

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF  
LEICESTER COLLEGE CORPORATION:  
STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 10 MAY 2023**



Present: Tom Wilson (Chair)  
Lisa Armitage  
Sam Emery  
Verity Hancock  
Maureen Magutu  
Neil McDougall  
Lee Soden

In Attendance: Melanie Arrowsmith-Kemp, Head of Student Engagement  
Louise Hazel, Director of Governance and Policy  
Gail Pringle, Head of Equality, Diversity and Engagement  
Harjinder Singh, Student Liaison Officer  
Matt Widdowson, Governance and Policy Officer (Minutes)  
Craig Whitehall, Student Liaison Officer

SET Team Course Representatives and Student Union Representatives  
(See attached list)

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 1.1. The Vice Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
- 1.2. There were no declarations of interest.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2.1. Apologies were received from Louisa Poole, Jai Sharda and Zoe Butler.

**3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 15 February 2023**

- 3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and approved.
- 3.2. There were no matters arising.

#### **4. RESPONSES TO ISSUES RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

4.1. The Principal presented the responses to the issues raised at previous meetings. The following were highlighted:

- 4.1.1. Staff had been asked to look at the planning for the next academic year and consider the pace of work.
- 4.1.2. Different learning styles were considered and accommodations made where it was possible.
- 4.1.3. There had been conversations with Curriculum Directors about managing student lateness. There needed to be reasonable allowances made for students who were experiencing public transport difficulties; however, these would not be extended to students who were late just because they did not make an effort to be on time. A new Attendance Policy had been introduced and the College was also looking at examples of best practice from elsewhere.
- 4.1.4. Behaviour and Attitudes training was being delivered to staff across the College. However, there had been positive feedback on behaviour from deep dives.
- 4.1.5. The College was unable to designate non-smoking areas on land that it did not own. This was particularly an issue at SMC. Directors had been asked to instruct their staff not to smoke or vape on-site.

4.2. **Governors made the following comments:**

- 4.2.1. **A student governor reported that her own transport situation had deteriorated with buses from Hinckley becoming less frequent.** There was now a free bus service in the city centre, although this did not address the issue of students travelling from the county. The Principal would pick this up with the local authority.
- 4.2.2. **While the Principal noted that she had seen less smoking on campus, a student governor commented that there appeared to be the same frequency of vaping.**

4.3. **Governors noted the responses to issues raised at previous meetings.**

#### **5. FACILITATED DISCUSSION WITH COURSE REPRESENTATIVES**

5.1. **Governors provided feedback from the facilitated discussions with course representatives.**

5.2. Careers

- 5.2.1. **Childcare T-Level (Y2) placements had provided great job opportunities.**
- 5.2.2. **Work experience input from outside agencies and individuals had provided good opportunities to Graphic Design (Y2) students.**
- 5.2.3. **T-Level Carpentry students had reported some problems around industry placements with students feeling that they were being used as**

- free labour to do some very low-level jobs and unable to practise their carpentry skills.
- 5.2.4. **Students alleged that some T-Level Carpentry students were being paid 'cash-in-hand'. The Principal would be raising this with the Curriculum Director.**
  - 5.2.5. **A T-Level Mechanical Engineering student had commented that there were not enough industry placements for everyone on the course.**
  - 5.2.6. **There was a general comment about the availability of information on accessing work placements in years 2 and 3.**
  - 5.2.7. **A student reported an incident of racist abuse experienced by a student on work experience in Seville. The Head of Student Engagement would follow-up on this.**
  - 5.2.8. **A UPS student commented that, as their course was being withdrawn, they felt that had not received support to find alternative provision. The Vice Principal would be asked to look into this.**

### 5.3. Equality and Diversity

- 5.3.1. **Students reported that Culture Day had been well received and that there had been lots of opportunities for students to learn about each other's cultures. Further similar opportunities would be welcomed whether these were provided by the College, students, or external groups.**
- 5.3.2. **Students reported that Personal Development sessions should be more interactive and less reliant on PowerPoint.**
- 5.3.3. **Students thought that there was the need for more understanding of visible and invisible disabilities and to raise awareness around why adjustments were appropriate for some students. They all raised the issue of accessibility, especially lifts not always working at all campuses.**
- 5.3.4. **Students asked whether there was the possibility of courses reps from PMLD (Profound Multiple Learning Disability) being included in the Student Liaison Committee. The Director of Governance and Policy would look into this.**
- 5.3.5. **UPS students reported that there had been team building exercises at the beginning of their course, however other students added that while initial team building had been good this had not continued throughout the rest of their courses.**

### 5.4. Additional Information

- 5.4.1. **Carpentry and Mechanical T-Level students fed back that being the first cohort had been "tough": materials received from City and Guilds had included errors and they had not received timely information about their employer set project.**

- 5.4.2. **A T-Level Construction student had encountered asbestos while on a work placement. They had not previously received any teaching about this but received instruction on the dangers of asbestos from the employer.**
- 5.4.3. **Childcare T-Level students reported that they had initially started the course on the understanding that there were no written exams. However, they had later found out that there would be four written exams over the two years.**
- 5.4.4. **A student reported that that software which she had to use was not compatible with a Mac book and wished that she had been told this beforehand so that she could have purchased another computer instead.**
- 5.4.5. **An issue was raised around the level of support offered to students going on to study elsewhere. The Vice Principals would need to look into this.**
- 5.4.6. **Students raised an issue around how it would have been useful to know that their part-time jobs could have been used as work experience beforehand.**
- 5.4.7. **The scheduling of assessments and overlap between different units was raised as an issue.**
- 5.4.8. **Having a timetable in advance would have been useful. This was a common challenge across FE due to students joining courses from the end of August right up to half-term.**

## 5.5. Highlights

- 5.5.1. **There was feedback from one student on how she had been supported by a lecturer by receiving feedback and being talked through difficult questions.**
- 5.5.2. **A governor commented that it was good to hear that the quality of teaching had improved over the year.**
- 5.5.3. **A UPS student had talked about the benefits of professional services coming into the College to talk about careers.**

- 5.6. **Governors noted the issues raised during the facilitated discussion with course representatives.**

## 6. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

- 6.1. The Chair of the Student Council provided an update on the Student Council meeting of 2 May 2023.
  - 6.1.1. The Director of Student Services and Marketing provided feedback from the student survey around health issues. The discussion focused on whether the College encourages students to be aware of their mental and physical health.

- 6.1.2. The Head of Personal Development had provided an update on previously agreed actions. These included details of a new platform which would assist with personal development and provide an innovative new approach to induction.
- 6.1.3. The Deputy Principal had provided an update on College-wide changes including development of the new engineering and aeronautical blocks, funding for catering and IT improvements at FPC.
- 6.1.4. The Student Union gave a presentation and provided information about the new student LGBTQ group and Teams chat. Public transport was also discussed.

6.2. **Governors noted the report from the Chair of the Student Council.**

## **7. PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE STUDENT UNION**

- 7.1. Student Union Executive members provided a presentation on the work of the Student Union.
- 7.2. 2022/23 achievements included:
  - 7.2.1. The relationship with students had continued to grow.
  - 7.2.2. The relationship with College staff had also grown and, in particular, they noted to the support of the Richard Plumber, Nicky Randall, Louise Morling, Campus Wardens, the Information Centre team, PMLD and SET.
  - 7.2.3. Food had been served to over 2,000 staff and students throughout the year.
  - 7.2.4. A Sustainability Officer post had been introduced and they had been working with the local authority on accessible transport.
  - 7.2.5. The SU had participated in three conferences, over 50 other meetings and 19 events.
- 7.3. Nominations for Student Union Elections were now open.
- 7.4. The Student Union had organised several events through the year including:
  - 7.4.1. Galantines Day where around £190 had been raised for the Disasters Emergency Committee's aid efforts following the Turkey/Syria earthquake.
  - 7.4.2. International Women's Day which included an event in the GP Hall where, along with SET, the Student Union handed out 100 free gift bags. The event was also attended by Leicestershire Police who provided advice as well as safety equipment such as panic alarms. There was also a makeup masterclass.
- 7.5. The National Union of Students Conference focused on several issues including the cost-of-living crisis, FE funding and a living wage for apprentices.

- 7.5.1. It was noted how the cost-of-living crisis had a disproportionate effect on disabled students due to the higher everyday costs they already faced.
- 7.5.2. In the past FE representation at the NUS Conference had been a struggle, but this year FE was well represented. There would be an NUS campaign on FE funding in the coming year.
- 7.5.3. Cardiff University had been sending out Monday morning wellbeing emails to students to ask how they were and to signpost to sources of support.
- 7.6. Culture Day had taken place at all three campuses. 800 students and staff had been served food. The event at APC had been the most successful and the Student Union would have to consider whether to continue at all three campuses in the future.
- 7.7. The Student Union and Vice-Principal had met with the local authority to discuss accessible transport. Analysis had shown that only 43% of students at FPC were city residents meaning that students travelled further to get to FPC, and the campus was the least accessible. It was also highlighted that students travelling from the south of the city were poorly served by cross-city buses.
- 7.8. Mental Health Awareness Week would be observed between 15 May and 21 May. Activities would include the sale of green ribbons, a spa giveaway and talks from mental health advocacy groups.
- 7.9. There would be a trip to the Peak District on 16 May 2023.
- 7.10. Langar on Campus would be taking place on 25 May 2023 and food would be served at APC between 11am and 1pm.
- 7.11. Iftar boxes had been handed out to students to celebrate Ramadan and Eid.
- 7.12. **Governors made the following comments:**
  - 7.12.1. **Would it be better for Culture Day to take place in the first term to bring people together?** Term One might be too early as there would not be a full complement of SU Executive Team members. The weather also needed to be considered as part of the event was held outdoors.
  - 7.12.2. **It sounded like the Student Union had a busy and successful year.**
- 7.13. **Governors noted the presentation by the Student Union.**

## **8. COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1. The Director of Governance and Policy asked everyone if they could complete the one-page student self-assessment form which they had been given.

**9. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PLAN 2023/24**

9.1. The Director of Governance and Policy welcomed any feedback on the Terms of Reference and Work Plan.

9.2. **Governors made the following comments:**

9.2.1. **Would the Director of Estates and Campus Services be invited to the Student Liaison Committee in 2023/24?** This was in the work plan.

9.3. **Governors approved the Terms of Reference and Work Plan 2023/24.**

**10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS NOTIFIED TO CHAIR PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

10.1. There was no further business.

10.2. The Chair thanked everyone for taking part.

**11. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- 15 November 2023, 2pm
- 14 February 2024, 2pm
- 15 May 2024, 2pm