE TO THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>i. Minutes</p> <p>ii. TLA Update including Starting Strong Student Experience and HE update</p> <p>iii. Term 1 Student Survey Results and video</p> <p>iv. QIP Summary</p> <p>v. Safeguarding Annual Report and Termly update</p> <p>vi. Complaints and Compliments Annual Report</p> <p>The minutes from the Curriculum and Quality Committee had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The reports to the committee on the TLA update and Term 1 Student Survey results had been submitted to the committee and were available on the Curriculum and Quality Committee OneNote tab.</p> <p>SB highlighted how detailed and informative the reporting to the committee had been. Most of provision was now performing well. Attendance was discussed and the</p>

committee had looked at how in 18 months there has been a profound difference in the work being done for careers and guidance for students. SB stated that the committee were really pleased with the College's tremendous capacity to continue to improve curriculum and quality matters.

It was stated that the Committee had noted the need to keep a focus at attendance at pastoral tutorials.

The QIP summary had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting and was noted.

The Safeguarding Annual Report and Termly Update had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting and was noted. The Committee had asked for a clarification of the number of suicide attempts reported. It was stated that the 23 different students' suicide attempts had been reported over a two-month period. It was stated that contact and support have been offered to all students.

The Safeguarding Link Governor asked about how this number compared to previous years.

ACTION: Safeguarding Link Governor to liaise with safeguarding team over yearly data related to suicide attempts.

Governors discussed the seriousness of this matter and noted that this was also an issue being addressed within universities, as the increase in safeguarding referrals reflects a national picture. The importance of having open and honest with students around this issue and the importance of how we try to support young people and their families was emphasised.

The P&CEO stated that access to external support for students turning 18 is a difficult area.

Governors queried support for students over the holiday period.

It was stated that there is clear signposting to other agencies and emergency support in the out of office communications.

It was noted that the Safeguarding Link Governor had been liaising with safeguarding teams and had delivered a comprehensive report to the Committee, which can be found in the minutes. There was work being done to ensure clear separation between welfare issues and safeguarding issues and to triage the appropriate level of response for students.

The DP stated that the Talk Campus App has been relaunched and is also a powerful support mechanism.

It was stated that safeguarding is an ongoing priority for the College and was discussed at length at the SLT meeting this week.

It was noted that the Complaints Annual Report had been received by the committee and was available on the C&Q Committee OneNote tab.

	<p>The Board thanked SB for his chairmanship of the committee whilst he has been in this leadership position on the Board.</p> <p>[AA exited the meeting]</p>
<p>7d</p>	<p>SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Minutes ii. Link Governors – roles and descriptors iii. Board Self-Assessment iv. Governor Training and Development Strategy – updated strategy v. AoC Code of Good Governance vi. Updates to FE and Sixth Form College Corporations Guide <p>i. The Search and Governance Committee minutes were submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>ii. A report detailing the Link Governor Roles recommended to the Board by the committee had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting. The roles were approved by the Board. Governors were asked to contact the Clerk if they felt able to fill any of the current vacancies.</p> <p>It was stated that the Sustainability and H&S Link Governor Roles could sit well together. SS agreed to accept both positions.</p> <p>The updated Governor Thematic Link Role Descriptors were recommended for approval by Search and Governance Committee and were approved by the Board.</p> <p>iii. Board Self-Assessment</p> <p>It was noted that the Board had undertaken a number of self-evaluative exercises over the year, including committee evaluation at the last strategy day and the Search and Governance Committee’s monitoring of governor attendance, the Board’s compliance with the AoC Code of Good Governance, the on-going evaluation of the actions from the External Board Review and monitoring of updates to the FE and Sixth Form College Corporations Guide.</p> <p>The final stage would be to gather individual governors’ input to the review of the Board’s activity and effectiveness. It was proposed that this be conducted on the second half of the strategy day on 4th February. This was approved by the Board.</p> <p>It was noted that, following the strategy day, the Clerk would compile a new governance action plan, amalgamating all the actions from the evaluation over the last year.</p> <p>iv. An updated Governor Training and Development Strategy had been submitted to the Board, prior to the meeting, with recommendation from Search and Governance Committee for its approval.</p> <p>It now aligned with the College’s new strategy and contained a reference to equitable access to leadership roles on the Governing Body.</p>

	<p>The Board approved the updated Governor Training and Development Strategy</p> <p>It was noted that during the review of governor induction which was submitted to Search and Governance Committee it came to light that new governors had not yet had an induction talk with the COO or DP and that some other governors may have also missed out on these sessions. ACTION: CSO to organise induction talks with the COO and DP in the new year.</p> <p>v. AoC Code of Good Governance</p> <p>It was noted that a review of the Board’s compliance with the AoC Code of Good Governance, which it has adopted, was submitted to Search and Governance Committee. It was noted that the Board is broadly compliant, except in a couple areas which the Clerk will work on e.g. drafting a specific Recruitment Policy and a Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>It was noted that the committee had discussed the number of recommended awards or accolades in the evidence column in the AoC Code and that it was felt that, whilst these were nice to have as recognition, the important thing for the College was to adopt good working practices and ensure change is implemented where necessary.</p> <p>vi. Updates to FE and Sixth Form College Corporations Guide</p> <p>It was noted that the Search and Governance Committee had received a report from the Clerk about the latest updates to the FE and Sixth Form College Corporations Guide and the College’s compliance with these, including the HR department’s review of the latest ‘Sexual harassment and harassment at work: technical guidance’ (Equality and Human Rights Commission).</p> <p>It was noted that a recent update to come in was a link to a specific guide to Fraud to align with the Charity Commission separating out its guidance to Fraud and cybersecurity.</p>
7e	<p>REMUNERATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT</p> <p>The annual report from the Remuneration Committee had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>SBN introduced the report.</p> <p>It was noted by the Board.</p>
8	<p>SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS</p> <p>a</p> <p>PiB (Partners in Bristol)</p> <p>The P2 Management Accounts for PiB were submitted prior to the Board for monitoring and were noted by the Board.</p> <p>The COO stated that there had been a slightly slower than expected start to the year.</p> <p>b</p> <p>SWAC (South West Apprenticeship Company)</p>

<p>c</p>	<p>The P2 Management Accounts for SWAC were submitted prior to the Board for monitoring and were noted by the Board.</p> <p>The COO stated that there had been a delayed start for the training for apprentices which had impacted financial performance. This will be kept under review.</p> <p>BPS (Bristol Professional Services)</p> <p>The P3 Management Accounts for BPS were submitted prior to the Board for monitoring and were noted by the Board.</p>
<p>9</p> <p>a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION</p> <p>ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD</p> <p>A paper detailing the process and nominations for the position of Vice Chair and Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Board elected Andrea Arlidge to the position of Vice Chair of the Corporation Board. The Board agreed that her term of office as Vice Chair would coincide with her terms of office as governor, so she would be in post until 31st July 2027.</p> <p>RATIFICATION OF CHAIR OF CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE</p> <p>[DA exited the meeting]</p> <p>The Board ratified DA's appointment as Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee, until the end of his term of office on 19th May 2025.</p> <p>[DA re-joined the meeting]</p>
<p>10</p> <p>a</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>PROJECT APPROVAL - SBSA ANIMAL CARE AND HORTICULTURE</p> <p>A proposal seeking Board approval of the SBSA Animal Care and Horticulture Project had been submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>COO introduced the proposal for animal care centre development and relocation of the horticulture site. The following was stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work had been undertaken to ensure that the scope of the project was correct and that it would meet the needs for curriculum delivery in these areas, - the proposals had been through consultation with advisers and curriculum and estates teams.

- There was a 7.7 year payback period for the project. This was felt to be acceptable as it was to be funded through the capital funding from ESFA.
- Tenders had been made in order to gain some realistic costings, with aim to carry out work and complete by September 2025. However, no one had been appointed yet.

SBN stated that it would have been better for the Board if the proposal could have come through Finance and Resources Committee.

It was explained that the urgency to submit the proposal to Board at this point was dictated by the deadline which the College has to spend its Capital Grant in.

The Board questioned the impact of not approving the proposal.

It was stated the College would not be able to continue with the T-Level.

The Board questioned whether there had been a pre-tender estimate.

It was stated that this work had been done and that it came in higher than the tender received now.

The Board sought confirmation that appropriate drawings had been received and queried whether planning permission was needed.

It was stated that all the appropriate preliminary work had been undertaken. The COO would have to ask the management team about the planning permission.

ACTION: COO to answer the Board's query about planning permission following the meeting.

There was some discussion about the security of the animals and animal welfare, including the importance of the College having clear messaging about ethical treatment of its animals. The P&CEO confirmed the site is completely secure and that animal welfare was of importance to the College.

The Board questioned the growth dimension aspect of the proposal, in terms of strategic expansion in this area, and also whether the plans were ambitious enough.

The P&CEO stated that there is established delivery in this area and the provision would ensure the College being able to respond to the specificity of the curriculum with regards to students being able to handle certain animals. It was stated that there is a high demand for animal care and the College cannot currently meet the demand.

The therapeutic benefits for young people of offering this type of training was mentioned.

MG offered support from university staff regarding the expertise of moving horticulture provision.

The Board asked how much the proposal would expand the College's capacity for curriculum delivery in this area and whether it would bring any commercial opportunities.

The P&CEO stated that this development would be an asset in terms of community involvement in the College. It was stated that there are already some good commercial connections in this area. However, this proposal would allow for further partnership working.

b

The Board stated that it would like further information regarding the impact on the capacity of these courses.

ACTION: COO to provide further information regarding the impact of the proposal on student numbers following the meeting.

The Board questioned how the proposal would impact staffing arrangements.

The P&CEO stated that the College have a great team but it would need to be expanded.

The Board questioned the impact of licencing requirements.

The P&CEO stated that there were no licences required for the intended species.

The proposal was **approved** by the Board, subject to the extra information to be supplied by the COO around planning permission and potential for increased student capacity.

BURSARY POLICY

The proposed update to the Bursary Policy was submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.

The COO noted the following:

- There was a one-line change to policy proposed to cap bursary costs at £1500 per student.
- the bursary is there to support students to attend college and is usually spent on travel.
- There was a significant increase this year of applications, partly due to mobility issues and travel anxieties.
- Taxi transport was particularly a contributing factor to high costs.
- the issue has been exacerbated by the removal of the travel grant.
- Current estimates are that the College would overspend its funding by half a million pounds if the Bursary was not capped, which the College cannot afford.

The Board asked how this would be communicated to students and their families. It was stated that work would start in January to liaise with students and their families about this issue.

There was discussion about the Board's concern about the potential reputational damage to the College at an in-year change of policy and the morality around a mid-year change. Concern was expressed that it may also cause students to withdraw from their courses.

The Board questioned what else the College could do to support these students to get to College.

The COO stated that there were a number of measures being explored, including postcode collections, a College minibus, travel training for students and parental support.

The Board questioned whether it affected one campus more than the other. The COO didn't have this data to hand but expected it to be SBSA mostly, due to the student intake there.

The Board did not approve the change to the Bursary Policy, due to the reputational risk, moral issue and risk of losing students with an in-year policy change.

	<p>However, it was agreed that work would still need to be undertaken in January with students and their families to reduce spending on travel, as it was currently unaffordable.</p> <p>It was agreed that the policy would be resubmitted for approval from September and that the Board would like the policy and its implications to first be reviewed by Finance and Resources Committee.</p> <p>There was some discussion about the need to clarify the College's USP going forwards to enhance its current mission and strategy.</p> <p>The Board viewed the student video which had been seen by Curriculum and Quality Committee.</p> <p>[All staff members (except the P&CEO and Clerk), Staff Governors and the Student Governor exited the meeting]</p> <p>[JW exited the meeting]</p>
11	<p>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</p> <p>The meeting entered a confidential session, open to external governors, the P&CEO and Clerk only. See Part B minutes.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 18:40</p>
12	<p>DATES OF CORPORATION MEETINGS</p> <p>25th March 2025 - 16:30-18:30 15th July 2025 - 16:30-18:30</p>

ACTIONS

Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline
Internal Audit Strategy 2024-25 to be submitted at the next Board meeting.	17.12.24	Clerk	25 th March 2024
Safeguarding Link Governor to liaise with safeguarding team over yearly data related to suicide attempts.	17.12.24	Safeguarding Link Governor	25 th March 2025
CSO to organise induction talks with the COO and DP in the new year.	17.12.24	CSO	Term 2
COO to answer the Board's query about planning permission for the animal care and horticulture proposal following the meeting.	17.12.24	COO	ASAP

COO to provide further information regarding the impact of the animal care and horticulture proposal on student numbers following the meeting.	17.12.24	COO	ASAP
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Approved as a correct record by the Chair on