

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS’ MEETING**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2019**

**MEETING COMMENCED: 5.12pm**

**MEETING ENDED: 7.10pm**

**PRESENT:** Derek Randall Mervyn Brown (MB) (Chair),John Alvis (JA), Gill Anderson (GA), Andy Berry (AB), Barry Brown (BB), Rebecca Coutts (RC), Matthew Cox (MC), Gordon Fraser (GF), Andre Frullo (AF), Alan Hunt (AH), Keith Stenning (KS), Claire Pearce (CP), Nick Skyrme (NS), Louise Seymour (LS), Gill Slattery (GS), Andrew Smith (AS), and Dylan Tippetts (DTi)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Marcus Holder, (MH), Louise Rowley (LR),Mark Nettle (MN) (Clerk) and Katy Hockings (note taker)

**G.03.30.19 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Lyndon Brett (LB), Salam Katbi (SK) David Taylor (DT)

**G.03.31.19 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda of the meeting.

**G.03.32.19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2018**

 The minutes from the meeting held on 6 December 2018 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair.

**G.03.33.19 MATTERS ARISING**

 Safeguarding Training Dates to be circulated

 **ACTION: MN**

**G.03.34.19 REPORT ON CHAIR’S ACTIONS**

MN reported on documents signed by DR since the last meeting:

Contract documents for 3G sports pitch.

Novation agreement for student accommodation and Pick Everard signed off for initial design phase

Two copies of contract with KGB cleaning signed off.

Contract signings noted by Governors.

**G.03.35.19 PRINCIPAL’S UPDATE**

AB provided an oral update.

Ofsted Inspection – AB reviewed the recent Ofsted Inspection. Governors agreed early indications predict a positive outcome. Formal report awaited.

Staff Celebration – Suggestion to extend Star Awards for more staff as a general celebratory event. This will be for one year only. Further details will be circulated in due course. Opportunity to celebrate three years of merger and staff hard work leading up to and during the Ofsted Inspection.

TES FE Awards and Semta Awards- AB outlined that we are finalists in the Semta Awards this evening. We are the only college there. Tomorrow evening we are taking three teams of staff to the TES FE Awards, for social mobility, apprenticeship of the year and support team of the year awards, categories in which the College has been selected as a finalist.

Student Trips- AB outlined recent student trips, including 150 creative arts students who visited New York. Sports students have just returned from South Africa, working with young people there on literacy and numeracy skills and sports coaching. The College has just hosted a trip with Hinds Community College from Mississipi, which has been happening for over 25 years. A really successful visit.

Student Forums – All areas across the three campuses have had the opportunity to feedback to the Principalship within student meetings. Some useful input received, particularly around English and maths.

The Colleges’ Partnership – AB reported on the recent Board meeting, which took place earlier today. Army recruitment lower than expected, due to the way in which the Army is procuring its recruitment and selection. AB flagged with the Board that there may be a risk to up to £100,000 of the contribution to the College in this regard. AB is working hard with Sue Burton. GA asked whether the relationship with the Colleges’ Partnership will be long term. AB said that we have seen the contribution decline over the past few years and attention needs to be given to this. We have around 50% of the Army apprenticeship offering, and it is unlikely we will get more than that. At the strategic planning day which is coming in at the end of April with the Colleges’ Partnership, AB and the rest of the Board will be considering future project ideas. AB confirmed that it is seen as a long term venture.

Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust- The multi academy Trust is expanding, with interest to join from a number of schools.

Institute of Technology- Down to just ten bids across the country now, including the one the College is involved with.

HM Treasury Visit – AB will be meeting with representatives from the Treasury on Monday next week, including tours of National College for Nuclear, Construction Skills and Innovation Centre and Hinkley Point C. CP said there may be some projects she is working on which could link into this. She will speak to AB.

 **ACTION: CP**

**G.03.36.19 OPERATING PLAN 2018/19 - UPDATE**

The updated operating plan for 2018/19 had been circulated. AB explained there is some degree of amber still remaining on the plan. Until the final outcome is known, these will remain amber, but good progress is being made.

The recent quality audit undertaken had highlighted no areas for improvement.

AB highlighted 3.1.1 which refers to industry placements. He flagged the fact that the target has not yet been met, and the deadline is approaching. RC asked if this will be achieved. LR confirmed that there is a lot of work being undertaken to ensure we meet our target, and that the placements being offered are useful. AB said that next year the industry placements will rise to 430 for the year.

AB highlighted under strategic aim 2.1 T Levels. LR confirmed we are offering three T Levels as part of the pilot year. A T Levels Project Group has been formed to ensure the implementation plan is being met. Our implementation plan has been uploaded and recognised as good practice by the ESFA. T Level information is now available on our website. The awarding bodies for these qualifications has been announced, and further and detailed information on these qualifications should be available soon. There is an opportunity to apply for capital funding, limited to refurbishment and not new build, and LR, MH and Head of Estates and AB will be putting a bid together for this over the next three weeks. There is a separate pot of money for equipment which we will also bid for.

AB highlighted 2.3.3, a growth target of 21% for apprenticeships, which has been met and exceeded already during the year.

BB asked about 3.4, regarding video conferencing and reducing travel. AB said that work is being done to ensure that Skype can be used more often, and investment has been made recently in this area.

RC asked if all the ambers ones are expected to be green by the end of the year. AB said that he is confident that the vast majority will definitely be achieved. He said the document could be developed further to improve its use and relevance as a senior team and also for the Govenors. RC said that it might be useful to have a percentage column, to give more accurate detail on how far towards achievement we are. RC said it is much harder to scrutinise when there are so many still amber, but which may be on track. A percentage column would give more helpful and accurate information on progress. GF said that the purpose and relevance of the document needs to be considered. Is it upward or downward communicating. AB said it does both jobs, in that the detail of the document is downward on compilation, and then upward for completion during the year.

RC said it would be useful to also have more full detail on targets and current position, so that there is a clear current position. AS suggested having a fourth rating colour. AB agreed to take away the feedback and develop the document further.

Governors noted the position and had no further questions.

 **ACTION: AB**

**G.03.37.19 FINANCE**

Finance Report and Management Accounts for the six months ended 31 January 2019

MH outlined the key points around surplus, cash and borrowings. Financial reports had been scrutinised in detail by the FP&GP Committee at its recent meeting. MH confirmed that the balanced budget is still on target to be achieved.

JA asked for more details on an unexpected invoice which MH explained that the income had been received in the previous year, and the costs had fallen in this year.

AF asked for assurances that pay costs will come in line with expected income and no additional expenditure will be required on staff. MH confirmed this is the case.

BB raised a point about staff, including bank and agency. He asked whether we are getting value for money by spending on agency staff. AB said that agency staffing costs have been closely monitored and work is taking place to reduce agency and bank staffing costs where possible. MH said that in relation to A/Ls, there will be a small overspend on budget, but a large reduction on last year. AF said the non-establishment staffing, accounts for 4.5% of total spend. He suggested we discuss this further in the future, to set a target percentage of agency staff of total staffing. AB agreed that this would be useful, and also for Associated Lecturers against permanent teaching staff. MH said it is worth noting the improved and stringent control over vacancies and recruitment during regular weekly meetings with AB, MH and HR department.

 **ACTION:MN**

MH provided a detailed update on the cash position. There were no questions raised following this. AS said that he noted that in the past we have been in a much stronger cash position. AB agreed that there are tight margins, but this is a reflection of the sector funding position. He said that the merger and current building project work has also impacted on this. He reassured Governors that he and MH are working closely to monitor the position and ensure that the financial position continues to be stable and strong. DR confirmed he is confident that the College is in a strong position.

Governors thanked MH for the updates.

**G.03.38.19 BUILDINGS AND ESTATES UPDATE**

MH explained the update had been scrutinised by both the Buildings Projects Committee and the FP&GP Committee.

 AEC building on budget and complete

NCfN building continues to win award. Control room, simulator and flow rig installed. Completed on budget.

3G pitch completed on budget.

Looking at better access to the train station, working with Sedgemoor District Council and Network Rail.

Consideration being given to utilise a service which monitors via CCTV to support site security.

Summer works programme is being finalised. Focusing on health and safety requirements and on new projects requiring resources.

Accommodation block at Cannington campus is on track and underway.

MH invited questions. There were none.

**G.03.39.19 UPDATE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

AB said that, following the Governors’ Strategic Planning days in January, there was a Senior Management Team planning day at which further work was undertaken to the Strategic Planning Framework for 2019/22. Following feedback from these days, AB has made changes to the draft document. There will be another SMT planning session at the beginning of April, where a final draft will be drawn together. AB will circulate this to Governors again in due course. **ACTION: AB**

**G.03.40.19 SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN**

MN advised that there is now an active sustainability committee, including student and Governor involvement (CP). MN said that the committee had decided to focus on clear areas of action such as energy saving measures. As a result of this work, 50,000KW of energy was saved over the winter across all three campuses. Another area is staff travel including lift sharing. MN said that all catering outlets at the College now only have Vegware disposable cutlery and cups and dishes, which is biodegradable. Investigation being made to introducing a wildlife corridor on campus. MB asked whether this is to do with Wessex Water, and if not, they have a fund available for this kind of work. MN to investigate. CP said that there is some funding available at SCC which she will advise on in more detail after the meeting. MN said there is also focus on educating around sustainability, and some materials have been put together on this. MB noted that Cannington campus appears to utilise more energy than the other campuses. This could be to do with the farm, and the residential accommodation there. AS asked about the price per KWH, as he thought this might be high. MH and MN will look into this. NS said that it may be possible to find out what the expected energy consumption based on weather conditions should be, so that weather effects can be discounted from the outcomes. RC said the Carbon Trust will provide advice and assistance. AS said he uses Green Days to compare with weather factors in consumption. MN to follow this up. BB asked whether Canonsgrove is charged as a lump sum and no addition for heating and light. MN confirmed.

Governors thanked MN for the update.

 **ACTION: MN/CP/MH**

CP left the meeting.

**G.03.41.19 MARKETING UPDATE**

AB provided an oral summary of the marketing update provided by Anthea Kerslake, Head of Marketing. He reminded of the declining demographic, which is expected to pick up again in the coming academic year. The Schools Liaison team is working very hard, with a small team of three who are focused on working closely with schools in order to increase applications. An increase of 90 16-year olds applying this year compared to last year is encouraging. JA said that it would be helpful to have figures on actual students who come to College, as well as applications. AB agreed this is useful, but at this time of year we don’t have this data available as we won’t know that until enrolment at the end of the academic year. AB said that he was encouraged that the Taunton applications are well up on last year. This has been helped by a focus on Taunton school presence. MC asked about Castle School and the fact that we have low applications from there into College. AB said the relationship with Castle School’s Headteacher is very positive. However, there are continuing efforts to improve applications from Castle to the Taunton campus. He also said that we need to be clear whether our offering in Taunton is what is wanted by these students. There is an historical tradition of many students from Castle School going to other colleges within the Taunton area, which poses a challenge. AB said we do push on programmes such as the IB at the Taunton campus, but more work needs to be done.

JA asked whether applications are campus specific. AB said they are, and that there has been a challenge to get any students from Taunton to Bridgwater, so it is key to get the curriculum offering right. KS asked whether there are Bridgwater students wanting to go to Taunton to study. AB said there are some students from Bridgwater who do go to Taunton but this appears to be declining.

DTi said that the IB offering at Taunton is a really strong programme, but wondered whether it would be possible to expand the number of subjects offered. AB said that the programme is expensive to run due to its broad nature, however he agreed that it is very helpful to receive feedback directly from the student body. LR agreed that there are limitations to the IB, however it doesn’t restrict students from doing subjects such as dentistry and medicine at university. LR agreed that work is needed to change the perception of potential students on the limiting nature of the IB programme, which isn’t actually true.

AB outlined further details within the marketing report, including a focus on digital marketing, and work on higher education applications. There is expansion on bill board marketing, as well as on the radio and in local press. Governors noted the marketing report. DR said that he was impressed with the last Marketing ARG meeting, which had been positive.

MC left the meeting.

**G.03.42.19 POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

Fees Policy 2019/20 – MH outlined changes to the policy, including a section added on apprenticeships. Governors approved the policy.

**G.03.43.19 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Buildings Projects Committee held on 5 February 2019 – The minutes of the meeting were noted, along with the papers.

Health and Safety Committee held on 27 February 2019 - The minutes of the meeting were noted, along with the papers.

Finance, Personnel and General Purposes Committee held on 21 March 2019 – The minutes of the meeting were noted, along with the papers.

Standards Committee held on 4 March 2019- The minutes of the meeting were noted, along with the papers.

Audit Committee held on 12 March 2019 – The minutes of the meeting were noted, along with the papers.

**G.03.44.19 PROPOSED DATES FOR 2019/20 MEETINGS**

The proposed dates for the next academic year were circulated. MN asked for feedback following the meeting on the dates to be sent to him.

 **ACTION: ALL**

**G.03.45.19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 4 July 2019, which will be followed by dinner. Venue to be agreed.