

South Staffordshire College



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 2 March 2021
9.00am to 11.30am

PRESENT:

Steve Burgin (Chair)) External Governors
Tim Legge)
Andrew Elsby-Smith <i>Present following minute 373</i>)
David Isteed)
Tony McGovern)
Phil Tapp)
Helen Simpson)
Mike Rowley)
Andrea Chilton)
Claire Boliver	Chief Executive & Principal (CEP)
Nicki Truman	Staff Governor (Business Support)
Steve Oliver	Staff Governor (Teaching)
Adam Stamps	Student Governor
(Attendance 86.6%)	

In attendance:

Kirk Hookham	Deputy Chief Executive
John Snow	Deputy Principal - Finance & Resources
Kim Vaughan	Assistant Principal – Learner Services
Karen Turley	Assistant Principal – Quality
Karen O'Reilly	Assistant Principal – HR
Ali Hanson <i>Present under minute 360 to 364 only</i>	Learner Services Manager
Steve Wileman <i>Present under minute 365 to 368 only</i>	Head of Digital Learning
Miranda Hughes	Clerk to the Corporation

PART 1

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

358 Apologies were received from Katy Buxton and Philip Atkins.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

359 None received.

LEARNER SERVICES PRESENTAION

360 The Learner Services Manager provided an overview of the Learner Services Department, with specific emphasis upon the work undertaken to fulfill responsibilities related to the College strategic objective of Increase Participation, with specific emphasis upon Learner Services HUBS, careers services, safeguarding, mentoring, the positive impact of digital enhancements as a consequence of COVID-19 and also its objectives for the future.

361 It was observed that the pandemic had accelerated new and digitalised ways of working and as such, a question was raised related to whether such methods were to be made permanent. Confirmation was received that, via the Department's utilisation of different and progressive methods of engagement, team working had been enhanced and processes streamlined as well a greater alignment with the ways in which the College communicated with its learners and wider community. The Learner Services Manager advised that new ways of working would remain in place.

362 The Vice Chair asked for detail regarding the main challenge for the Department moving forward and the Learner Services Manager advised that the main area of focus related to the migration of management information systems. Governors were informed that the change in systems from REMs to ProSolution was welcomed, and that staff training undertaken to date had been received positively.

363 The pastoral support to learners by teaching staff, beyond that of learner services staff, was raised and in response governors were informed that all College staff were aware of the need to support the health, wellbeing and career aspirations of learners. As a result of being more equipped to offer support via the provision of training and materials provided by the College, staff had had the opportunity to be more reflective within this area and as such enhanced and more effective links from teaching staff through to learner support services had been created.

364 On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked the Learner Services Manager for the informative update and to the wider Department for their work undertaken to date.

DIGITAL FIRST STRATEGY

365 The Head of Digital Learning introduced the updated Digital First Strategy to the Board, where he also advised of the impact of the Digital Learning Department over the past 12-month period as well as the roadmap of priorities for the future to equip students, staff and stakeholders with the necessary skills to respond to the cultural and behavioral changes of a digitised society.

366 The findings from the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) were discussed, and confirmation received that inclusivity was at the heart Strategy as it sought to provide access to high quality digital support for all, with additional support for those with physical or learning difficulties with assistive technological tools such as Claro Software and enhanced accessibility features within Office 365. On the subject of Digital Poverty, the Strategy aimed to reduce barriers to learning via the provision of College IT resources on and off site.

367 The Board, together with the CEP thanked the Head of Digital Learning for the continuation of good work done by the College, inclusive of the sharing of best practice nationally on this subject throughout the pandemic.

368 **Resolved** that the updated Digital First Strategy be approved.

SAFEGUARDING TERM ONE REPORT

369 In addition to the safeguarding updates provided at each full Board meeting, the Assistant Principal – Learner Services/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) presented the Term One report to the Board for consideration, which provided detail related to the number of child protection, safeguarding and mentoring referrals made to the College's Safeguarding Team during term one of the 2020-21 academic year. As reported at the previous meeting (*minute 302-305 refers*), the DSL, together with the Safeguarding Governor, advised that the number of referrals had increased when compared to the previous academic year, which were largely linked to mental health; exacerbated by lockdown and the anxieties associated with COVID-19. The measures put into place to engage, maintain regular contact with and support Looked After Children at the College were also shared.

370 The Safeguarding Governor reported that Learner Voice meetings had served as a useful mechanism by which to receive feedback on this subject from the student body. He advised that a key item raised by students during the first round of Learner Voice meetings related to limited peer-on-peer contact during the national lockdown and its effect on health and wellbeing. As a consequence of such feedback, the work to support health and wellbeing via digital and remote platforms was shared along with the student feedback following the second round of Lerner Voice meetings, which had been positive.

371 **Resolved** that the term one safeguarding report for 2020-21 be approved.

HEALTH & SAFETY

372 The Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources updated the Board on Health & Safety matters (*also referred to under minute 374-377*). No incidents were reported.

CYBERSECURITY UPDATE

373 The Board received an update on cybersecurity from the Deputy Principal, where no issues were reported. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Audit Committee and Board, following the return of students to College from 8 March.

REOPENING UPDATE

374 The Deputy Chief Executive shared plans for the safe the return of staff and students to College from 8 March, in line with government guidance. Governors continued to endorse the College approach. The following information was highlighted:

- At the time of the meeting, preparations were being finalised for the roll out of a College-wide lateral flow rapid testing programme for both students and staff, of which included on site testing facilities at each campus for the first two weeks from 8 March. Additional staffing has been secured which enabled the testing programme to take place, at cost, some of which the College would be compensated for.
- Students would return mostly via bubbled timetables, which would be adjusted to accommodate increased practical time where necessary.
- One-way systems, hand sanitisation stations, increased cleaning, increased ventilation and all previously communicated COVID-safe measures would be in place, which also included face coverings in the classroom as well as in communal and corridor spaces.
- Updated College guidance for staff and students, inclusive of the risk assessment and detail following consultation for awarding grades in the summer of 2021, would be published following the Board meeting.
- Additional communications continued via the College website, posts on social media and via Staff Key Messages.

375 The effectiveness of remote working was discussed with regard to both uplifting the performance and work-life balance of staff. To support this, the CEP advised that, where possible, staff had been given the opportunity to flexibly with up to three days off site until Easter and following this, the College looked toward moving to a 60/40% model, whereby staff would be invited to spend 60% of the working week in College and 40% working flexibly from home.

COVID-19 Risk Register & Action Plan

376 The Board received the updated COVID-19 Risk-Register and Action Plan, where governors received detail on the ten key risks facing the College. The Deputy Principal advised that the graphs linked to each risk gave an indication of whether a risk had increased or decreased, specifically with regard to the spread of infection rates within the region. Attention was drawn to the addition of one new risk which related to the College-wide lateral flow rapid testing programme.

377 The rise in infection rates within the Tamworth area at the time of the meeting prompted the Chair to question if the College would be within its powers to close the Tamworth campus should the need arise. In response, the Clerk and CEP advised that, in accordance with government guidelines, any decision to close the College must be based on advice from Public Health England and the ESFA before taking action. In conclusion, the Board agreed that the College must continue its sharp focus upon the three key activities relating to testing, tracing and isolating affected individuals. Confirmation was received that whilst testing would be offered at all College sites and participation remained voluntary, the College would actively monitor and encourage staff and students to consent to take part in the programme.

378 On behalf of the Board, the Chair congratulated all College staff in the successful navigation of the College through the health pandemic.

COLLEGE VISION 2025

379 The CEP and Deputy Chief Executive updated the Board with regard to the work undertaken to develop and refine the College Vision 2025 following the review undertaken at the Board of Governors' Strategy Event held in November and Board meeting in December. The following draft Strategic Objectives and Values were presented for comment:

- Strategic Objectives:
 - Performance – *Be ambitious and to develop students high quality skills, maximising potential and leading to sustainable careers supported by excellent business services and facilities.*
 - Participation – *Be the first choice college by meeting the needs of local and regional priorities.*
 - Prosperity – *Remain a financially robust, sustainable and resilient organisation that can continue to develop and invest in its facilities, infrastructure and workforce.*
 - Provision – *Deliver demand led, well sequenced, high quality vocational, technical and professional skills in collaboration with others that lead to sustainable careers and employment.*
 - People – *High staff engagement through reward and recognition, development and health and wellbeing interventions.*
- Values:
 - Supportive
 - Transparent
 - Ambitious
 - Respectful
 - Sustainable

380 The Board agreed that the content of the reconfigured and more simplified framework, with particular regard to the formulation of the Five Ps and STARS, brought added value and facilitated more effective communication of the Vision. Following a review of the document, governors made the following observations:

- The fifth draft strategic objective, entitled People was well clear and well-articulated.
- Whilst the split between Performance and Provision offered differentiation between quality and curriculum, further work was to be done regarding the articulation of the narrative linked to the draft Performance objective.
- To emphasise accessibility, further reference to both equality and inclusion was to be detailed within the document.
- On Participation, further differentiation regarding what being 'the first choice college' meant for South Staffordshire College specifically.
- On responsiveness, further reference to adaptability be detailed within the framework.
- On Values, reference to the creation of opportunities and better horizons be detailed within the document.

381 **Resolved** that, subject to the amendments referred to under minute 380, the College Vision 2025 progress to the next stage of development.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

382 The Board received the Principal's report which was intended to enable the CEP to highlight key developments with reference to each of the College's strategic objectives and to report on key strategic issues affecting the College. Particular attention was drawn to the following areas:

Increase participation

- The CEP reported that whilst the number of College applications had reduced by 4.64% when compared to the same point in the previous academic year, the number of offers showed an increase of 69.32%.
- Further Open Events were planned throughout the year, on a virtual basis, until government lockdown restrictions eased.

383 Further reasoning behind the decline in applications was sought. The Assistant Principal – Learner Services reported that it was anticipated that the College would see a rise in application numbers following

the return to face-to-face education from 8 March, via increased encouragement and support of staff within educational settings. Since the time of writing the report, confirmation was received that numbers of applications had increased which had resulted in parity between 2019-20 and 2020-21 data. Plans for a summer marketing campaign were also shared.

384 In the event that the College saw further growth beyond that of 2020-21 within the 2021-22 academic year, a governor queried if the leadership team envisaged there being capacity-related issues. Confirmation was received that this would not be the case.

Current priorities for this objective:

- *Recruit adults to new programmes to ensure the funding target is achieved*
- *Recruit 16-18-year-old students early for 2021-22 intake*

Deliver outstanding teaching, learning and business services

- The partnership with Wolverhampton University was reported to have progressed well, particularly with regard to discussions related to new progression opportunities for learners on Level 3 programmes.
- New programmes with Wolverhampton University included a foundation degree in engineering and art and design, a degree in health and social care, Higher National Diploma and Higher National Certificates in computing and a higher apprenticeship in nursing.
- For 2022, new programmes were being developed with Wolverhampton University included, foundation degrees in business and public and uniformed services and also included provision within equine, games and animal behaviour and conservation and a possible HE/FE AgriSTEM curriculum at the Rodbaston site.
- The partnership with Staffordshire University continued for a select number of programmes, which included film and TV, early childhood studies, animal, computing and teacher education.

Current priorities for this objective:

- *To provide teachers with support from Digital Learning Technologists with 'live' online learning*
- *Target online virtual learning walks and provide support*
- *To support all new teaching staff with a Teaching and Learning Coach*
- *To closely monitor learner attendance and engagement in ASPIRE meetings and set actions*
- *To reinforce the new Quality Monitoring and Improvement process for 2020-21, focusing on the new ABC standards procedure and our learners at risk procedure*
- *Continue to focus on English and maths and its improvement*
- *Develop the 'supporting social isolation activities' further for learners*
- *Deliver the migration training programme for Microsoft Teams*
- *Review consultation outcomes and put in place a plan of action*
- *Support quality improvement in the apprenticeship provision*

Deliver excellence

Current priorities for this objective:

- *To continue to monitor attendance and retention*
- *To plan for learners to return to campus from 8 March onwards to complete practical assessments*
- *To complete curriculum planning validations and commence timetabling to quantify staffing requirements*
- *To monitor recruitment to adult programmes during the summer term to maximise AEB funding achievement*

Develop a highly engaged and skilled workforce

- Further to the February Board meeting (*minute 344 refers*), the Staff Supporting Change initiative was reported to have worked well, with sessions held every six weeks with both verbal and written responses communicated.

- The Staff Supporting Change initiative served as a forum which enabled areas for further development to be shared and improvement measures to be put in place. The following findings were shared:
 - Staff very happy that the CEP was involved in meetings.
 - Staff happy with the approach that the College had taken throughout the pandemic and were very complimentary on what was going well.
- Findings of the Employee Engagement Survey would be shared at a subsequent Board meeting, benchmarked against the York Survey.

Current priorities for this objective:

- *Complete the distribution of lecturer contracts and commence the distribution of business support contracts.*
- *To run training sessions for our managers on performance management and absence management.*

Achieve financial stability and improve efficiency

(Reported on under Management Accounts to 31 January 2021 and Two-Year Financial Forecast)

Current priorities for this objective:

- *Closely monitor income and expenditure against the Financial Plan for Faculties and closely scrutinise the curriculum plans for 2021-22.*
- *Work to ensure that the ESFA Condition grant and LEP grants are spent in a timely fashion*
- *Continue to monitor pay and non-pay costs across the College and ensure that further costs are avoided and savings are identified*
- *Start work on budgeting for 2021-22 including the capital expenditure process*
- *Financial work relating to the Tamworth Redevelopment including VAT reviews*

Other updates

385 The Principal's Report also detailed a number of other important updates, related to capital investment, the receipt of additional in-year funding. Key information following the publication of the Skills for Jobs White Paper was also shared.

KPIs

386 The updated KPIs report for 2020-21 was presented, which comprised of both dashboard screenshots and national average data. The Deputy Chief Executive drew attention to the following areas:

- The percentage of total Adult Education Budget, inclusive of WMCA, stood at 87% and therefore below the period profiled target due to the impact of COVID-19 and the January 2021 national lockdown. To remedy this, it was reported that adult provision, previously scheduled to commence from January, had been re-planned for later in the academic year.
- The percentage of Non-Levy Funding stood below the period profiled target due to a change in the way Reserve my Funds had been classified which in turn had been categorised as Levy funds.
- The percentage of total apprenticeship funding stood below the period profiled target which was confirmed to be largely as a result of the impact of COVID-19 restrictions and as such, the College remained hopeful of improvement in this area following an ease of government restrictions. Details related to a third-party company used by the College to generate increased apprenticeship activity were shared.
- Achievement for Apprentices (Timely Best Case) was confirmed to be less positive due to a combination of the impact of COVID-19 and also a number of apprentices that had passed their planned end date and who were yet to take end point assessments (*also referred to under minute 390 to 393*).

387 A question was raised regarding the reasoning why the January trend for the finance-related strategic objective had not been populated at the time papers were circulated. Confirmation was received that the KPI document had been prepared earlier in the month than in previous iterations which meant that the document had been issued prior to the finalisation of the management accounts (*referred to under minute 403 to 405*). Moving forward, financial information would also be reported under both the KPIs and management accounts items.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN (QIP)

388 The 2020-21 QIP was received, and governors were pleased to observe that good progress had been made overall. It was confirmed that the document had been reviewed by the Quality Recovery Group in advance of the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- Attendance was reported as good and above 1.3% KPI.
- Engagement with learners was good at 91.3% in December 2020, when compared with 89.4% at the same point in the previous academic year.
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment was reported to be good with 83% of sessions meeting or exceeding College expectations, of which 7% exceeded.
- 96% of learners would recommend the College to a friend.
- SSA3 continued to make good progress, with good attendance above College KPI and 98.7% of learners on track with improved learner satisfaction which stood 14% higher than national benchmarks.
- Good progress was made in GCSE resits which exceeded improvement made in 2019-20.
- A virtual supporting social isolation group was launched January, created so that learners could share tips on wellbeing, share study skills and to generate ideas for activities. From 1 March, the College had also introduced Fitness Fridays.
- Recent attendance figures within English and maths had improved although remained an area for improvement, along with a minority of learners' behaviour and attitudes towards English and maths.
- Apprenticeship provision remained an area of focus (*referred to under minute 390 to 393*)

389 A further QIP update would be provided at the May meeting.

QUALITY OF APPRENTICESHIPS PROVISION

390 The Assistant Principal – Quality confirmed that the first deep dive had commenced in the week commencing 16 November 2020, focused within Apprenticeships. The findings of which had been reviewed in advance of the meeting by the Quality Recovery Group. The report also detailed updated information regarding the remedial action that had taken place since the review. The following information was highlighted:

- In the best sessions, professional relationships and supportive approaches were demonstrated by staff during learning walks, which led to environments conducive to learning, and apprentices were confident to contribute to sessions and ask for further support where required.
- Smart Assessor was found to not be effectively used to track and monitor apprentices progress.
- Leaders, teachers and assessors to rapidly implement recommendations for improvement to ensure apprentices made speedy progress.
- Following the review, a quality consultant had been commissioned in order to work with the team and drive improvement at pace, in conjunction with the Quality Team.
- Following the review, expectations processes had commenced along with assessor review boards to ensure external targets were met.
- Following the review, significant work had been undertaken to implement the recommendations, particularly with regard to timely reviews, assessments and records management, which had since been centralised.

391 The Chair asked what proportion of the findings could be attributed to the impact of the health pandemic. The Assistant Principal advised that, in excess of 200 apprentices had been furloughed over the 12-month period and as such, apprenticeship provision had been negatively affected by COVID-19. Confirmation was received that, at the time of the meeting, the Quality Team were working with each area, assessor and apprentice to establish the extent of COVID-19 impact.

392 A member of the Quality Improvement Group confirmed that the findings of the review were discussed at its February meeting and, whilst governors were disappointed with the outcome, assurance had been taken with regard to the actions that had been developed post review. Moreover, the governor stated that additional assurance had been received following the review of and discussions that followed the updated Bord paper in question, which demonstrated the positive impact since the last meeting. It was agreed that the focus of the Board must be on the fix and the leadership team on resolving the areas requiring development.

392 A question was raised with regard to the date by which Ofsted inspections would recommence. The Assistant Principal confirmed that full inspections were scheduled to recommence in the summer term and as such, the College had prepared for a full inspection to be undertaken during this timeframe.

393 **Resolved** that an update on the quality of apprenticeships provision be reported at the May 2021 Board meeting.

ENGLISH & MATHS UPDATE

394 An English and maths update was received by the Board, reviewed in advance of the meeting by the Quality Improvement Group. Particular attention was drawn to the following:

- English and maths provision remained an area of focus at the College.
- Utilisation across the maths and English department remained at 95.81% but was still driven by the collegiate target of 97%. Governors were advised that, via the delivery and support of group catch up sessions, the figure was expected to rise further, funded by the 16-19 Tuition Fund.
- Attendance across English and maths was confirmed to have increased from 79.3% to 80.1% since November and despite the uplift, nevertheless required further improvement. Areas of particular improvement as a consequence of interventions put into place had been identified within media, construction and hair and beauty at between 6-7% respectively.
- November saw learners offered the chance to resit their English and maths exams following the Centre Assessed Grades process in 2019-20. Grade boundaries for the November resits were relaxed to take into consideration loss of learning as a result of COVID-19 with results confirmed as:
 - English: 51% (25/49) learners achieved a grade 4+ (high grade) in their November retake (National Mides High Grades 2020: 36%)
 - Maths: 29.8% (17/57) learners achieved a grade 4+ (high grade) in their November retake (National Mides High Grades 2020: 28%)
- English and maths learners had made progress, with further development required within English. Following Assessment Point 2, confirmation was received that 24% of learners achieved a high grade in English and 42% of learners achieved a high grade in maths.

MARKETING, EVENTS & COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY UPDATE

395 The Board received an update on recent developments in marketing and events including commercial activity. The report also provided detail of findings following an evaluation exercise of the College summer campaign, used to inform future events. Attention was drawn to the following points:

- COVID-19 had significantly impacted College events, however Rodbaston Hall remained visible throughout the pandemic via website updates and shared content via social media and wedding platforms, which resulted in increased enquiries over the summer months and a reduction during the autumn and winter as government restrictions heightened.
- The College had enrolled 2500 students aged 16-18 in 2020-21, 9% above set target, supported by new and digitalised ways of working.
- Market share for 16-19 students increased by 1% in core recruitment area, by 2% in the Tamworth core area, by 1% in Lichfield, maintained across Rodbaston and increased by 5% in Cannock, as reported by Vector analysis.
- Market share for adults in core areas increased by 3%, maintained in Tamworth, increased by 4% in Rodbaston, increased by 2% in Lichfield and increased by 7% in Cannock, as reported by Vector analysis.
- The Marketing Team had received two silver awards in the national FE First Awards in November 2020, in a virtual ceremony held on Monday 30th November 2020 in categories of Best Digital and Social media campaign and Marketing Team of the Year.
- In light of the health pandemic, open events from October were arranged as bookable events to manage safety, in line with government guidelines. It was reported that all events were well attended, with an additional physical open event scheduled to take place in May, subject to government restrictions in place at that time.
- The Animal Zone continued to undertake virtual activities throughout the pandemic which had in turn supported animal care learners in their studies.

MINUTES

Board

- 396 **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2021 be approved as a true and accurate record.

Action Grid

- 397 The Board reviewed the action grid, noting the actions completed and progress made on actions and matters arising identified at the Board meeting held on 12 February 2021.

Quality Improvement Group

398 The Chair of the Quality Recovery Group presented the minutes following the last meeting held on 10 February 2021 and commented that many of the points discussed during the Board meeting had previously been covered at length at the latest meeting of the task group (illustrated within the minutes), where the quality of apprenticeship provision remained an area of sharp focus. Attention was drawn to the fact that as of the February meeting, 95.2% of students were still on track and attendance was confirmed to be high at 91.2%, which demonstrated the impact of positive digitised forms of pedagogical delivery and student support offered by the College throughout the lockdown period. Discussions with regard to the measures to support and uphold mental health had been reported as well as improved performance within English and maths, which continued to be closely monitored by the Group. In addition to Learner Voice involvement, virtual visits to student groups had also been reported to have been scheduled.

399 A discussion took place with regard to the Group's recommendation to remove the requirement for standalone reporting on SSA3 moving forward, given the good progress evidenced, which had in turn resulted in an uplift in performance due to a combination of new leadership, management and intervention to drive forward areas of development, inclusive of the positive changes to the attitudes and behaviour of staff. Given the improvements made and that developments within the area would continue to be documented as individual item within the QIP, the Board resolved to support the recommendation. On behalf of the Board, the Chair congratulated SSA3 colleagues and all who played a role in the improvements of the area.

- 400 **Resolved** that, given the good progress made, the requirement for standalone reporting on SSA3 be removed.

TWO-YEAR FINANCIAL REFORECAST

401 An updated two-year financial reforecast was received with following information was highlighted:

- Additional in year 16-18 growth funding provided by the ESFA at £692k, combined with an additional £146k of Teachers' Pension Scheme financial support for the remaining year of £146k had been reflected within the financial forecast.
- Additional staff costs of £140k had been added to the forecast to finance a College wide pay award.
- Additional staff costs to the value of £150k related to increased teaching and contingencies had been incorporated into the forecast
- For contingencies, additional non-pay costs to the value of £100k had been built into the forecast
- The surplus balance of £448k was reflected within profit lines and also used as the basis of increased cashflow.
- The updated covenant compliance calculations presented reflected the revised levels from Lloyds, confirmed in February and, at the time of the meeting, the College did not anticipate any covenant risk within either 2020-21 or 2021-22 academic year.
- The College budget for 2021-22 would be presented to the Board at its July 2021 meeting for consideration.

402 The subject of the final 2020-21 financial forecasted position was raised and the Board were advised that operating surplus was anticipated to fall from a surplus position of £10k to a deficit of £68k.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 JANUARY 2021

403 The Board received the management accounts to 31 January 2021. The operating position detailed within the document presented showed a surplus position of £194k against a profiled deficit of £140k. The following information was highlighted:

- Financial accounts for 2019-20 had been submitted and financial health was confirmed as Good, with 2020-21 budget and forecasts also assessed as Good.
- The management accounts reflected the positive impact of ESFA 16-18 in-year growth and Teachers Pension Scheme funding to the value of £838k.
- To cope with the additional learner numbers, there had been a rise in staff costs, particularly in teaching and student support as well as higher cleaning costs due to the controls in response to COVID-19.
- Other income lines were reported to be adverse to budget by £186k overall, with Catering, Residences and Conferences and Transport income reduced with the continuation of the national lockdown and the restriction on commercial activities.
- The College had identified staff who could be furloughed for the length of the lockdown which would in turn generate a grant of around £46k per month.
- As a consequence of heightened government restrictions in response to the health pandemic,
- Changes have been made to transport routes from January 2021 to make cost savings of c£40k, including savings during lockdown.
- Cash balances continued to be significantly ahead of forecast.

404 Covenant compliance was raised and governors were assured that no covenant issues were anticipated. To support the Board in the identification of potential risk points looking forward into the next academic year the Deputy Principal advised that, whenever a reforecast was completed, the covenant appendix was also updated to illustrate compliance, which, in respect of the February reforecast, had been completed for the academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22. Confirmation was received that the FE Commissioner's guidelines stated that, as a minimum, Colleges should have greater than 25 days cash in hand at any point, which the College illustrated was in place. Compliance with the requirements of the College banking providers was also confirmed, details of which would be incorporated into cashflow forecasts moving forward.

405 A governor asked for detail related to the total financial impact of COVID and whether any further costs could be reclaimed. In addition to furlough grants, the Deputy Principal stated that whilst the College would be able to reclaim payment per each test carried out via the lateral flow testing centres from March, it was unlikely that the College would recoup a significant proportion of the £35k of cost to run the centres for two weeks. In the recent submission of the Financial Accounts, he stated that it was estimated that current year additional COVID costs were £506k and loss of income stood at £885k, some of which had been offset subsequently by the additional 16-18 funding.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR CANNOCK COLLEGE TO 31 JANUARY 2021

406 The Board received the Management Accounts to 31 January 2021 for Cannock College which illustrated that, following the reopening of the campus, it had since produced a positive financial contribution to the College overall. In addition to financial viability, a discussion took place with regard to the enhanced curriculum offer at the site when compared to the point at which it closed, illustrated by the increased numbers of learners enrolled on programmes year on year following its re-opening. The CEP went on to advise that, moving forward, the new Digital Hub, together with new curriculum developments at the site would enhance the student experience and opportunities for the local community further.

VALUE FOR MONEY REPORT

407 A report was received which detailed the arrangements in place which routinely ensured that value for money was sought as part of the College's normal day-to-day activities, via to the improvement of academic outcomes for all learners, over delivery against funding contracts, collaboration with stakeholders and partners, procurement and income generation.

STAFF PAY AWARD

408 Further to the announcement of additional ESFA 16-18 in-year growth and Teachers Pension Scheme funding to the value of £838k, the affordability of a pay award was considered, up to the value of

1.5% for the whole of the College workforce, including Senior Postholders (SPHs) and the Clerk, which enabled the College to move to the Association of Colleges (AoC) recommended pay scales.

409 Pre discussions had by the Remuneration Committee were drawn upon whereby decision-making had been considered against the overarching pay award principles of financial stability and affordability. The Chair of the Committee reported that, in recognition of the improvements in both leadership and governance, a recommendation had been made to approve the pay award for SPHs and the Clerk, subject to the same decision being reached for all other employees of the College.

410 **Resolved** that a pay award up to the value of 1.5% be awarded to all College staff, inclusive of SPHs and the Clerk to the Corporation, to enable salaries to be aligned with AoC recommended pay scales.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

411 Updated Financial Regulations were presented and reviewed. Attention was drawn to the changes in the document following its last review in October 2020 which related to tendering procedures.

412 **Resolved** that the updated Financial Regulations be approved.

POLICY APPROVALS

413 The Board received the following revised policies that were due for re-approval:

- i. Medication Policy
- ii. IT User Policy (Student Facing)
- iii. Fees Policy

414 Governors were advised of any material changes to the policies, including feedback from student governors where appropriate. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) analysis had been reviewed by a member of the Board in advance of the meeting with records shared within the electronic Governors' Area for reference.

415 **Resolved** that the policies be approved.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9am, Friday, 7 May 2021

Chair

Date