

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College
Board of Governors**

**Minutes of a meeting held at the Broadwater Campus
Monday 30 April 2018 commencing at 4.30pm**

- Present:** Gary Anderson, Natalie Brett, Claire Hopkins, Jim Hynes (Staff Governor), Nick Juba (CEO), Scott Marshall, Joy Mercer, Julie Nerney (Chair), Debbie Waring (Staff Governor), Martyn Wilks
- In attendance:** Sarah Box (Project Officer), Sharon Collett (Principal), Stuart Eatock (ECE Architecture) for Item 8, Rhiannon Phinbow (HR Director), Jon Rollings (COO), Peter Scragg (NorthGates) for Item 8
- Apologies:** Jenny Brooker (Governance Adviser), Anwar Musa (Student Governor)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

306. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted. Governor appraisals and Away Day discussions had identified a desire for further engagement between Board members and the core business of the college - teaching, learning and assessment. With this in mind, arrangements had been made for the Assistant Principals to provide a 45 min briefing session prior to each Board meeting. Governor attendance would be optional, but it was agreed that members would advise on their availability in advance to ensure that presenters could prepare appropriately.

MINUTES

307. The minutes and the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2018 were taken as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

Schedule of decisions

308. The Board received and noted a schedule outlining the progress of actions from the minutes of the last meeting. All actions were complete or in progress.

WORTHING COLLEGE

309. The CEO updated the Board on the potential merger opportunity with Worthing College and the associated Structure and Prospects Appraisal process. A timeline has been proposed by the FE Commissioner (FEC) with the submission of the Expression of Interest (EoI) by 25 May, full proposals by 22 June and presentations to the Worthing College Board provisionally set for 6 July. The CEO has engaged

with local officers, politicians and businesses in the Worthing and Adur region, and there has been a clear expression of support for a single post 16 offer in the town.

310. The Chair and CEO confirmed that they had both held informal conversations with the FEC team. Governors were cautioned that while the GBMet bid appears strong, based on the geography and curriculum compatibility, it was not a straightforward process and the final decision remains solely with the Worthing College Board.
311. The Executive team has commissioned a consultant to provide an analysis of the movements of students in the Worthing area from Individualised Learner Records (ILR). This data would not only help to add competitive advantage to the proposal, but would be a valuable piece of research regardless of whether the bid was a success.
312. Members commented that regardless of the final outcome and partner of choice for Worthing College, they felt that the CEO's work to raise awareness with stakeholders in West Sussex was a positive demonstration of the college's commitment to the Worthing and Adur community and learners, post-merger.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive would continue work to develop the EoI and full proposals.

PEOPLE STRATEGY

313. The HR Director presented the reviewed and updated strategy following the feedback given at the March Board meeting.
314. The staff governor requested assurance that the strategy is deliverable, in light of the feedback from the staff satisfaction survey on issues such as workload. In response, the HRD advised that the initiatives also set out in the digital strategy would help to reduce administration burden and building in remission time for Course Leaders would help to alleviate workload pressures.
315. In response to questions from governors the HRD informed governors that recruitment and staff turnover were likely to remain the key challenges throughout the duration of the strategy.
316. Members commented on their desire to see priorities given to the detailed action plan. In response, the CEO explained that the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) will draw out the most significant areas of each sub-strategy for the year ahead, at the same time illustrating the links to the 5-year strategic success measures. The draft AOP will be presented to the Board for comment at the May meeting.
317. The staff governor challenged whether the 100% completion rate for appraisals is an effective success measure of the appraisal process, as it does not take into account the quality of the development discussions. The CEO acknowledged that good objective setting was central to high quality performance management. The development of the behavioural framework will also address this matter, ensuring

expectations are clear and objectives are aligned to reflect the priorities of the Strategic Plan.

318. The importance of the clear communication of the strategies was discussed, and the method in which they will be presented and circulated to staff. For the People Strategy, the HRD commented that the key message to convey was that it had been developed in response to all the feedback received from staff.
319. In response to a query, the CEO assured governors that there was sufficient resource allocated to deliver the people strategy.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the people strategy.

CEO REPORT

Executive Summary

320. In addition to the information presented in the Executive Summary, the CEO informed the Board that two inspections had recently taken place. The first was the anticipated British Council inspection of English Language provision. Feedback at the end of the three day process had been positive, and initial indications suggested that the accreditation is likely to be retained. The second had been an unplanned inspection of the teacher training provision at the University of Brighton. There was confidence that the college had assisted the UoB to gain a positive outcome. It was acknowledged that the inspections had created a significant amount of work for both teams involved.
321. The Board were advised that the planning for Phase 4 continues, and the delivery remains on track.
322. In addition to the separate paper, the CEO highlighted that the Office for Students (OfS) will become the new HE regulator as of 31 July 2019. In the interim period, the memorandums of assurance and accountability and funding agreements between the college and the previous regulatory regime (HEFCE) will be maintained.

Applications

323. The latest application figures were provided to governors. The numbers of FE 16-18 applications are slightly behind the 2017/18 figures, once adjusted for the impact of the merger.
324. The Executive team's focus remains on HE where the figures are significantly behind the same period in 2017/18 compounding the downward trend in applications over the past three academic cycles. Work continues to address the shortfall by converting applications and increasing the number of new applicants where possible.

325. An analysis of late applications to HE programmes in 2016/17 and 2017/18 has shown a total of 200 in each year, the current positions are therefore expected to improve based on that data.
326. A discussion took place on the reasons for the decline in HE applications, which include the changes in the demographic makeup of the student population in the Greater Brighton region, declining applications to creative subjects nationally and a significant shift in applicant behaviour. It was recognised that the GBMet HE position is comparable to other organisations in the sector.
327. The CEO informed governors that HE would be covered in depth at the May meeting, to include presentation of a strategy and action plan. It would be a chance to consider not only the challenges, but also the opportunities for the college's HE provision in the future. Governors requested that information on fees is provided, alongside detail of the finances required to underpin the strategy.

Quality

328. The Principal presented an overview of the recent data showing GBMet 2016/17 performance against newly released 2016/17 national averages. The national average has increased by 2% for all qualifications all ages, and GBMet remains 2% above that at 86.4% and is placed 54th (on the edge of the upper quartile). This is a modest increase for the college, but the overall figure masks some areas of concern including: 16-18 entry level, Level 1 English and maths functional skills. This was not unexpected and work to tackle these issues has already been incorporated in the 2017/18 curriculum plan.
329. The college is ranked 52nd for overall apprenticeship achievement (on the edge of the upper quartile). Timely achievement challenges include 16-18 and L3 apprentices, which continue to require action throughout the year.
330. Governors were assured by the knowledge that the data was anticipated and felt that the overall position, just outside of the top quartile, is positive.
331. It was agreed that the overall league tables would be circulated for information.
332. The results of the GBMet Student and Apprenticeship survey results were also discussed. Both *killer questions* 'I would recommend...' are above the college target of 92%. Intervention is in place to rectify lower outcomes. The results of FE and Employer Choices surveys will be available towards the end of the academic year.
333. The Board were advised that the outcome of the English and maths evaluation in the student survey is reflected in the attendance rates. The Principal confirmed that the emphasis is on ensuring teaching and learning are stimulating to remove fear following students' poor experiences at school.

RESOLVED:

To circulate the national leagues tables to governors for information.

Funding/Contract performance and Finance

334. In response to questions the COO advised that the increase in overheads was mainly due to IT contract renewals and managing the legacy of under investment in estates in Brighton. The Exec team would consider how these costs were classified going forward, and would also be reviewing how the figures will impact on the year-end position as part of the Q3 reforecast.

HR

335. The HRD confirmed that the professional boundaries policy will replace the code of conduct from both predecessor colleges and will be developed as part of the People Strategy action plan.

REGISTRATION WITH THE OFFICE FOR STUDENTS

336. The CEO advised that while the probability of the OfS not approving the application to register is low, the possible impact is high, hence the need for Board oversight. The application would be developed in time for Exec to review it prior to the deadline for submission.

RESOLVED:

The Board noted the new registration arrangements with the OfS.

PELHAM REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE

337. Stuart Eatock (ECE Architecture) and Peter Scragg (NorthGates) attended to present images and plans of the latest design to the Board. Governors were asked to note progress with the project

Design Development

338. Stuart Eatock presented the plans for the new accommodation and the use of the legacy space and outside areas. The design process is approaching the end of RIBA stage 2 and moving towards public consultation, due to take place on the 18th and 19th May.
339. A confidential minute was taken at this point. See confidential minutes 347-349.

SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY

340. The Board approved both the Safeguarding and Prevent policy and the appointment of Claire Hopkins as the Board's Safeguarding and Prevent Lead. The Chair expressed her grateful thanks to Joy Mercer for covering the role in the intervening period.

RESOLVED:

That Claire Hopkins is appointed as the Board's Safeguarding and Prevent Lead.

That the Board formally approved the Safeguarding and Prevent policy.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

341. The Board formally approved the updated Financial Regulations.

RESOLVED:

That the Board formally approved the Financial Regulations.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dates to note

342. The Chair reminded governors that the annual hair and beauty show is taking place on 10 May, and the Annual Achievers awards ceremony on the 21 June and encouraged attendance from governors where possible.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

343. It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled to take place on Monday 21 May at 4.30pm at the Brighton Central Campus.

MEETING EVALUATION

344. An informal evaluation of the meeting was led by the Chair.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signature of Chair..  Date.....21.05.18.....

