



**BRIDGWATER  
& TAUNTON  
COLLEGE**

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2019**

**MEETING COMMENCED: 5.00 pm**

**MEETING ENDED: 7.35 pm**

**PRESENT:** Mervyn Brown (MB) (Chair, for part of meeting), Derek Randall (Chair for part of meeting), John Alvis (JA), Andy Berry (AB), Gill Anderson, Barry Brown (BB), Andre Frullo (AF), Rebecca Coutts (RC), Alan Hunt (AH), Nick Skyrme (NS), Andrew Smith (AS), Thomas Harris (TH) Keith Stenning (KS), David Selway, Claire Pearce (CP), David Taylor (DT) and Louise Seymour (LS), Lyndon Brett (LB) (from 5.20 pm)

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

#### **G.02.15.20**

##### **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Matthew Cox (MC), Salam Katbi (SK) and Gill Slattery (GS)

MB opened the meeting at 5.00 pm as DR was delayed.

#### **G.02.16.20**

##### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

#### **G.02.17.20**

##### **MINUTES OF THE SELF ASSESSMENT MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2019**

The minutes from the meeting held on 10 October 2019 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair, subject to an amendment under G.01.10.20 Capital Update – the residential block is called Burrow Hall.

#### **G.02.18.20**

##### **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters not covered on the agenda.

#### **G.02.19.20**

##### **PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE**

AB had provided a written update, summarising the current position and items of significant development since the Self-Assessment meeting in October. AB highlighted key points and invited questions. BB commented on AB's appointment as South West representative to the AoC Board. There were no questions. Governors noted the update.

LB and DR joined the meeting at 5.20 pm

## G.02.20.20

### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2018/19

DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2019 – MH presented the draft financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2019. MH confirmed these have already been fully reviewed and scrutinised by the Audit Committee and FP&GP Committee. MH highlighted key points and confirmed that, subject to Governor approval, these will be signed off by DR and AB. MH highlighted the income and expenditure of 2018/19 compared to 2017/18 which showed continued growth. MH invited questions. There were none. Governors unanimously agreed that the draft financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2019 be duly signed.

AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT INCLUDING LETTER OF REPRESENTATION – MH advised that the audit completion report including letter of representation had previously been taken to the Audit Committee and FP&GP Committee for full review and scrutiny. MH said that the report made a small number of low level recommendations, but nothing of significance. RC asked whether there is any data which shows how our pension liability relates to that of other, similar colleges. AB advised that he and MH would seek some data and distribute to Governors at the next full Board meeting. DR reassured that this liability would not fall to the College but the Government should there be a critical situation. The Board noted the audit completion report.

**ACTION: AB, MH**

## G.02.21.20

### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2019/20

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THREE MONTHS ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019 – MH presented the management accounts for the first three months of the financial year. The revised forecast showed no movement to final budgeted performance. This document had been previously scrutinised in detail by the FP&GP Committee. MH highlighted key points within the management accounts and invited questions and comments. KS asked about apprenticeship income and risk. AB confirmed that the carry in allocation is a risk as well as new starts, but these are being monitored closely both within area and across the College. DT asked what the impact has been of switching to End Point Assessment. LR said that this can have an impact on timely achievement as it is an additional layer, in addition to the fact that employers own the EPA process, but generally this has not been a problem. It is a bigger process in managing the gateway process. Again, this is monitored closely and regularly and adjustments made to forecasts. DT asked whether this is within our Risk Register. AB said he would confirm that this is within the Risk Register. **ACTION: AB to check this, and include if it is not**

RC asked whether this should be discussed in more detail at the Strategic Planning event in January. AB said that there are measures in place to minimise the risk in this area. AS asked whether it is possible for an apprentice to join at any time of year. AB said that it depends on the area of the College. Where there are high percentage of taught elements to the qualification, such as Engineering and some Construction these will have entry points only once a year. Other qualifications are roll on roll off with a start during any time of the

academic year. MH highlighted variances to income and expenditure in the first three months against budget and forecast. Adjustments have been made to the forecast to reflect these, although they are not significant. MH highlighted that the financial reporting to the ESFA timing has changed and there will be only one submission annually in January from this academic year. MH advised that there will need to be Board approval of the submission in February 2020 (the deadline is a month longer in this first year). It was proposed at FP&GP Committee that the submission be circulated to the FP&GP Committee in advance of the submission, and if there are no questions or comments, then the Board shall authorise DR to sign off the submission on behalf of the Board. RC requested that all Board members have sight of the submission and MH agreed. The Board thanked MH for his review and summary of the management accounts to October 2019, and approved the document as presented. **ACTION:MH**

#### **G.02.22.20**

#### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE TO THE CORPORATION 2018/19**

MN presented the final version of the annual report of the Audit Committee to the Corporation for 2018/19 and summarised the key information. JA remains the Chair of Audit Committee, and MN is the lead officer, and CP joined the Audit Committee, joining existing members KS and AS. Whistleblowing Policy had been reviewed. Internal and external audit tenders resulted in RSM remaining as internal auditors, and Francis Clarke were re-appointed as external auditors. BB enquired as to how many firms had tendered for the audits. MN said that there were only five expressions of interest and two tenders for external auditors. There was more interest for the internal process. MN confirmed the Audit Committee had reviewed and scrutinised the annual report and were recommending it for approval by the Board. MB enquired as to whether the health and safety actions had been reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee. It was agreed this would be brought forward to the Health and Safety Committee at its next meeting. JA highlighted the colour coding on the table needed amending. MN will action this.

**ACTION:MN/MH**

#### **G.02.23.20**

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

KPI 2018/19 – AB presented the KPI outcomes for 2018/19. He highlighted key points including where KPIs were achieved. He invited questions from Governors. DT commented that the ALPs training session for Governors prior to the last Quality and Standards meeting was invaluable and extremely helpful in providing an understanding for Governors. DT also asked about the parameters on entry requirements for A Levels. LR responded, saying using ALPs allows accurate assessment of student capability and likely outcomes and entry criteria are set on this basis. DT suggested some students might be better suited to other qualifications than A Levels. LR said that it is important to note that some areas of the College showed much higher achievement than the College overall. CP highlighted that new employers looking to move into the region will be looking at the skills base in the area. AB highlighted the market share achieved in Taunton in 2018/19. It was agreed that local marketing needs to be considered to ensure that potential students are able to make an informed choice of what is available. DT also said that development is needed on

employer engagement within Taunton. DT suggested inviting Taunton school governors to attend an event at Taunton campus. AB will investigate this further. **ACTION: AB**

NS asked whether the timely achievement could be included within the KPIs going forward. AB explained that due to the EPA process, reporting going forward will not take timely achievement into consideration. However, internally the College is still monitoring this. Governors noted the outcomes of Key Performance Indicators for 2017/18.

KPI 2019/20 – AB presented the KPIs as set for 2019/20, and the progress so far. AB highlighted key areas and actions being taken to ensure that KPIs remain on course for achievement. Governors noted the updated KPI report.

**G.02.23.20**

**DRAFT COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2018/19**

AB updated Governors on the Self-Assessment grades awarded for 2018/19. These reflect the grades awarded at Ofsted. Grades and the evaluation were scrutinised and approved by the Quality and Standards meeting on Tuesday 3 December. Governors noted the Self-Assessment Report. 2018/19.

**G.02.24.20**

**PROGRESS UPDATE ON OPERATING PLAN 2019/20**

LR presented the update for December on the operating plan for 2019/20. Actions link to strategic priorities within the self-assessment plan. Resource capacity in English and maths has been identified as a requirement, and appointment of a Head of English and maths is currently underway. LR highlighted that 2.1 success criteria will need to be reviewed. LR highlighted key areas for consideration and noting by the Board. LR invited comments and questions. DT asked whether work placement students can be paid by employers. LR confirmed this is possible and is something currently being implemented. CP highlighted opportunities within the Gravity project for work placements and employment. The Board noted the updated operating plan 2019/20.

**G.02.25.20**

**OFFICE FOR STUDENTS**

LR presented a report from Pauline Osborne, Head of Higher Education. Governors were referred to the paper circulated: Notice received from the Office for Students on 21 October 2019 on compliance with regulatory deadlines. LR advised that a total of 250 providers had received similar letters relating to infringements of OfS regulations.

AH reported that the Quality and Standards Committee had discussed the letter and OfS regulations in detail at its recent meeting. The Board noted receipt of the letter and its contents and discussed steps to be taken to mitigate any further breach. Governors directed the senior management team to ensure that all regulatory requirements of the OfS are followed.

**G.02.26.20**

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

MN presented the updated Equality and Diversity Policy for 2019/20. He highlighted minor changes, including 1.4 College Values – added 'together' which appears in the mission and values statement, 4.10 gender pay gap is referenced, 4.12 changes to wording to encapsulate

all terminology as it is evolving, and 9.3 the training on offer is varied and being developed both for face to face and online opportunities. RC suggested adding that Governors also receive training. CP highlighted that the gender pay gap is of particular significance in this geographical area as it is one of the worst performing areas of the country, so it is even more important to ensure this is high on the agenda. RC asked whether the Board receives pay and gender information regularly. AB would check and ensure this is the case. The Board noted the updates to the Policy and approved it as presented, subject to the changes discussed above.

**ACTION: AB/MN**

**G.02.27.20**

**SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

MN provided an update on safeguarding and a summary of recent activity and incidents and highlighted the rise of online abuse. He invited questions and comments. BB asked about lanyards of ex-students being re-used and security. MN confirmed that there are plans to introduce a new colour, and this is being discussed with the student union. MB asked if those students who have rated themselves as not feeling safe at college are contacted to follow up. MN confirmed this is done via MIS and all students are contacted to find out what more can be done to support them. DT raised the point of how safeguarding is dealt with in relation to students who are not regularly in College or who are in work placement or employment. GA confirmed that apprentice safeguarding is regularly reviewed and that any issues are fed back through to Student Services for action. The Board noted the report.

**G.02.28.20**

**STUDENT UNION REPORT 2018/19**

TH presented the Student Union report for 2018/19, including Student Governor training in Birmingham and attendance at day one of the AoC Annual Conference. Governors noted the report and thanked TH for his report and for his contribution.

**G.02.29.20**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 2019/20**

MH provided a summary of changes made to the updated Health and Safety Policy 2019/20. MH confirmed that the Health and Safety Committee and SMT have approved the draft. The Board noted the minor changes and approved the Policy as presented.

**G.02.30.20**

**MARKETING UPDATE**

AB presented the Marketing update compiled by the Head of Marketing. Governors noted the report. DR advised that marketing strategy and planning will form part of the Strategic Planning event in January.

**G.02.31.20**

**ESTATES AND PROPERTY UPDATE**

MH presented the Estates and Property update which had been reviewed at the Building Projects Committee meeting on 27 November. BB asked whether the College benefits from having Costa coffee. MN said that Costa charge the College for marketing materials, coffee machines and coffee beans, but it is a profitable venture. Governors noted the update.

**G.02.32.20**

**MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The minutes of the following sub-committee meetings were noted.

Health and Safety Committee 24.10.2019

Quality and Standards Committee 11.11.19  
Audit Committee 21.11.19  
Building Projects Committee 27.11.19  
Finance, Personnel and General Purposes 5.12.19

The Board ratified these minutes.

**G.02.33.20**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Colleges' Partnership – MN reported that AH and AF had worked with two Wiltshire College Governors to commission an investigation into the issues raised by TCP's departing Chief Executive. AH had met members of the Audit Committee and given assurance that he and AF were satisfied with the robustness of the investigation and that AB would be discussing TCP at the January Strategic Planning event.

Board Membership - DR said that this would be MB's last meeting, although he will join for the Strategic Planning event in January.

**G.02.34.20**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be the Strategic Planning event on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 January 2020, which will be held at the Aztec Hotel, Bristol.