



**SUMMIT LEARNING TRUST**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD OF  
SOLIHULL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE  
HELD AT THE SCHOOL AT 5.00 PM ON WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2019**

PRESENT:	Mr O Ahmed	
	Mr L Banks	
	Mr J Bridges	- Chair
	Mrs L Gearing	
	Miss S March	- Student Governor
	Mrs S Shingler	
	Mr M Sullivan	- Principal
	Ms C Sweeney	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs J Hamilton	- Vice Principal
	Mrs M Kaur – Clerk	
	Mr Jamie Staddon	-Vice Principal
CONSENT TO ABSENCE:	Ms J Edwards	
	Mrs H Glass	- Education Improvement Director

0060     **APOLOGIES AND WELCOME**

Governors were welcomed to the first meeting of the new academic year. A particular welcome was extended to Miss S March, newly appointed Student Governor and introductions were made around the table.

**APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD**

0061     **RESOLVED:**     That Services4Schools be appointed as Clerk to the Local Governing Board for the 2019/20 academic year.

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST/CONFIDENTIALITY/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Attention was drawn to the Articles of Association relating conflicts of interest, including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest.

Governors were advised that if a person had any interest in a contract, proposed contract or matter under consideration, s/he should disclose the fact and take no part in the consideration, discussion or vote in respect of the contract or matter and withdraw from the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

Governors were reminded that care should be taken to ensure that they were aware of agenda items of a confidential nature. In addition, they were advised to ensure that minutes of their meetings did not include information of a confidential nature as the draft minutes were considered public documents as soon as approved by the Chair of the meeting.

The Clerk requested that Governors consider if any items were of a confidential nature. Governors were advised that these items should be considered in private.

Governors were reminded of the automated process of registering any business interests and requested to complete this process for the 2019/2020 academic year.

The Clerk stressed that accurate email addresses for Governors were essential to ensure that they received meeting papers and other communication and requested that any changes to details were notified to the Clerk or S4S Governor Services Department. Governors were also reminded that they were able to check and update their own details on GovernorHub. Governors considered whether contact details should be shared amongst the Board.

Governors had received the Summit Learning Trust Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) with their agenda packs.

- 0062      **RESOLVED:**
- i. That Governor email addresses and phone numbers be shared amongst the Local Governing Board, solely for the purposes of communication in relation to the role of Governor;
  - ii. That the Summit Learning Trust Code of Conduct be approved for the 2019/20 academic year.

0063      **CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR 2019/20**

It was confirmed that Mr J Bridges had been appointed Chair and Ms J Edwards was appointed Vice Chair to the Local Governing Board for the 2019-20 academic year.

**APPOINTMENT OF LINK GOVERNORS**

- 0064      **RESOLVED:**      That the Link Governors detailed below be approved until the first meeting of the 2020/21 academic year:

Safeguarding/Child Protection – Ms J Edwards	
SEND	– Luke Banks
Careers/Employability	- Mrs L Gearing

0065 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Governors considered items of Any Other Business and agreed that the following be discussed immediately:

**Skills Audits**

The Chair advised that it had been normal practice in the College to keep a record of skills and capabilities within the Governing Board and there was a need to ensure that this remained updated. The Governance Skills Audit had recently been revised and all Governors were required to complete this in order to identify any skills gaps. Governors were provided with the assurance that all information provided would be used for the sole purpose of the skills audit.

**ACTION:** That Governors complete the Governance Skills Audit and email these to either the Clerk or the Chair.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

0066 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday 4 July 2019, be approved as a correct record.

0067 **MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD**

Governors were informed that there was one vacancy for a Y12 Student Governor on the Local Governing Board and an election for this was due to take place in November 2019.

The Clerk reported that there were no terms of office that were due to come to an end before the date of the next meeting.

The Clerk added that there were no attendance issues to report.

**SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

**A Governor queried the support and expertise that Governors at the College received as they identified that the College was unique as a School within the Trust** and was advised that it was the Governing Board's responsibility to represent the College and it was important to build a rapport and work in aligned accordance with the Trust.

**ACTION:** That any queries with regards to the Scheme of Delegation be forwarded to the Chair.

0068 **RESOLVED:** That the Scheme of Delegation from Summit Multi-Academy Learning Trust be adopted for the 2019/20 academic year.

0069 **ANY URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR**

There were no actions to be reported.

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Governors had received the Principal's Executive Summary in advance of the meeting. Governors' attention was drawn to the following matters:

- There was a significant improvement in value added to minus 0.15.

**The Chair recognised that there was progress at the three data points, which was encouraging, so this was a continuing trend** and was advised that there were areas of concerns but significant improvements had been made as a results of major developments that had been put in place at the College. It was anticipated that the trend would continue.

**A Governor asked how this compared against the national trend** and was advised that Solihull Sixth Form College (SSFC) were slightly below national in the sixth form college sector, but not significantly. Sixth Form Colleges tend to have better outcomes than national A Level providers. In January, data would be available to compare SSFC against all national A Level providers so clearer comparisons would be made.

**A Governor queried the reduction in enrolments and asked what the impact would be over the next 12 months** and was advised that there had been two consecutive decreases to the cohort, from 2300 enrolments two years ago to 2000 enrolments this year. This had now impacted on funding and in-year action had been taken.

**A Governor asked if there would be an impact on curriculum** and was advised that had been an impact on subject areas, but there was an ongoing shift towards Science and Maths, so humanities had been affected in the main. Dance classes had been removed, however the fall in numbers were a result of demographic change and the College had projected numbers in line with this; numbers had increased by approximately 40 students in September 2019 from what had been projected.

**The Chair queried whether this would identify that staffing would need to remain in line with number** and was advised that this was the case. At the open day, attendance would be considered, in order to indicate an increase in numbers. Although numbers had fallen, this did not follow in a linear pattern. Accounting had been introduced as a subject and had 60 students currently and last year Criminology was introduced where there were currently 200 students. Importance was placed on understanding the market and what the students desired. The College's USP was to have a range of subjects to maintain a competitive advantage.

- Section 2 highlighted the strengths identified by the College and OFSTED.
- Section 3 identified the areas of improvement and it was noted that gaps had been narrowed where progress of students from black and dual heritage had improved. The group where there continued to be a widening gap was Pakistani.

**The Chair noted that it was likely that Ofsted inspectors would speak to Governors** and it was confirmed that Link Governors were likely to be approached.

**A Governor asked how much notice Ofsted were required to provide** and was advised that this was two days.

**The Chair queried whether it would be useful to provide advice and guidance to Governors** and was advised that it would be beneficial to outline to Governors what SSFC had put in place since the last inspection and to discuss results and change.

- Governors were referred to the results analysis (Appendix 2) which indicated a significant improvement in value added; the graph identified how the value added had changed.

**The Chair asked if these figures were provisional** and was advised that this was the case as the system compared results from this time last year.

**The Chair asked if further a further data set would be available in January** and it was confirmed that this was the case; a national data set for the summer would be released which the College were unable to access at this time.

- The number of missed grades were provided on page 2 of the data sheet.
- The pass rate had improved significantly which meant that this year, there was only one student who had received three U grades compared to three years ago; this demonstrated that more students would be able to progress into work or university. The number of U grades had dropped by 100 which was positive.
- In the subject analysis, all of the main areas of concern had shown improvement. Drama was the only subject not to have improved and in Photography, there had been a move from a decrease in value added to an increase in value added and this was likely to be positive.

**The Chair asked how much of the data depended on year to year variability and natural variability and how much did the data inform improvement planning** and was advised that the ongoing areas of concern were Biology, Chemistry, PE and Computing. SSFC had a responsibility to ensure that there were a bulk of subjects in value added and there were always likely to be circumstances, however it was the College's responsibility to minimise this.

**The Chair highlighted that the key variable driving those outcomes was teaching and asked what improvement activity was taking place** and was informed that SSFC had drafted the improvement plans which were RAG rated and teams where there were concerns were asked to identify what action was being taken to address the concerns. Last year there was a push for a shift in CPD action and the Principal advised that he was confident that the improvements that were now visible, were a result of the improved quality of teaching and learning. These improvements were over a year so it was likely that they would continue as a culture of continuous improvement was embedded. Monitoring had also changed to ensure that it was developmental.

**A Staff governor seconded this as there was a real focus on pedagogy and a shift in culture.**

In response to a question, **the Student Governor identified that in English and History, there had been shift and there was a focus on what students were required to understand and what was required for exams.**

**A Governor questioned whether Geography was an identified area for improvement** and it was confirmed that surprisingly this was the case. For the last 20 years, Geography results had always been positive and the same teacher remained in the subject. It was anticipated that the recent results were a glitch and these results would not continue. There were some exceptional circumstances where a teacher may have been more distracted, however there was also indication that there were signals that were missed from exam boards. All students continued to do what they had chosen to do.

**A Governor highlighted that if the Sciences and Computing remained a challenge, there would be greater significance, particularly in areas where there would be a student increase and a challenge in recruiting the right staff; this could become compounded problem if there was not an improvement** and was informed that Chemistry was marginally below significant and Biology did not make as big a difference as had been anticipated, however through intervention there was a different team in Biology.

**A Governor asked how improvements would be made in these subject areas** and was advised that the subjects that had made the least improvement would be considered and leaders would be asked to consider the recent action taken.

**A Governor asked if the attainment level at GCSE level was considered** and it was confirmed that this was identified within the entry criteria.

- BTec results were good and Cache was positive. GCSE data was difficult to obtain but the GCSE retake data was pleasing.
- The Review of College Improvement Plan (Appendix 3) was provided in two parts and the concept of VESPA was explained.

**A Student Governor informed that in the Key Assessment Rap Up sessions (these were a brand new introduction to feedback which focused on reflection), students covered VESPA which encouraged them to think about how well they had prepared for an assessment. It was noted that a number of students failed to see the benefits of this** and was advised that this would be an area for which the College would continue to develop.

- The review of the overall progress from January 2018, (date of the last Ofsted inspection) was provided in part 2 of the improvement plan and it was noted that Governors were expected to understand the measures that had been put in place at the College and the impact of these, as well as the next steps.
- Mrs Sweeney provided an update on the SEND report (Appendix 4) and advised that the report reflected on the previous year. The achievement data supported the fact that SEND students continued to achieve in line with their peers in terms of success rates and value added. The gap was narrowing and figures at the end of last year were 505 students that had been added to the SEND database. This year there were 303 SEN students and 112 of those were Y12 students.

**The Chair advised that there had been a focus on SEND and safeguarding at the most recent Scrutiny Committee and queried the reason for the lack of information provided from SSFC in comparison to other academies within the Trust** and it was noted that SSFC were a part of the SEND Review Academy however it was agreed that improved levels of communication was required to the Trust.

- The Retention Report (Appendix 5), Student Attendance Report (Appendix 6) and Complaints Report (Appendix 7) had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. It was difficult to achieve an accurate summary of retention due to students moving from a one year course to two year course; retention rates dropped when measuring variances in the length of course. There was a national shift in retention and SSFC's retention rate had fallen below the national average and there were some areas where low retention was masking underperformance.

**A Governor asked if retention was affected when a student withdrew from one course and started another and** it was confirmed that this was the case.

**A Governor asked if there were elements of BTec that could be used to support A Level colleagues** and was advised that BTec teachers had a real confidence and growth mind-set that students would be successful on course so student on BTec were provided with the belief that if they attended and completed their coursework, they would achieve good outcomes. It was anticipated that this belief be transferred to A Level, however BTec results had always been positive and there was not the same level of confidence at A Level.

- Governors had received the Safeguarding Report (Appendix 8) in advance of the meeting and this was positive in terms of the College's own self-assessment. It was important to ensure that there were effective systems in identifying where there were needs, to embed a culture of vigilance so that staff made referrals, which had increased on the number of safeguarding concerns.

**The Chair identified that feedback from the student body demonstrated that a high number of students felt that they felt safe in College** and was advised that the staff tried to ensure that all students felt this way.

- Governors were referred to the staff (Appendix 9) and student (Appendix 10) disciplinary reports.

**The Chair queried the 77% of Pakistani males where cases had gone to panel** and was advised that this reflected 22 cases, as there were a smaller number of Pakistani students and the majority of these students had been disciplined for violence. This was a concern which had been considered at the Equality and Diversity Committee in College. A significant proportion of those incidents were linked with an isolated violent incident. There was also a huge postcode issue which had entered into the College and members from certain groups had resulted in a violent act.

**The Chair asked if the numbers were peer reviewed in College and if there was sensitivity to the actions of unconscious bias** and was advised that this was the case; the College was not complacent. It was noted that the College needed to work positively in ensuring the integration of Pakistani-British males into the College. SSFC were actively involved in working with the police.

**A Governor queried the threshold of discipline and asked if the threshold had remained unaltered over recent years** and was advised of the disciplinary process. Low level disruption would start as a concern and a commitment interview would take place with a student. If the student failed to respond, a behaviour contract would be issued and if this remained unsuccessful, a disciplinary panel would be put in place. There was a low level exclusion rate at the College and a zero tolerance policy to drugs and alcohol.

[MRS HAMILTON WITHDREW FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT]

- The Student Voice Report 2018/19 (Appendix 11) represented a number of measures taken to communicate with and receive feedback from students. It was noted that 97% of the student body stated that they felt safe and the College had followed up every student who had answered this negatively.

**A Student Governor agreed that the report seemed fair and students had the opportunity to communicate their voice.**

**ACTION:** That a coaching session for all Governors be arranged to discuss the results and changes at SSFC since the last Ofsted inspection.

0070 **RESOLVED:** That the report of the Principal (Appendix 12) be adopted.

0071 **EDUCATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Chair delivered on this item on behalf of Mrs H Glass, Education Director.

Trust Designation Criteria

Governors had received the Trust Designation Criteria (Appendix 13) in advance of the meeting and it was explained that the Trust had introduced was to assess against these criteria on a number of elements of academy performance with the objective of achieving 'sustain' and maintaining this.

SSFC Designation Update from the Trust

The Chair made reference to the designation update (Appendix 14) and reported that all Schools within the Trust were assessed against this assessment criteria for School Improvement, Human Resources and Finance. The focus at SSFC was in College improvement, but the operational aspects of managing an Academy were assessed against similar criteria. The College ranked highly in procurement, estates and ICT.

There were improving trends at the College, with good results and an improvement plan to address areas identified by the leadership team as areas of improvement.

The Trust's perspective was that there were many areas where actions were required to drive improvement. There were different methods of teaching and learning in the College from other Schools within the Trust which was being worked on.

0072 **SAFEGUARDING**

Governors received the summary report from S4S outlining the main changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (Appendix 15). Governors also noted that, all members of the Governing Board were expected to read and have regard to, sections 1 & 2 of the KCSIE Guidance.



All Governors in attendance confirmed that they had read and understood the document relating to the changes to KCSIE and sign (Appendix 16) to confirm this which was handed to the Chair.

0073 **FEEDBACK TO/FROM TRUST**

Finance Update

A finance report was filed and reviewed by the Board.

A Scrutiny Committee meeting had taken place on 8 October 2019 and the primary aim of the committee was to provide oversight and support that LGB's were doing what was required and confirm that LGB's were happy with processes.

There were members of the Scrutiny Committee who were Chairs or Governors of LGBs and there was a focus on SEND outcomes across the Trust.

There was an informative CEO report from Mrs Anwar and approval of the changes to the Articles of Association had taken place to ensure a standard document across the Trust. Attendance performance had been considered which had highlighted attendance issues as some Schools. Discussions had taken place about the Trusts strategy and plans for the coming years and information on this would be shared at the next meeting.

The Audit and Risk Committee worked on the control plans and assurance for potential identified risks. It was noted that the College's risk register was to be considered at a future meeting. There was to be an external assessment of the HR system across the Trust in line with requirements of the risk register. Consideration was also required for trips in the summer term to ensure that organised trips were managed and procedures were followed.

0074 **LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS / GOVERNOR VISITS INTO SCHOOL / STRATEGIC GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT**

The following Link Governor Reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Safeguarding and Prevent Training – Mrs J Edwards (Appendix 17)

One-to-One with Principal - Mr J Bridges (Appendix 18)

One-to-One with Education Director – MR J Bridges (Appendix 19)

Mr Banks advised that he had met with Mrs Sweeney on 8 October 2019 to consider the SEND report and advised that the outcomes from SEND were extremely positive and some students had progressed well.

Mrs Gearing attended the Governor training which was useful. There was not a Careers and Enterprise Governor at Trust level currently but this would be required by the LA in the future. There were glitches in the online system, however regular meetings had been scheduled going forward. There was challenge in that it was mandated that educational institutions met benchmarks but there were no implications if they did not, however it remained important to understand what the benchmark was.

0075 **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

Governors received copies of the S4S training programme for 2019/20 and the Clerk highlighted that all Governors were able to attend courses from the central programme with a charge made for each course as detailed in the brochure.

The Clerk also highlighted that training on the new Ofsted framework was included in the training programme and these courses may be of particular benefit to Governors.

0076 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chair reported that no correspondence had been received since the previous meeting which they considered necessary to draw to the attention of Governors.

0077 **ONLINE INFORMATION ABOUT GOVERNORS**

Governors were reminded of the need to provide up-to-date information on the Get Information About Schools website. This could only be updated via the school administration team. Governors noted that their names, categories and term of office details would be recorded and could be viewed publicly.

Governors were also reminded of the need to include information regarding governance arrangements on the School website. This should include names, Governor category, terms of office, committee membership, positions, pecuniary interests and attendance.

0078 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk requested Governors to identify any agenda items for the next meeting and the following were agreed:

- Self-Assessment Report (SAR)
- Process for monitoring progress in underperforming Curriculum areas

Governors confirmed that the next meeting of the Local Governing Board would be held at the School at 5.00pm on Wednesday 11 December 2019.

The meeting closed at 19.20.

Signed: .....  
(Chair of Local Governing Board)

Date: .....