

DRAFT



**BRIDGWATER
& TAUNTON
COLLEGE**

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

**MINUTES OF FULL BOARD MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021**

MEETING COMMENCED: 5.00 pm

MEETING ENDED: 7.10 pm

PRESENT: Derek Randall (Chair), John Alvis (JA) (from 6.30 pm), Andy Berry (AB), Andre Frullo (AF), Alan Hunt (AH), Nick Skyrme (NS), David Taylor (DT), Gill Slattery (GS), Louise Seymour (LS), Lyndon Brett (LB), Matt Cox (MC), Denys Rayner (DRay), Mike Westlake (MW), Luke Fielder (LF), David Selway (DS)

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

G.03.35.21

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Rebecca Coutts, Claire Pearce, Salam Katbi, Millie Harris and Karen Frost.

DR opened the meeting and thanked the senior management team for their work over recent months through all the challenges the pandemic and lockdown have presented.

G.03.36.21

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

G.03.37.21

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2020

The minutes from the meeting held on 10 December 2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were duly approved.

G.03.38.21

MATTERS ARISING

Safeguarding Training for Governors – MN reported this will be organised for the Full Board in July, or a pre-recorded session will be available in the summer term.

Testing of Dust Extraction – MH had investigated following the issue raised at the last meeting (minute **02.28.21**). MH confirmed our insurers covered all of the necessary requirements in this regard.

G.03.39.21

REPORT ON CHAIR'S ACTIONS

MN highlighted a number of documents that DR had signed on behalf of the Board:

EICTB Welding Centre of Excellence agreement.

Deed of Grant of Easement for Cream Care Group
Cannington Court Planning application for events and visitor centre
Letter of intent for T Levels
Building contract with QUBE contractors
Honda agreement for a donation of a car for the Automotive department.
Joint Services Agreement with Yeovil Hospital NHS Trust and Somerset NHS Trust regarding the nursing associates programme.

Governors noted the documents which had been signed and approved on behalf of the Board by DR.

G.03.40.21

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

AB had presented a written update to Governors prior to the meeting. He highlighted key points from the report, including work which has been undertaken in relation to lockdown, full reopening of campuses, and testing of staff and students.

AB confirmed that during the lockdown period at the beginning of the calendar year, all learning returned online until Monday 8 March when students returned to campus. Positive feedback from online learning included that students have been empowered to be more independent and self-motivated with their learning.

AB highlighted the fire in the Arts and Technology building on the Bridgwater campus, which took place in the early hours of 18 February. The actions of the fire and rescue team were excellent in getting the fire under control, and also liaising with the Press throughout the fire itself. They also assisted in handing back the building once the fire was out. Work is now underway to get the building demolished and a new building erected over the coming months. Fortunately, only a small number of students were affected and have been relocated, but the impact for those students was significant in terms of lost project work. AB highlighted the recent cyber incident, which he would report on in full later in the agenda.

AB handed over to LR to give an overview of the onsite and home test processes since the beginning of March. We have had to organise and manage on site testing for students and staff as well as the distribution of home testing kits for all staff and students who wish to participate.

6,180 student tests have been completed since the beginning of March. 12,360 home tests will have been given out to staff and students since the beginning of March by the time we break for Easter next week. 2,711 staff test results have been recorded on the College database for home kit recording, and so far 2 staff have tested positive following a lateral flow device test. AB thanked LR for all of her work on ensuring the testing programme has been rolled out smoothly this term.

DT commented on how well the senior management team has managed over the past few months.

DT commented on the student survey feedback at the recent safeguarding committee meeting. The focus was around wellbeing, but it also focused on online teaching and online learning. DT asked what the way forward will be in relation to online learning in the medium to longer term. DT requested feedback through the Quality and Standards Committee on this matter, to reflect on the positives and drawbacks of online learning, and to seek a balanced way forward for all students in relation to teaching delivery format. AB agreed to bring a proposal to the Quality and Standards meeting next term. AB highlighted that MW

has joined the Digital Area Review Group which meets termly to discuss the digital innovation across the College.

MN commented that he will share a summary of the the data which was reviewed by the safeguarding committee recently, to the whole Board to give a wider context of the impact of the lockdown and pandemic on students' mental health. MN noted that it was a reflection of young people's mental health in lockdown, rather than a reflection on the College.

Governors noted the Principal's Update and thanked AB for his summary.

**ACTION: Distribute summary of safeguarding survey. MN
Bring recommendations for online/face to face learning to Quality and Standards Meeting in summer term. AB**

G.03.41.21

FINANCE

Finance Report and Management Accounts for the six months ended 31 January 2021

MH presented the financial report and management accounts for the six months ended 31 January 2021. He confirmed that this report and the management accounts had been scrutinised in detail at the recent FP&GP Committee meeting. MH highlighted key points within the report to Governors and invited questions. MH confirmed that the College is on track to maintain good financial health at the end of the financial and academic year. AB thanked MH for providing high quality and timely reports on finance for senior management and Governors. There were no questions from Governors.

Indicative Budget 2021/22

MH presented the indicative budget for 2021/22. He confirmed that the FP&GP Committee had scrutinised it in detail at its recent meeting. The final budget for 2021/22 will be brought to the Board for signing off and approval at the July Full Board meeting. MH highlighted the key points within the budget and invited questions from the Board. DR highlighted the key points from the FP&GP Committee, and the importance of marketing strategy and targets moving forward to ensure that we are in a consistently strong position. There were no questions, and the Board noted the budget update.

G.03.42.21

ESTATES AND BUILDINGS UPDATE

Capital Programme Summary

MH highlighted the capital programme summary, which outlines the number of capital programmes which are currently in progress or which are being bid for. He highlighted that the Building Projects Committee had reviewed these projects in detail, which included:

T Levels Wave One – 100% funded. Digital and Construction T Levels at Taunton campus, funded.

T Levels Wave Two – 76% funded by DfE. The facility, at Taunton, is for the healthcare and childcare T Levels.

IoT – refurbishment and equipment at Welding Centre of Excellence at Bridgwater, and at Cannington.

Capital Estates Fund from DfE

Digital Accelerator Programme – local enterprise partnership (LEP) provided 47% funding.

Health Education England – infrastructure for the courses for healthcare provisions.

Unallocated College Works – funds set aside for summer works programme

Potential capital bids – MH highlighted potential funding that the College will be bidding for over the coming weeks.

Mechanical Centre of Excellence – will be funded by EDF Energy, as a mock up facility for testing systems and processes.

Automotive and Technology Building – this will be a new build

AB commented that the process for bidding for funding related to all of these projects is considerable, but the Estates, Curriculum and Finance teams have worked hard to produce strong and credible bids for funding.

Governors noted the position on the capital programme and did not have any questions.

Capital Priorities

MH summarised the capital priorities, and noted that the document had been scrutinised in full by the Buildings Project Committee. Governors noted the report.

Further Education Capital Transformation Fund – Summary Estates Strategy

MH highlighted key points within the report on the FE Capital Transformation Fund bids which have been submitted. He highlighted the key projects which have been for, which included:

Health and Wellbeing Centre, Taunton

Agriculture Mechanisation Centre, Cannington

Residential facility, Cannington (planning permission for three new blocks, only one built so far)

Social, emotional and mental health and link centre, Cannington

New sports hall at Bridgwater

The outcome of these bids is currently awaited. MH invited questions or comments. There were none, and the Board of Governors noted the bids which have been submitted.

Further Education Capital Transformation Fund – Business Cases

MH highlighted the business cases for the projects summarised above. This report gives the full details of the business case for each of the FECTF bids which have been submitted.

DRay asked whether we have a priority list in place, and which projects we would prioritise should we not be successful on all bids. AB confirmed that these funds are focused around category C&D buildings only. He commented that the Health and Wellbeing Centre at Taunton would be of high priority, along with the Social, emotional and mental health centre at Cannington, but we will need to await the outcome

before taking any firm decisions. MH indicated that the outcome of the bids will be due in September this year.

A&T Building Fire

MH had presented a report prior to the meeting summarising the fire at the Arts and Technology building at the Bridgwater campus. He highlighted the key points and invited questions or comments. The fire had broken out in the early hours of Thursday 18 February, but fortunately was contained by fire fighters to the one building. The motorsport facility, plumbing workshops and various classrooms and offices within the building have been destroyed or damaged beyond salvaging. Staff and students have been relocated to other buildings to ensure continuity of learning. There will be portable workshops installed over the summer period to ensure that sufficient facilities are available whilst there is a new build on this site. Professional team to undertake the works are being procured currently. NS asked whether we have acknowledged and thanked the Fire and Rescue Service. AB confirmed that he has written to the Chief Fire Officer to thank him and the team personally for their hard work and high quality support during and immediately after the fire. He had also thanked the Chief Fire Officer in person, as he had visited the site during the fire. AB agreed it would be appropriate to invite the Fire Service in to have a tour of the campus in due course. AB also noted that a previous apprentice from the College, who now has a full-time job in the Fire Service, had been part of the fire crew who tackled the blaze. GS asked about the provisions of the insurance policy in relation to the new build. She asked whether we can incorporate sustainability and carbon zero build standards and other climate focused initiatives to support a sustainable new build. MH confirmed that this is on the radar, and that a requirement of the insurance payment is a 'like for like' replacement, and so the College will work hard to ensure that as many sustainable methods, materials and processes are incorporated into the project. AB highlighted that one of our newly proposed cross-cutting themes within the draft strategic plan, to be discussed and finalised by the Board at the end of this month, is the climate emergency. LB confirmed that all new builds follow the current requirements in relation to sustainability. However, he suggested that we review the insurance provision, to ensure that all buildings insurance covers fully for any future liability, taking into account the standards required for new builds. MH agreed that he will be addressing this point with the insurers. MN confirmed that conversations are taking place with himself, MH and various companies focused on sustainable building and initiatives. MC highlighted that the age of the building had meant that the damage was probably more extensive than if the building had been newer, and this would be something to keep in mind when considering materials to be utilised in the new build.

Governors thanked MH for the update and noted the position.

G.03.43.21

UPDATES FOR THE BOARD

Cyber Incident

AB gave an overview of the recent cyber incident. He confirmed that the College was fully insured against this type of event, and we were

provided with a cyber expert team to support the work required to ensure the College's systems were brought back online safely and securely.

AB highlighted the key points within the incident, and confirmed that the team of specialists involved via our insurers have now completed their work and systems have now been fully restored.

The College has made appropriate contact with the Information Commissioners Office, our providers and partners, to ensure they are provided with key information, and that appropriate actions were taken.

AB highlighted that, due to the use of Microsoft Office 365, including Teams, the impact on student learning was minimal and education provision was largely unaffected. This meant that throughout the incident students and teaching staff could maintain online teaching and learning.

AB invited comments and questions from the Board. There were none.

The Board noted the update, and congratulated the senior management team, particularly Matt Tudor, as well as the IT Team, who have worked extremely hard to minimise the impact of loss of access to IT systems as a result of the cyber incident.

JA joined the meeting at 6.30 pm

G.03.44.21

OPERATING PLAN 2020/21 UPDATE

Operating Plan 2020/21 Update

LR highlighted the key points on the updated Operating Plan, which had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

1.2 – attendance rate is currently lower than we would anticipate. It is important to note that this reflects a period of remote learning, and this will have had an impact, particularly for those hard to reach students. LR explained that there has been an element of digital poverty, so not 100% of students had access to technology during lockdown and so could not access online learning resources. LR highlighted lower attendance from adult learners, many of whom were home schooling their children simultaneously, and not all parents would have been able to manage both home schooling and their own online learning. English and maths attendance is lower than expected, and again, it is likely the impact of the lockdown. Action being taken to remedy this lack of contact includes increasing face to face teaching for English and maths, and utilising the tuition fund to run focused groups for some students. GCSE and A Level students will not have examinations this year and they will have teacher assessed grades. However, this does not apply to functional skills students, and the College has lodged its disappointment at this decision, as some functional skills learners will have found this academic year challenging to maintain engagement.

Strategic Aim 2

Industry Placements – focusing on re-engaging with employers for September.

AEB Budget – LR highlighted that the College has almost reached its allocation for AEB funding, and the College is lobbying for additional support, and liaising with other colleges to utilise some of their allocation if they are not going to reach the 90% threshold.

Commercial Targets have been affected by the lockdown and pandemic, however there is more activity starting to take place over the coming months.

Strategic Aim 3

Throughout the pandemic and lockdown, we have maintained a robust and successful recruitment process. We have recruited over 40 staff to assist with the running of the testing facilities, and whilst these are part time and temporary, we have gained some skilled staff who are starting to apply for other jobs within the College as a result.

CPD – much of the CPD has moved to a digital platform, utilising systems such as Yammer and Teams.

Strategic Aim 4

LR highlighted work taking place to ensure processes around safeguarding are even more robust. LR congratulated the College safeguarding and wellbeing teams on their work over the lockdown in supporting students.

LR invited questions. MC asked about the funding linked to the industry placements pilot and whether this is at risk due to not being able to reach our targets. LR confirmed that the funding from the CDF project was protected this year, as long as we were able to demonstrate that we are building capacity for September onwards. We have additional CDF funding guaranteed for the next academic year, but this is tapering off thereafter. Next year we will require around 500 students to go out on industry placements, and so this remains a challenge at the current time. MC highlighted a small correction on strategic aim 4.

The Board noted the updated, and thanked LR for the highlights.

KPI 2020/21

AB highlighted the current position on the KPIs for the current academic year. He highlighted the changes from the December update. Work continues to ensure that KPIs are achieved.

Questions and comments were invited from the Board. There were no questions or comments, and the Board noted the position.

Update from the Strategic Planning Process

AB highlighted the agenda for the Governors Strategic Planning event which will be held on the afternoons of Monday 29 March and Wednesday 31 March. This will focus on discussion on the draft Strategic Planning Framework 2021-24 which has been developed by the senior management team, as the basis of discussion at next week's event. AB asked Governors to read the contextual document he had circulated. DR confirmed the sessions will be held over Zoom, with

opportunity for Board discussion and feedback on Wednesday, following presentations from senior management on Monday afternoon.

G.03.45.21

MARKETING UPDATE

A marketing update had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting, outlining current marketing initiatives.

AB invited questions and comments. There were none. The Board noted the position.

G.03.46.21

POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

Fees Policy 2021/22

MH highlighted key points on the updated Fees Policy for 2021/22, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. This policy is reviewed and updated annually. The FP&GP Committee has reviewed this policy update in detail and recommend its approval.

The Board approved the policy.

G.03.47.21

PROPOSED DATES FOR 2021/22 MEETINGS

Dates for the 2021/22 committee and Full Board meetings had been proposed and circulated prior to the meeting. The Board noted and agreed these dates, which were now confirmed.

G.03.48.21

REPORTS AND 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 11.02.2021

Quality and Standards Committee from 01.03.2021

Buildings Projects Committee from 09.02.2021

Audit Committee from 09.03.2021

Finance, Personnel and General Purposes from 11.03.2021

Governors noted the minutes.

G.03.49.21

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm.