

**WALSALL COLLEGE  
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 1230 HRS  
VENUE: HAWBUSH CAMPUS**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Charlotte Bosworth Fiona Macmillan Louise Miller Jo Hughes	Chair Governor Student Governor Tutorial Coordinator/Staff Governor
<b>TOGETHER WITH:</b>	Mary Mahoney Andrea Packer Gail Lewis Helen Griffiths David Turner Richard Brennan	Governor Interim Head of Student Services and Wellbeing Student Engagement Coordinator Student Engagement Officer Assistant Principal Quality and HE Assistant Principal Curriculum
<b>STUDENTS</b>	George Hopkins  Thomas Durbin Christopher Osayi Fortune Uglagbe Mary Nakintu Alex Hibberd Emma Eyre Kimberley Grice Jake Flood Jack Rafferty Kebba O Keita Brooke Leoni Pearce Michael Harvey	(Yr1) BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production (TV and Film) Level 2 Diploma in Creative Media Skills L3 Applied Law, Criminology & Business CILEX L2 Certificate in Legal Studies L2 Early Years L2 Skills for Working Life OCR L2 Certificate in Business Admin L1 Painting and Decorating T Level Construction: Design, Surveying and Planning L2 Diploma Building Maintenance Operative L2 Engineering Machinist L2 Skills for Working Life Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Aisling McGowan	

**01.21 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and welcomed everyone, particularly students, noting that it was the first virtual Student Voice meeting.

The Chair outlined that the meeting would give opportunity for students to give feedback on things they felt could be done better, confirming that hearing students' views was never more important than now. She encouraged students to use the chat box facility on Zoom and to speak up as the meeting progressed through the agenda.

The new SU President was welcomed to the meeting.

**02.21 MINUTES**

Minutes of last meeting held on 6 February 2020, having been circulated, were taken as read and approved.

**03.21 MATTERS ARISING**

Matters arising would be dealt with throughout the meeting.

**04.21 STU UNION PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The SU President presented the report.

New SU Executives had now been appointed for the coming year, and with the exception of the Green Lane Officer; this post was still vacant. Due to

the lack of interest in this post, discussions were taking place on the future of this post, and whether it should be changed so that it did not just cover Green Lane.

Votes had been very low this year compared to previous years. This was a worrying decrease as the online system was piloted the previous year and had shown an increase in students.

It was noted that campaigning had not been physically possible around College. Students generally didn't know about voting. They had received the email but didn't see in their inbox. Manifestos were on student portal but were not very visible advertising to students in College.

Consideration needed to be given to future elections. Is it prominent enough in the student curriculum?

It was felt that democracy was brought in through 300 student reps, but that meant that the emphasis was on the student rep but not on Student Union.

Students were asked whether they do a democracy tutorial? They confirmed that they did, and that they did a vote for reps within their own groups.

It was suggested that introducing text messaging and other communications through Teams may provide an alternative way to bringing in more communication for students. Emails alone clearly did not work.

It was **resolved** that Jo Hughes would investigate different methods and report back to the meeting.

JH

SU Website was discussed by SU Execs with the aim of creating a larger awareness of students.

Money was in reserve. This must be managed to deliver value for money and good experience for students. Requests had been received from staff/students and were currently in discussion to see whether appropriate for engagement.

Induction is to promote SU to students. This had not been able to be carried out this year and numbers had decreased from the 1,397 last year. This year had been done by video.

The SU President led members through previous events and upcoming events which included hidden disabilities and mental health work.

The Chair thanked the SU President for fantastic work going on.

The Assistant Principal Quality and HE thanked the SU President for her presentation which had been very clear and very useful and expressed that he felt there was a very powerful agenda around E & D. He invited the SU President to attend the next E & D Committee meeting in February.

MS

## **05.21 STUDENT COVID-19 EXPERIENCE REPORT**

Working from home had caused a lower number of students engaging. There had been lots of problems regarding devices/broadband/space etc. In April 65% students were engaging online. Engagement had increased in the following weeks thanks to the efforts of staff.

College was eager to get students engaged. Engagement therefore went up to 75% but best engagement during lockdown was 80%. The academic year ended with 20% unengaged students. This was reflected nationally,

Lots of engagement was of poor quality due to devices students had to use (ie. mobile phones), but we did conduct two high profile surveys to see what we were doing well and needed to improve. For classroom based provision over 1,000 responded. 90% were very happy with support receiving and would still recommend Walsall College.

Where students said the College needed to do more, there was a lack of satisfaction in quality of learning online. 17% weren't happy about responses from tutors. This was dealt with this by getting the message out to tutors to contact students more frequently.

Apprenticeship students were also very happy with provision. 92% students were happy to be working online and were probably more ready with working online.

Overall 83% of College delivery is face to face. Students prefer this support.

Digital pledge introduced before students started in September. 400 devices had been issued to students. Building also reconfigured to add more booths into facilities to help students come into College to work remotely.

Where students were being asked to attend synchronous/asynchronous sessions there was 8% less attendance. Some could be issues re environment/technology but there clearly needed to be more stimulation for students to attend remotely.

Remote learning appears to be here to stay and so is an important life skill for students.

**Action:** More discussion with students on we can do to make this more attractive.

Surveys had been done over summer but were at a time when we weren't in a position to fully examine quality of teaching and learning online. We have now commissioned another survey to go into more detail about how to teach/learn online.

Some students were using data on mobiles to listen to lessons. They are now being asked to download recorded sessions on wifi in College and then take home to watch. Adaptions have been made regarding how they are shown on mobiles so that lessons are readable. Work now needs to be done to ensure that working online is the best student experience, taking into account what devices students are using.

A further survey had been commissioned course by course and should be available very soon.

The Induction survey also includes questions about online experiences. Over 2,700 students completed so far.

However, students commented that they found surveys very onerous and that they required a balance as they preferred to focus on their course work rather than spending times replying to surveys.

Consideration was given to whether tutors could talk about things in tutorial time and get feedback verbally, although it was pointed out that this could be an issue as some questions asked are confidential about their circumstances at home and using devices at home etc.

It was **resolved** that the Quality Team should have oversight of surveys.

DT

Issues raised from students regarding COVID-19 experience include:

- Behavioural aspects that staff have been asked to address.
- Some safety issues had been investigated and extra staff in corridors had been implemented.
- Additional heaters in tents had been requested and were currently being investigated.
- Lanyards issue had been implemented.
- Tents – were only seen as temporary solution. Classes had been re-timetabled in order to get people out of tents and social spaces inside building.

#### **07.21 STUDENT VOICE – ADULTS/AND STUDENTS**

Student Voice had been amended to increase student participation in feedback from different Clusters. It includes online meetings/forms/curriculum meetings etc. Therefore an increase in information received from students and an increase in students attending meetings.

There were 245 students representing. This is increasing all the time. This increase was deemed very positive. Students from all campuses and different ages attending today which was terrific news.

Staff were available in different campuses, for example, Liaison Officers were present in Portland Street, Green Lane, Hawbush and were also present at the meeting today.

Chat with Jat had been very well covered this year, with almost 20 students attending. There had been lots of talking/communication. A further meeting was scheduled for January.

If Reps were unable to attend meeting, Course Reps could use a feedback form to discuss with groups so that questions can be asked and answers supplied. This would then go into the action plan with issues that students had raised. It would then be communicated out with You Said We Answered.

Students have opportunity to attend student rep training. This has predominantly been online but could be face to face (online) if required. Hawbush has Google Classrooms. Others have Teams.

A new form of communication been set up on Teams. There was a slight delay but would be rolled out shortly. Communication were being sent out to students six weekly.

Training has been pushed but hadn't received a large uptake.

Communication and storing of information required improvement so that it flowed much better. Feedback forms need to be robust.

The Student Voice Cycle provided a plan of action for the academic year.

It was confirmed that the appointment of a SU President needed to take place in June.

The Chair commented on the Student Conference Feedback, recognising that the priority list had changed due to COVID-19 and online learning.

The Assistant Principal Learning Services added her thanks to Jo Hughes for report and the good work she had been doing.

**08.21 FNAL SAY FROM STUDENTS**

It was reported that students at Green Lane and Portland Street had requested machinery to be moved so that they can remain at their campus to study without the need of having to go to the LRC at Wisemore. This had been put to the Management Team and would be reported back to the next meeting.

There were no further questions from students. However, the Chair encouraged students to continue these conversations outside of the meeting.

**09.21 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

11 March 2021 at 1230 hrs.