

DRAFT



**BRIDGWATER
& TAUNTON
COLLEGE**

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

**MINUTES OF FULL BOARD MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 2020**

MEETING COMMENCED: 5.00 pm

MEETING ENDED: 7.36 pm

PRESENT: Derek Randall (Chair), John Alvis (JA), Andy Berry (AB), Barry Brown (BB), Andre Frullo (AF), Rebecca Coutts (RC), , Alan Hunt (AH), Nick Skyrme (NS), David Taylor (DT), Gill Slattery (GS), Louise Seymour (LS), Lyndon Brett (LB), Matt Cox (MC), Salam Katbi, Millie Harris (MHa), Denys Rayner (DRay), Mike Westlake (MW), Luke Fielder (LF), Keith Stenning (KS), David Selway (DS)

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

G.02.17.21 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies had been received from Claire Pearce.

G.02.18.21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
There were no declarations of interest relevant to the agenda of the meeting.

G.02.19.21 MINUTES OF THE SELF ASSESSMENT MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2020
The minutes from the meeting held on 8 October 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were duly approved.

G.02.20.21 MATTERS ARISING
Induction for new Governors – MN has led an induction process for the newly appointed Governors.

Annual Report of the Governing Body – MN reported he will be following up on the points raised during the Self-Assessment meeting in October.

G.02.21.21 PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE
AB had presented a written update in advance of the meeting. He highlighted key points. DR thanked AB for his update and invited questions or comments. BB asked about how many devices the College has given out to support students in accessing online learning. AB said that it is currently in the region of 200. MN also reported that 100 free sim cards would be supplied in January which would provide three months of data for students without a broadband connection at home. BB asked whether any further had been heard about the Town

Board Deal in Bridgwater. AB confirmed that the College supported project around sport did not form part of the final bid from the Town Board. However, there may be other routes to achieving a sports facilities improvement for the College.

G.02.22.21

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2019/20

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2020 – MH provided a verbal update to the financial statements which had been circulated prior to the meeting. These have been scrutinised and approved by the Audit Committee and FP&GP Committee. He presented these for final approval to the Full Board. The Board confirmed its approval that the financial statements be signed off.

ACTION: Financial Statements to be signed off.

Audit Completion Report Including Letter of Representation – MH provided a verbal update on the audit completion report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He highlighted key points for the Governors to note. He invited questions and comments. There were none. DR thanked MH for presenting the report.

G.02.23.21

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE TO THE CORPORATION 2019/20

MN provided a verbal update on the key points within the annual report of the Audit Committee, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. MN highlighted that some aspects of the planned internal audits could not take place, including the 'deep dive' aspects which were not safe during lockdown or possible with social distancing. These aspects have been deferred, possibly to later this year or next. MN highlighted the actions from the audits, including aspects of wellbeing and mental health of students. Furthermore, secure remote working was reviewed and there were a number of recommendations which are being enacted. MN invited questions or comments. KS commented that he has been impressed with the internal auditors and their processes, and that they have provided an excellent service. MN commented that the internal auditors have offered to run a training session on fraud for the Audit Committee this year. JA commented that he had been pleased with the response from the senior management team in relation to the audits and the related actions. The internal audit process is valuable in providing opportunities to improve and develop further. RC commented that the fraud training might be helpful also for students and that key points from this training could be circulated to students to help students minimise the risk of online fraud. MN confirmed that a letter will be going out to parents of students as there is currently a fraudulent social media campaign trying to gain access to the bank details of 16-18 students. An idea put forward by students to film short videos of College students highlighting aspects of personal safety was being investigated.

G.02.24.21

REVIEW OF 2019/20 OPERATING PLAN AND ASSOCIATED KP

Operating Plan 2019/20 – AB provided a verbal update on the final outcome of the operating plan for 2019/20, which had been updated and circulated prior to the meeting. AB highlighted areas where targets have not been achieved, including 2.7 which relates to commercial income, as this was adversely affected by Covid-19, with many staff from this area of the College being furloughed. Governors noted the final outcome to the operating plan 2019/20.

KPIs 2019/20 – AB provided a verbal update on the final outcome of the targets of the KPIs for 2019/20 which had been updated and circulated prior to the meeting. AB explained that the outcome for apprenticeships was affected by Covid-19 and lockdown which resulted in some apprentices not being able to achieve as planned. Target for market share of school leavers from Bridgwater was achieved but there is still further work to do with the Taunton school leavers market. Non-funded curriculum was also hit by Covid-19 during the year. The financial contribution target again was affected by Covid-19 and was not able to be achieved. Other KPIs were either achieved or nearly achieved. AB invited questions or comments from Governors.

DT asked a question regarding the market share in Taunton, how many young people we enrolled as a proportion of school leavers, and as a proportion by school. He noted that there has been an increase in Level 3 enrolments from Court Fields school, and it would be helpful to know more detail so that further work can take place to improve the market share. Dray asked what is being done to address the gap in enrolments from school leavers against our targets. AB said that Sam Reilly, who is the campus lead at Taunton, is building relations with the Taunton Head Teachers, to ensure that schools are fully aware of the College's offering. Further work is being done with the schools liaison team to get into schools to provide more information. There will also be a further review of the curriculum offer at Taunton campus to ensure that the courses on offer are those which students are interested in enrolling on. AB said he will ask Matt Tudor to bring some data and the marketing plan on this area to the strategic review by Governors. BB asked about higher degree apprentices, and why this is marked red. LR reported that the higher education marketplace in terms of apprenticeships has caused some barriers, particularly at Level 6, as HE institutions are resistant to FE providers moving into that marketplace. However, progress is being made, albeit slower than planned. RC asked if the marketing plan for the Taunton schools could incorporate a timing for the roll out of the plan. AB agreed to feed this back to the Marketing team. He outlined the digital and online marketing which has taken place for school leavers looking to study from 2021. He said these have been innovative and inclusive in seeking ways to access schools without being able to attend their campuses due to Covid-19. DT commented that the important time to catch younger people is at options, either in Year 8 or Year 9. He said there is scope for more to be done in this area. SK said that she is impressed with what the College is doing locally and regionally. She asked what is being done at a national level to learn from examples of excellence. AB said that he is on the National AoC Board, as well as the Tertiary Colleges Group, and he seeks opportunity to share and seek good practice. BB commented that in some pockets in Taunton, it appears that school leavers do not always understand the scope of what the College offers, particularly at the Taunton campus. AB highlighted the FE White Paper, which is seeking more collaboration between colleges.

Governors noted the outcome of the KPIs for 2019/20.

ACTION: Schools marketing plan to incorporate timing of actions.
AB

G.02.25.21

DRAFT COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2019/20

LR highlighted key points of the draft SAR for 2019/20. She recorded thanks to Nikki Sendell, who had put the report together, and to Governors who attended the meeting on Tuesday to scrutinise the

document. The grades within the draft document were ratified by the Governors at the Quality and Standards meeting on Tuesday 8 December.

LR highlighted changes to the way the SAR is structured due to the change to the Ofsted framework to EIF. The SAR also reflects the lockdown period and changes which had to be made to deal with the global pandemic.

LR emphasised the robust process which the College employed to reach the Centre Assessed Grades which were completed over the latter part of the summer term in 2020.

Further and detailed action plans will be drawn from the SAR in order to ensure that we achieve our targets and go into our next Ofsted Inspection in a strong position.

The final SAR document for 2019/20 will be circulated to Governors.

LR summarised key data points within the document.

Questions and comments were invited from Governors. AH commented on behalf of the Quality and Standards Committee on the quality and amount of work which Nikki Sendell has put into the SAR this year, giving a fair and accurate balance between the effects of Covid-19 but not blaming it unduly, and as a base from which to move forward for 2020/21. AH commented on the work and commitment by staff at all levels in compiling the SAR but also on building to improve going forward to reach our targets.

Governors noted the SAR for 2019/20 and approved it on the recommendation of the Quality and Standards Committee.

G.02.26.21

PROGRESS UPDATE

Operating Plan 2020/21 – AB provided a verbal summary of key points of the operating plan for 2020/21 which had been updated with progress to date this academic year. AB invited comments or questions from Governors. RC commented on English and maths and asked what contingency plans are in place to ensure the difficult to reach students are given the best chance to achieve. RC asked how the targets for English and maths compare to the national averages. RC commented it would be helpful to show the national averages in order to provide some context. AB confirmed that the English and maths elements of teaching will move from blended learning in term one to full on campus teaching from term two onwards. A new Head of English and maths has been recruited in the past six months in order to drive our achievement in these areas. LR commented that, in addition to the face to face delivery, there will be targeted use of our Tuition Fund, for catch up sessions for students who are not at the required level. This will involve one to one and small group sessions for English and maths students. To mitigate against further lockdowns, and the possibility of Centre Assessed Grades, there is further evidence recording, along with mock examinations. November re-sits were also held this year, which is a change from previous years. AB confirmed that the national averages will be recorded on the KPIs. Governors noted the update to the operating plan for 2020/21. LR confirmed the figures for English and maths.

ACTION: Record national averages for English and maths in the KPI document for reference. LR

Strategic Plan – AB highlighted the key points to the Strategic Plan for 2020-2023. The Strategic Plan had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. AB invited comments and questions. NS commented

that low carbon may need to be emphasised further within the narrative of the Strategic Plan. AB confirmed that this is a key feature of the medium term planning, and will become more and more embedded in all of our work. MN reported that low carbon does appear within the plan, including response to climate change. He reported that the College is working with a specialist company to access the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funds. The company will be submitting a bid on the College's behalf to secure some funding to support the decarbonisation process. MN will report back to Governors when the outcome of this bid is known. Governors noted the Strategic Plan.

KPIs 2020/21 – AB outlined the KPIs for 2020/21. This document had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. AB highlighted that there are some areas of further work required to meet target, but there are a large number of areas which are strongly on track to achieve our targets. It was agreed to incorporate the English and maths national averages within the KPI document, for reference. Governors noted the KPIs for 2020/21.

DR reported that the planned residential Strategic Planning event in January will be postponed due to the continued restrictions due to the global pandemic, which will not permit a meeting in person. It is planned that this will now take place at the end of March 2021. If an in-person event cannot take place at this point, further consideration will be given to a different format to the event.

G.02.27.21

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Revised budget for the year ending July 2021 – MH reported on the key points to the revised budget for the year ending July 2021, which had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. He reported that this has been scrutinised and approved by the FP&GP Committee. Due to the number of uncertainties around the Covid-19 situation, Governors had agreed to receive a revised budget for 2020/21. MH commented that there will be no change to the overall operating outcome for the budget for 2020/21, although there are changes to the individual projected income and expenditure streams. MH invited comments and questions from Governors. There were none. Governors agreed to approve the revised budget.

Management Accounts Three Months to 31 October 2020 – MH highlighted the management accounts for the three months to 31 October, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. This has been scrutinised and approved by the FP&GP Committee. Budgets are holding their position, and there are some favourable variances, however it is too soon to confirm that these will remain, and a further update will be given at the next Board meeting in March. MH highlighted that the high-risk area of our income is apprenticeships, which are continuing to experience turbulence due to Covid-19. MH invited questions from Governors. AB commented that FP&GP have looked carefully at the revised budget and the current position and that a 1% award, with a minimum payment of £250 pro rata, will be made in the December run. AB also highlighted that the new BTC Extra staff discount scheme has been launched this month, and that two additional efficiency days will be introduced before the end of the calendar year, moving the final day the College will be open before Christmas to

Wednesday 16 December, coinciding with the planned end of term date. Governors noted the position.

NS congratulated the senior management team on securing a relatively strong financial position, given the current challenges. NS highlighted that the College is currently rated as 'good' financially, but awareness needs to be given to the risk of moving into 'requires improvement' if the financial outturn is not as strong as forecast. AB noted this point and confirmed that careful monitoring of the budget and the forecast continues to ensure that we safeguard against moving into a lower category. MC commented on a greatly appreciated additional two efficiency days, which has been well received by colleagues across the College.

G.02.28.21

POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

Equality and Diversity Policy – MN presented the revised Equality and Diversity Policy, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He highlighted the key changes from the previous version. MN noted that RC has recently joined the College's Equality and Diversity Committee, that the College had signed up to a Black Lives Matter charter, and had also adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism. MN invited comments and questions. There were none. Governors approved the policy.

Health and Safety Policy – MH presented the revised Health and Safety Policy, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He highlighted the key changes from the previous version, and confirmed that the Health and Safety Committee had reviewed and approved the updated policy. NS asked a check be undertaken that under 13.2, dust extraction within workshops meet the required standards. MH confirmed that checks will be made into this. Governors approved the policy.

ACTION: MH to follow up on compliance with dust extraction requirements.

G.02.29.21

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

MN highlighted key points in the safeguarding report which had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. MN thanked DT for his support as the Safeguarding Governor. MN highlighted an incident where a tagged student was able to enrol. Revised fitness to study procedures have been put into place aiming to prevent this happening again in the future. Close monitoring has taken place of vulnerable students, and continued contact has been maintained over lockdown and during the period since. MN invited questions. RC noted on page 1, under safeguarding referrals, it should read 'of the 11' instead of 'of the 15'. MN will amend. RC requested a safeguarding training update for Governors over the coming few months. Governors noted the report.

ACTION: minor amendment on page one of the report. MN Safeguarding Training session to be arranged for Governors. MN

G.02.30.21

STUDENT UNION REPORT 2019/20

The Student Union report for the year 2019/20 had been circulated prior to the meeting, and MHa gave a brief summary of key points. Figures for fundraising exceeded the previous year, including Rag Day and Children in Need events, and other events throughout the year. MHa invited questions or comments. LR said that the students have adapted extremely well to the challenges of Covid-19, and thanked MHa for her

work as FE Student President. DR thanked MHa for her report. Governors noted the report.

G.02.31.21

MARKETING UPDATE

The Marketing Update, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, was noted by Governors.

G.02.32.21

ESTATES AND PROPERTY UPDATE

The Estates and Property update, which had been circulated prior to the meeting was noted. This had been received and scrutinised by the Buildings Project Committee. No comments were made.

G.02.33.21

MINUTES OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The minutes of the following sub-committee meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting:

Health and Safety Committee from 22.10.2020

Quality and Standards Committee from 09.11.2020

Buildings Projects Committee from 10.11.2020

Audit Committee from 17.11.2020

Finance, Personnel and General Purposes from 26.11.2020

Governors noted the minutes.

G.02.34.21

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BB Retirement – DR recorded thanks on behalf of the Governing Body for all BB's work and service to the College. This will be BB's last meeting prior to stepping down as a Governor.

The meeting closed at 7.36 pm