



BRIDGWATER
& TAUNTON
COLLEGE

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GOVERNORS HELD ON THURSDAY 23 MARCH 2023

MEETING COMMENCED: 5.05 pm

MEETING ENDED: 7.31 pm

PRESENT: Derek Randall (Chair), Alan Hunt (AH), Andy Berry (AB), Helen Stapleton (HS), Nick Skyrme (NS), Andy Berry (AB), Jackson George (JG), Adam Collett (AC), Sam Harris-Roberts (SHR), Bethan Nodwell (BN), Lyndon Brett (LB) (via Teams until 6 pm), Hannah Lenthall-Aung, Mike Westlake, Claire Pearce, David Taylor, and Denys Rayner

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

G.03.36.23

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

DR welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies for absence had been received from David Selway and Beverley Hawkins.

G.03.37.23

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest relevant to the meeting.

G.03.38.23

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2022

The minutes from the meeting held on 8 December 2022 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were duly approved.

G.03.39.23

MATTERS ARISING

AoC Governance Events – MN confirmed he is circulating events to Governors as they arise.

G.03.40.23

CHAIRS ACTIONS

MN reported on the liquidation of Bridgwater Education Trust (BET), the assets of £55,000 were transferred to Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust, and DR signed off to receive these funds into the Trust.

G.03.41.23

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

AB had provided a written update on the year to date and recent developments.

He summarised the key points of the update, including focus around teaching, learning and assessment and the emphasis we place on this core element of our activity. AB invited questions. DT asked for a report on students who had applied for T Level courses which have been deferred and how we have been able to reallocate these students to other courses. LR confirmed that these T Levels will be replaced with

another technical qualification, and a report on this can be circulated to Governors. AH asked whether the disrupted timetable on T Levels will slow down the defunding of existing Level 3 qualifications. AB said that there is a lot of discussion within the FE sector around this defunding. AB said there is no evidence to suggest at this time that the Government is planning to delay the defunding process. LR reported that the deferral of some T Levels will have an impact on the College budget as planning has been in place for two years as well as spending on resources. LR is meeting with the DfE to discuss this further and will report back. DR thanked AB for his report.

ACTION: report on where T Levels students who applied for courses which are being deferred have been offered alternative places. LR to provide.

G.03.42.23

FINANCE

Management Accounts for the Six Months Ended 31 January 2023 – these had been circulated prior to the meeting and MH highlighted the key points. MH invited questions. The Board noted the final management accounts for the six months ended 31 January 2023.

Indicative Budget 2023/24 – This had been circulated prior to the meeting and MH highlighted key points. MH invited questions. DRay asked how much contingency has been put in to allow for continued cost of living and inflation. MH addressed the question. The Board noted the budget.

Corporate Services Limited Management Accounts – MH presented the management accounts for Corporate Services Limited. He highlighted the key points. MH invited questions. There were none. The Board noted the management accounts for Corporate Services Limited.

Corporate Services Limited Indicative Budget 2023/24 – MH presented the indicative budget for Corporate Services for 2023/24. MH highlighted the key points within the budget including projection on pay and non pay costs for 2023/24. MH invited questions. There were none. The Board noted the indicative budget for 2023/24 for Corporate Services Limited.

NS commented that there had been a discussion at FP&GP Committee regarding pay costs for 2023/24 in some detail, as well as an update on HR across the College including recruitment and staff numbers. NS requested further information on this for the wider Board. AB provided an update and context to these reports. The Board noted the position.

DT commented on the weighting of income from apprenticeships and current political discussions around the future of apprenticeships and the associated levy. DT asked if there is a risk from apprenticeship forming a large portion of our income. AB said that at the current time this isn't a huge risk but of course it will continue to be monitored as Government discussions continue.

G.03.43.23

OPERATING PLAN 2022/23 - UPDATE

LR highlighted key items from the updated operating plan, which had been reviewed within departments and by SMT. One key action was around moving appraisals online. This has now been rolled out by the

HR Department. Staff survey results showed an increased number of staff declaring a disability, and this will support with making relevant adjustments to support all staff. MN provided an update on student safety. There is currently an open student survey and so far 700 responses have been received. Focus on skills for Ofsted is taking place led by Matt Tudor. Further work on bootcamps is in progress. IT infrastructure work continues. Focus on staff development and undertaking a survey to inform where there is a need. Mechanisms for climate actions are being considered to ensure full engagement across the College with staff and students. Looking to develop the BTC Academy and enrichment offer by collapsing timetables for one afternoon a week from 2023/24 academic year. Further work around Green Campus, and report will be brought to the Full Board in due course. LR invited questions. NS asked about the carbon agenda, and what the balance is likely to be between energy saving and energy generation. On energy generation it is looking around equal split between PV and LED.

Strategic Risk Register – AB provided an update on the current position with regard to the Risk Register. This had been reviewed by the senior management team and the current position recorded. MN noted that Covid19 and pandemic risk was now being incorporated within the business continuity risk. AB invited questions. There were none. Governors noted the position and the updated strategic risk register and that it had been reviewed in detail by the Audit Committee at its recent meeting.

G.03.44.23

ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

LR had circulated a draft document to the Board prior to the meeting. This accountability agreement is a specific requirement regarding the College's use of public funds and how we do this to meet local and regional needs. LR outlined the key points within the document and sought Board approval for this. LR highlighted that the accountability agreement may need to be updated to reflect the LSIP which should be published in the next month. The Board approved the accountability agreement in principle subject to the changes required by the LSIP and any comments by Governors.

ACTION: Governors to review the Accountability Agreement and provide feedback to MN or LR.

G.03.45.23

GRAVITY PROJECT UPDATE

AB provided a verbal update on the Gravity Project. AB invited questions. There were none. The Board noted the position and would await further updates in due course as the project develops.

G.03.46.23

ESTATES AND BUILDINGS UPDATE

MH provided an update on the reports received and reviewed in detail by the Buildings Projects Committee at its recent meeting. He summarised key buildings projects which are being planned and ongoing, noting progress on these. MH invited questions. There were none. The Board noted the position.

G.03.47.23

MARKETING UPDATE

A marketing report had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting from the Head of Marketing. AB highlighted key points within the report and invited questions. HS asked about the development of

marketing around UCS, and was pleased to learn that the College has engaged consultants to support this. HS commented that we need to move to a more national focus on marketing for UCS. AB commented that local marketing so far has focused around local HE on your doorstep, so there would need to be targeted marketing. MW commented that there are mechanisms available that would permit targeted marketing for both local, regional, and national markets.

BN commented that other HE providers seem to keep in touch more heavily between application and acceptance and start of course. This is something that could be improved or changed to have more targeted marketing. HLA commented that keep warm for HE would be helpful and that further mechanisms could be introduced in the same way as with FE students whereby easy contact can be made via Pro Solution. MW commented on the possibility of increased digital touch points for marketing events and linking into local schools. MW commented on market trends and social media and which platforms are being accessed by the Year 11 students that we are going to be trying to attract. AB thanked MW for his input and comments, and would ensure that consideration is given to mechanisms by which focused and effective marketing tools can be utilised in the best ways. DT commented on language within the report and this was noted. DT noted that he is a Trustee of the Partnership which oversees Castle School. DT commented on focus around marketing towards parents, which was included within the report, and the importance of this in addition to marketing direct to students. HLA confirmed that there are a number of events being organised directly for parents over the coming months. JG noted that current students are a huge resource for promoting and marketing the College to other young people.

ACTION: AB to feedback comments to Marketing Department to ensure actions are taken forward. Consideration to re-introduction of Marketing ARG to have closer Governor involvement in Marketing Strategy.

G.03.48.23

STUDENT UNION CONSTITUTION

MN presented the updated Student Union Constitution which had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. BF, Head of Student Engagement has consulted with the Student Union and worked with them to update the constitution. The document contains a section detailing all of the updates for review. MN requested a name change to 'The Students' Union', which was approved by the Board. MN requested approval of the Student Union Constitution. The Board approved the updated Student Union constitution. DR recorded thanks to JG for his input into the updating of this document and involvement with the Student Union.

G.03.49.23

POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

Fees Policy 2023/24 - MH presented the draft fees policy for 2023/24 for approval by the Board of Governors. He highlighted changes from the current fees policy. The FP&GP Committee had reviewed the changes in detail and recommended approval. The Board approved the policy.

G.03.50.23

PROPOSED DATES FOR 23/23 MEETINGS AND MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Proposed Dates for 2023/24 Meetings – MN had circulated proposed dates for meetings of Governors for the 2023/24 academic year.

Search Committee held on 4 October 2032 – The minutes were noted and ratified.

Health and Safety Committee held on 9 February 2023 – The minutes were noted and ratified.

Quality and Standards Committee held on 28 February 2023 – The minutes were noted and ratified.

Buildings Projects Committee held on 7 February 2023 – The minutes were noted and ratified.

Finance, Personal and General Purposes Committee held on 9 March 2023 – The minutes were noted and ratified.

Corporate Services Ltd Board held on 24 November 2032 – The minutes were noted and ratified.

G.03.51.23

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

National College for Nuclear Instrument and Articles - MN highlighted changes to the National College for Nuclear's Instrument and Articles. CP commented on potential name changes in the future, and this point was noted. AH also emphasised this point in ensuring that a name change does not limit opportunities. AB recommended that legal advice be sought on the changes prior to Board approval being given. It was agreed that a digital approval of this change will be sought from the Board once legal approval has been secured.

ACTION: MN to seek legal advice on these changes and seek digital approval by the Board in due course.

G.03.52.23

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 29 June 2023 at 5 pm.

The meeting closed at 7.31 pm.