



**WOKING COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING**

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 4.15pm  
Learning Resource Centre, Woking College**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Tim Stokes</b>	<b>Chair</b>
	<b>Rob Kemp</b>	<b>Vice Chair</b>
	<b>Jonathan Miles</b>	
	<b>Rosh Sellahewa</b>	
	<b>Alastair MacAulay</b>	
	<b>Ray Marks</b>	<b>Member</b>
	<b>Brett Freeman</b>	<b>Principal</b>
<b>In Attendance:</b>	<b>Heads of Year</b>	
	<b>Heads of Department</b>	
	<b>Assistant Directors</b>	
	<b>Nuweed Rasaq</b>	<b>Deputy Principal</b>
	<b>Fiona Munday</b>	<b>Finance Director</b>
	<b>Laura Cook</b>	<b>Assistant Principal</b>
	<b>Barbara Maude</b>	<b>Clerk to the Board of Trustees</b>

	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>ANNUAL CONFERENCE WITH HEADS OF DEPARTMENT/YEARS</b>  <b>Welcome by Chair &amp; Principal</b>            The Chair and Principal welcomed both Trustees, Ray Marks (Member) and all staff to the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>Opportunity for Trustees to meet College Heads of Department</b>            Tables had been set up around the room at which a number of Heads of Department (HoD), Heads of Year (HoY) and Associate Directors had been seated and each Trustee and Member was invited to join a table. The small, informal discussion groups provided an opportunity for staff to talk directly with an individual Trustee concerning the challenges they had faced over the last academic year and their thoughts and expectations on the year ahead. There was no planned agenda or set topics for discussion just the opportunity for Trustees to hear from staff directly. After approximately 20 minutes the Trustees rotated moving to another table.</p> <p>At the end of the session, the Principal thanked all staff who then left the meeting.</p> <p>After a short refreshment break the Board reconvened and the Chair asked for feedback from fellow Trustees as to what they had learnt from their discussions with staff.</p>	

	<p>Trustees reported that they had enjoyed the informal format and the common areas of discussion had centred on the pastoral support provided by the College, and the implications of the recent cyber-attack. Whilst staff were very positive about the overall experience for students during lockdown, and in particular, the levels of pastoral support provided during the pandemic, some had queried about the support available for teaching staff teams. In addition, some staff had reflected that they had found online teaching much harder whereas others had found it to be positive and actually felt that they had got to know their students better through the process. Overall the staff had found that new students this year were taking longer to socialise and to adapt to College routines than in previous years and felt that they would require additional pastoral support to help them address effectively the missing years. Many staff had found the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) process to be challenging and some expressed uncertainty about further lockdowns.</p> <p>Staff felt that the cyber-attack had a material impact and necessitated a major re-building exercise. The groups had discussed staff turnover which was statistically high but due to the pandemic staff that may have moved at the end of 2020 had remained and by 2021 there was effectively a doubling of staff turnover, with staff leaving for largely positive reasons, so there was a mixture of old hands and new faces.</p>																										
	<b>WOKING COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING</b>																										
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence &amp; Declarations of Interest</b> The Chair convened the formal part of the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cullum Mitchell, Mike Mulheron and Yasmin Aslam. The apologies were agreed. Ben Smith and Anne Middleton were absent. No Trustee or Member or SLT declared any pecuniary interest or other direct or indirect personal interest in any item on the agenda.</p>																										
2.	<p><b>Introduction to the Board Meeting</b> The Principal confirmed that the strategic intent of the meeting was to ensure that the Board could strategically assess where the College was at this moment in time and to enable them to do so the meeting would provide an overview of the summer 2020/21 examination results, a financial summary including a review of the July Management Accounts, a site update and a confidential report from the IT specialists, SRM on the cyber-attack investigation.</p>																										
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b> The Board received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and approved for signature by the Chair.</p>																										
4.	<p><b>Matters arising</b> To review any matters arising</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="188 1659 1342 1984"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>By whom</th> <th>By when</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Student Focus Group</td> <td>TST/BFR</td> <td>End of Summer Term 2020/21</td> <td>Deferred until Autumn 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Staff Focus Group</td> <td>TST/BFR</td> <td>End of Summer Term 2020/21</td> <td>Deferred until Autumn 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Capital Projects update - OWCC, Post 16 Capacity Fund bid; Outdoor social space</td> <td>BFR</td> <td>Item 5</td> <td>Ongoing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td>Cyber Attack/Insurance costs</td> <td>BFR</td> <td>Item 5</td> <td>Ongoing</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			By whom	By when	Status	1.	Student Focus Group	TST/BFR	End of Summer Term 2020/21	Deferred until Autumn 2021	2.	Staff Focus Group	TST/BFR	End of Summer Term 2020/21	Deferred until Autumn 2021	3.	Capital Projects update - OWCC, Post 16 Capacity Fund bid; Outdoor social space	BFR	Item 5	Ongoing	4.	Cyber Attack/Insurance costs	BFR	Item 5	Ongoing	
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	<p>The Chair confirmed that the Student and Staff Focus Groups would be held during the autumn term as soon as convenient dates could be arranged.</p> <p>Both the capital projects update and a report on the cyber-attack were existing agenda items and would be picked up later in the meeting.</p> <p>In a change to the sequencing of the agenda, the Chair advised that the Board would take the Financial Update as the next item.</p>	<b>TST</b>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Financial Update</b></p> <p>The Finance Director gave an overview of the College’s financial position, noting that the July Management Accounts showed an operating surplus better than the budgeted surplus to date due to receipt of some unforeseen income and staff savings. There had also been revisions in terms of technology costs, repairs and maintenance, premises and administration costs.</p> <p>The cyber security costs were discussed which included the costs to rebuild certain applications, the papercut photocopying facility and ongoing IT consultancy costs. 3 claims had been submitted for the expenditure incurred in the restoration and rebuilding of the College’s IT network but realistically not all of the expenditure incurred would be met by the insurance policy.</p> <p>In terms of the CIF bid for the replacement windows, as had been mentioned in previous meetings, whilst the College had received funds towards the project, due to issues of supply and increased costs the contract price had effectively doubled. This meant that the College could proceed with the project and pay twice as much or install only half of the windows. SLT had decided to put the project on hold until Summer 2022 as it was now not feasible, in any event, to proceed with the fitting of new windows with students in College and most contractors had already been booked for projects. The ESFA had approved the request to delay the project following the submission of a scope change request made by the College in July 2021.</p> <p>In respect of the year end, as had been agreed previously by the Board, the scope of the internal audit had been changed to reflect the implications of the cyber-attack. In respect of the external audit of the College’s financial statements this was due in October and the Finance Director drew to the Board’s attention the point that due to the loss of key financial data, whilst she anticipated that the College would still achieve a clean audit, she had had a conversation with the auditors, due to the implications of the cyber-attack, of the possibility of a qualified audit opinion.</p> <p>Also due to the financial implications of the cyber-attack, the associated IT costs and the general inflationary pressures that were starting to come through, SLT had made a decision to complete a revised budget for 2021/22. SLT advised that suppliers across the board were increasing costs and increases of 10% were not uncommon. Trustees discussed both the rationale behind introducing a revised budget as opposed to noting variances and the extent of the Colleges reserves.</p> <p>The Finance Director confirmed that she anticipated that the revised budget would reflect a more modest surplus with the Principal assuring the Board that SLT would not allow the quality of teaching and learning to suffer due to lack of resources. The College was not holding back on spending and they all recognised the amount of money needed to rebuild the IT network.</p>	

In terms of student numbers there were currently 1,473 students on roll, a little down on the anticipated 1,500 but this did mean that the College had cover staff available so recruitment for the year ahead was possibly going to be more limited.

The Board thanked the Finance Director, who then left the meeting.

**6. Examination Results 2021**

The Board received an analysis of examination results for the academic year 2020/21 from Laura Cook, Assistant Principal.

The Assistant Principal advised that a more informative comparison could be made by comparing this years' examination results to those of 2018/19. This was because in 2019/20, students had completed in March, and had not returned to College so there was no student drop out post March 2020. Comparing the results to those of 2018/19 was therefore more realistic as this year students had continued up to the summer term.

The overall summary of results was as follows:

	Sixth form			Adults			Total		
	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21
Achievement rate (%)	91.4	96.2	92.8	86.3	92.1	88.8	91	95.4	92.3
Pass rate (%)	98.3	99.5	98.1	89.4	94	89.2	97.6	98.5	97
GCSE Average	5.6	4.9	4.58	3.6	3.2	2.6	5.6	4.9	4.4
Attendance (%)	97.8	98.3	96.9	95.1	99.7	96.2	97.8	98.3	96.8
Retention (%)	95	96.6	94.5	96.6	98	99.4	95.1	96.8	95.2
High Pass rate (%)	56.5	69.1	67.3	15.9	35.3	87.3	53.3	69.2	67.7

As already mentioned, the data for last years' cohort was slightly higher across the Board due to the cessation of term in March.

In terms of Level 3 the results were as follows:

	18/19	19/20	20/21
Achievement rate (%)	91.6	96.8	93.3
Pass rate (%)	98.4	99.95	99.2
GCSE Average	5.9	5.25	5.18
Retention (%)	95.3	96.9	94.1
High Pass rate (%)	59.4	68.4	66.4

The results for A level were noted below, with both achievement rates and retention rates being slightly lower than in either 2018/19 or 2019/20 reflecting, in the opinion of SLT, the impact of 2 years of disrupted education.

	18/19	19/20	20/21
Achievement rate (%)	96.8	96.9	94.2
Pass rate (%)	98.4	99.9	99
GCSE Average	6.3	5.97	5.8
Retention (%)	98.4	96.9	95.2
High Pass rate (%)	46.8	63	59%

Vocational results, however, were pleasing across the board.

	18/19	19/20	20/21
Achievement rate (%)	92.1	96.8	92.2
Pass rate (%)	100	100	99.3
GCSE Average	5.1	4.31	4.4
Retention (%)	92.1	96.8	92.9
High Pass rate (%)	74.8	74.7	74.6

In terms of the ALPS Value Added Grades, the Assistant Principal reminded Trustees that the value added range ran from 1 to 9 with 1 being the strongest grade (top 1%) and 9 the weakest (bottom 1%).

A level results had achieved a Grade 2 which put the College in the top 20% and vocational grades achieved a Grade 3 which put the College in the top 25%. Trustees noted that Music had maintained its ALPS Grade 1 which was to be commended.

<b>ALPS Value Added Grade</b>			
	18/19	19/20	20/21
<b>A-level</b>	3	2	2
<b>A-level High Grades</b>	3	2	2
<b>Vocational</b>	3	3	3

The Assistant Principal also advised Trustees that the College had been fair and rigorous in the compilation of Teacher Assessed Grades and did not believe that there had been any grade inflation.

In terms of both Level 1 and Level 2 courses retention had remained strong at 98.8% and 97.2% respectively. Level 1 courses were Functional English and Maths and Tourism and the Level 1 cohort often did not have English as a first language and enrolled at the College with a low GCSE average. There were also very few Colleges in the area that offered Level 1 or Level 2 courses so the College was very pleased with the results achieved.

#### **Level 1**

	16-18			19+			All		
	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21
Achievement rate (%)	76.3	90.1	83.8	86.1	94	89.4	81.4	93.1	87.7
Pass rate (%)	91	93	87.7	86.1	94	89.4	88.3	93.8	88.9
GCSE Average	3.4	2.6	2.34	4.3	4.6	2.69	3.5	2.6	2.6
Retention (%)	84.4	96.9	95.6	100	100	100	92.7	99.2	98.8
<b>Level 2</b>									
	16-18			Adult Learners			All		
	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21
Achievement rate (%)	93.3	95.7	94.1	85	81.9	85.9	91.8	93.5	94.4
Pass rate (%)	98.9	100	97.2	90.8	92.5	87.2	97.4	98.9	97.1
GCSE Average	4	3.1	3.06	3.8	3.08	2.33	4	3.1	3.1
Retention (%)	94.5	95.7	96.8	93.7	88.6	96.9	94.3	98.9	97.2
High Pass rate (%)	53	78.5	69.8	18.5	84.9	87.2	46.6	79.4	68.7
<p>In terms of areas for development then in respect of A level provision the focus was on Film, English Literature, Philosophy, RS, Classical civilisations and Criminology. New staff were now in post to deliver these subjects.</p> <p>In respect of vocational provision then the focus was on Business, IT and Law. For example, whilst the teaching had been good in these areas the ALPS score was lower (6) and this needed to move to a Grade 3. Level 3 A level retention was also highlighted as an area for development.</p> <p>Trustees asked that in future it would be helpful to see a chart reflecting those areas that achieved an ALPS Grade of 3 or higher. Trustees also asked for confirmation of any areas that had a higher ALPS grade but also had low student numbers. In terms of low numbers this was seen most in modern languages with French having now been dropped although the numbers remained good for Spanish. Latin had only three students this year but this would be the last year that it was offered by the College.</p> <p>SLT confirmed that all areas of development would be reflected in the College's Self- Assessment Report 2020/21 and the Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22. Trustees would be invited, outside of the meeting, to attend SAR Review meetings taking place at the end of the month.</p> <p>Finally, In terms of enrolments the current number was 1,474, comprising 756 Year 12's; 86 Level 2 and 632 Year 13's.</p>									
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>College Briefing Update</b></p> <p>The Board received a progress report on capital projects from Brett Freeman, Principal and the Cyber Security Confidential Report prepared by S-RM Intelligence and Risk Consulting Limited (S-RM).</p> <p>Turning first to site issues, the Windows CIF bid had already been covered by the Finance Director earlier in the meeting.</p>								

<p>In respect of the OWCC, planning meetings were continuing fortnightly with the project expected to commence In April 2022 with drama spaces being made available to the College from September 2022 and the music rooms from January 2023. The Principal continued to have regular discussions with the Woking Borough Council CEO over an anticipated shortfall of CIL money available from the Council. Final financial figures would not be clear until tenders had been received and the Principal confirmed, for the avoidance of doubt, that the College had made no financial commitment to the project as yet and would not do so until the total maximum spend by the College was clear.</p> <p>The Board were very clear that they did not wish to be in a position whereby if WBC were unable to inject as much money as anticipated at the start of the project the College would be left to fund an increased share. The Principal re-iterated that it was fully understood that Trustees would not commit to the project if the total maximum spend by the College was unclear. Before the College committed to spending any capital there would be a full account of College liabilities from WBC so that the Board could review, challenge and approve the College’s financial contribution to the project. Furthermore, by way of additional assurance, the Principal advised that the ESFA would, in any event, not allow any spend by the College until the underlease of 125 years had been completed.</p> <p>It was possible that there would need to be some value engineering as works to the existing windows, roof and some of the internal refurbishment of the community areas may need to be removed in order to reduce costs.</p> <p>The ESFA had agreed to the College’s application for the OWCC satellite centre with the proviso that planning permission is granted and as such the College were waiting on the October WBC planning meeting for this confirmation.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would be helpful for Trustees to see the proposed graphics of the OWCC at the next meeting.</p> <p>In terms of the CIF capacity bid, the College had not been successful. The similar Post 16 capacity fund bid had been submitted (to build the teaching block at the front of the College) and an announcement was expected in the autumn term although it was high unlikely that even if successful such a project could be completed by the end of next year. If student growth was not excessive then the College could potentially cope next academic year especially now that the two porta cabins had been installed. Both in terms of appearance and usefulness the portacabins were very pleasing as they provided two additional classrooms and an overflow LRC with 30 computers for independent study.</p> <p>The external student shelter had unfortunately been delayed by supply issues but it was anticipated that it would be completed by half term in time for colder weather.</p> <p>Turning to the Incident Investigation Report prepared by SRM then much of the content had already been provided to the Board via the Principal’s report at the last meeting.</p> <p>However, the stated purpose of the report was to provide a timeline of events relating to the incident, a summary of the actions taken by SRM and the College to respond to the incident and then to outline the findings of SRM’s forensic investigation.</p> <p>However, the Board noted that the most significant finding was that SRM assessed that the incident had been contained. The threat actor’s access to the College’s environment had been</p>	<p><b>BFR</b></p>
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	<p>removed and the estate had been protected against further attacks from the threat actor in connection with the incident. An endpoint detection and response tool had been deployed across the College’s environment and the College’s previous remote access solution had been decommissioned and replaced with a secure alternative.</p> <p>The threat actor had exfiltrated approximately 175GB of data from the College’s and SRM had identified the use of certain search terms such as “billing” and “payroll”. Whilst it was still possible that the ransomware group could release the exfiltrated data on the dark web it was suspected that they had not been able to obtain any useful data.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that the ransomware group had not published any of the College’s data at the current time and they had made no attempts to contact the College since the incident.</p> <p>Trustees queried what was the likely nature of the exfiltrated data but the Principal advised that SRM could only say the amount of data that had been exfiltrated and not exactly what it was.</p> <p>The College had kept the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) up to date with all developments and whilst they had not yet closed the case SLT did not believe that they would be taking any further action.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>The Clerk requested that all Trustees complete and return to her, if they had not done so already the Declaration of Gifts &amp; Hospitality for 2020/21 and the Register of Interests for 2021/22</p>	
9.	<p><b>Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the next meeting of the Board would take place on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 6.30pm.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Confidential Agenda Item for Trustees</b></p> <p>It was agreed that this item would be minuted separately.</p>	