

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
LEICESTER COLLEGE CORPORATION:
STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE
HELD ON 14 MAY 2025**



Present: Lee Soden (Chair)
Chloe Bakewell (Co-Vice Chair)
Shabir Ismail
Vipal Karavadra
Neil McDougall
Nicky Randall

In Attendance: Louise Hazel, Director of Governance and Policy
Harshad Taylor, Director of IT
Gail Pringle, Head of Inclusion
Harjinder Singh, Student Liaison Officer
Pete Thorpe, Personal Development Manager
Matt Widdowson (Minutes), Governance and Policy Officer

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

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1. There were no declarations of interest.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1. Apologies were received from Tom Wilson, Kyle James and Sophie Strevens-Robinson.

2.2. Lee Soden would be chairing the meeting.

**3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 26
FEBRUARY 2025**

3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and approved.

3.2. MATTERS ARISING

3.2.1. The new Aerospace Building at APC would be completed in September 2025, and the electrotechnical build at FPC was also on target for completion. It was

hoped that there would be further capital funding available by the time of the next meeting of the Student Liaison Committee. Governors would also be discussing capital investment as part of their conversations around the new strategic plan.

4. RESPONSES TO ISSUES RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1. The Director of Student Services and Marketing provided the responses to the issues raised at the previous meeting. The following points were highlighted.

4.1.1. The intention of the discussion at the previous meeting had been to consider the marketing approach to attendance, and the Marketing Team were working on the feedback received. However, the conversation at the meeting had broadened into a much wider conversation about attendance.

4.1.2. Feedback around making the College a more welcoming environment and fostering a sense of belonging had been shared with CLT. This would be discussed again at the next CLT meeting and feedback from this would be shared with the Student Liaison Committee.

4.1.3. The Personal Development Manager had been working to ensure that early messages about good attendance were embedded in inductions. Inductions would be very different next year, and the Student Liaison Committee's feedback had been an important part of shaping the changes.

4.1.4. Welcome Week would help tackle some of the inconsistencies identified in communication with new students by ensuring that sessions were put on where the same message could be delivered to all new students.

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

4.2.1. **The Personal Development Manager was welcomed to the Student Liaison Committee.**

4.2.2. **For various reasons, there would be some new students who were not present for inductions. It would be important that these students were followed up to ensure that they received the same information as everyone else.**

4.2.3. **It would be important to test any changes prior to implementation.** The Personal Development Manager had met with students to discuss these changes. There had been discussions with students around the design of the new Welcome Weeks. There would also be a group of students who would be acting as mentors.

4.2.4. **It would be useful to share information about the changes to inductions and the new Welcome Weeks with governors. Governors would want to see what was happening before, what had been changed, and how it could be evaluated.** Noted.

4.2.5. **There had been a suggestion made by staff of offering trial sessions at around week four of the academic year. This would involve lessons being suspended on the day and students being given the opportunity to experience another programme area. This would support the 'swap don't**

drop' message given to students unhappy with their course choice. This could be picked up with the Directors of Curriculum.

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

5. FACILITATED DISCUSSION

5.1. The following topics were discussed.

5.1.1. How can we improve participation in surveys and student voice activities to ensure that everyone's voice is heard?

5.1.2. As we move towards a Wednesday afternoon off timetable for many students, how do we ensure that we offer the right activities and enrichment, so students participate?

5.2. Course representatives and governors provided the following feedback.

5.2.1. STUDENT SURVEYS

5.2.1.1. There was not enough publicity for surveys. Students received a lot of messages from the College and surveys could be missed. It would be better to discuss surveys in PD sessions.

5.2.1.2. There should be the option to choose which surveys are completed to avoid 'survey fatigue'.

5.2.1.3. The purpose, and intended outcomes, of surveys should be stated in advance.

5.2.1.4. There should be a prize draw linked to survey completion. Tea and cakes with a group of friends would make a good prize.

5.2.1.5. Surveys could be boring and time consuming, and students did not necessarily want to complete these in their own time.

5.2.1.6. Feedback from surveys had been inconsistent. How could feedback be standardised?

5.2.1.7. Only a small number of students went to course rep meetings, could a different way of providing feedback be considered? Was TikTok a good platform for delivering feedback?

5.2.1.8. Could surveys be more personalised?

5.2.1.9. Could surveys be shorter?

5.2.1.10. Perhaps surveys could be completed on a curriculum area basis, with teaching staff explaining each question and the purpose behind the survey.

5.2.1.11. Information could be gathered in a less formal way, such as by ELT and governors meeting with students in their classrooms throughout the year.

5.2.1.12. The main problem with survey completion was awareness. Could there be a stall near entrances with digital screens that enabled students to complete surveys?

5.2.1.13. Consideration needed to be given to the phrasing of questions and the need to keep questions simple.

- 5.2.1.14. **Students should be allowed to expand on answers by being given the option to provide comments in the survey.**
- 5.2.1.15. **Most students kept the Teams channel muted due to the volume of communication. Perhaps other channels should be considered for raising awareness of surveys, such as social media?**
- 5.2.1.16. **Most students opened Moodle everyday although there was a need to ensure that this was kept up to date.**
- 5.2.1.17. **Course reps should be given the responsibility for promoting the completion of surveys, perhaps by allowing them to talk to each class for five minutes.**

5.2.2. WEDNESDAYS

- 5.2.2.1. **Sports were always a good option, and there were a lot of facilities near campuses. There would need to be adequate publicity for teams and societies.** Once students joined a club or society, they tended to continue their engagement with it.
- 5.2.2.2. **Course specific events such as visits to companies and guest speakers from industry would be a good idea. There could be a mix of subject specific speakers and more general speakers.**
- 5.2.2.3. **Students could set up their own clubs and receive funding linked to the number of members they had.**
- 5.2.2.4. **There could be the opportunity to learn life skills such as CPR.**
- 5.2.2.5. **Careers information could be provided on a Wednesday afternoon.**
- 5.2.2.6. **Students should be asked what they wanted, perhaps by means of an online forum, a suggestion box or a QR code that could be linked to a survey.**
- 5.2.2.7. **Student Engagement Officers were well placed to know what students wanted and should be given more freedom to decide on activities.**
- 5.2.2.8. **The social spaces at SMC needed expanding as there was not enough room.**
- 5.2.2.9. **Before a suggestion was declined, there should be more consideration given to whether the suggested activity could be accommodated.**
- 5.2.2.10. **There could be a FIFA tournament.**
- 5.2.2.11. **There should be activities that include both students and staff to bring everyone together.**
- 5.2.2.12. **Would Wednesday afternoons be mandatory?** A final decision had not yet been made. Even if it was mandatory, there would still be exceptions including students who were still timetabled. The activities planned for Wednesday afternoons would be important for student development and the College would be putting resources into these and would want to see the benefit.

5.2.2.13. **Could there be flexibility depending on the weather as students would want to see a change in the activities offered from term to term?**

5.3. **Governors noted the feedback from the facilitated discussion and requested updates at the next meeting.**

6. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

6.1. The Chair of the Student Council provided a report from the meeting of the Student Council. The following points were highlighted.

6.1.1. The Student Council had received a presentation from the Student Union.

6.1.2. The Acting Principal had attended the Student Council for a Q&A session.

6.1.3. There had been an evaluation of the work of the Student Union.

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

7. PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE STUDENT UNION

7.1. Members of the Student Union Executive presented an update on their work. The following points were highlighted.

7.1.1. It had been a big year for the Student Union (SU). They thanked the Student Engagement Officer for his support.

7.1.2. The SU Executive listed their activities since the previous meeting.

7.1.2.1. There had been a Uniformed Public Services Day held with the participation of the police, ambulance service and fire brigade. This had been a very busy and successful event.

7.1.2.2. Disability Awareness Day had been a collaboration between the SU and SAIL. Students had wanted to raise awareness of the barriers that could be faced by individuals with their disabilities. Each student had a stall where they could discuss their own disability.

7.1.2.3. Langar on campus had taken place on 10 April 2025. The SU had agreed to fund the event, and food was obtained from a local Gurdwara. 250 students had been served, and no food had gone to waste. This event provided students with an opportunity to learn more about the Sikh faith.

7.1.2.4. The NUS England Conference had taken place at Lincoln University. The NUS had recently split into nations which made this conference smaller and more focused on English issues. One of the big issues that had been discussed was around maintenance loans not being affordable and the impact this had on the affordability of rent.

7.1.2.5. A darts competition had taken place, and the winner was awarded with tickets to see Luke Littler play in a competition.

- 7.1.2.6. Wear a Hat Day had been held to raise awareness of brain tumours. £276 had been raised by the SU by selling cakes and samosas.
- 7.1.2.7. Nominations had opened for SU elections and hustings would follow before the voting opened.
- 7.1.2.8. World Culture Day would be on 28 May. This would be held at APC and students would be asked if they would like to attend in their own cultural attire.
- 7.1.2.9. The SU had been concerned about the troubling rise in knife-related incidents nationally and had discussed Bleed Control Kits with the College Health and Safety Officers. These specialised kits had been intended for use by first aiders to deal with catastrophic bleeding. However, while the SU had wanted these kits visible and immediately available, the Health and Safety Officers had advised that Bleed Control Kits should only be used as back up resources.
- 7.1.2.10. The SU had run a survey which had found that most students wanted the social space at SMC to be expanded including space for a pool table which would provide a revenue stream for the SU. Discussions with the Principal and Director of Student Services were underway to consider this.
- 7.1.2.11. The SU had sent representatives to various College committees and forums.

7.2. **Governors asked the following questions.**

- 7.2.1. **Did the NUS England Conference provide opportunities to share ideas with other student unions?** There were not many FE student unions represented, and Leicester College Student Union had been the largest. However, FE unions had been interested in some of the events which had been organised by LCSU including the World Culture Day which had been adopted by Dudley College SU. The conference had also provided an opportunity to introduce the College's SU to the student union at DMU. There would be further meetings between the SU and DMU SU about developing a working relationship.
- 7.2.2. **The question around the use and placing of Bleed Control Kits would need to be taken away and investigated further.**
- 7.2.3. **The President and Executive of the Students Union were thanked for their work over the year.**

7.3. **Governors noted the presentation by the Student Union Executive.**

8. **COMMITTEE SELF ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1. The Director of Governance and Policy asked students at the meeting to complete the self-assessment questionnaire and provide their feedback on the Student Liaison Committee.
- 8.2. **Governors noted the Committee Self-assessment Questions.**

9. **TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORKPLAN 2025/26**

9.1. The Director of Governance and Policy presented the Committee Terms of Reference and proposed Workplan for 2025/26. The following points were highlighted.

9.1.1. No changes had been made to the ToRs, but suggestions were welcome.

9.1.2. The Workplan looked similar to that of 2024/25 but there was flexibility for this to change throughout the year.

9.2. **Governors approved the Terms of Reference and Workplan for 2025/26.**

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

10.1. The College and SU would be jointly delivering the College's first Pride event on 9 June at APC.

10.2. 203 students had participated in the recent Hear My Voice project and there would be further communications sent out about the results.

11. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- 26 November 2025
- 25 February 2026
- 13 May 2026

