

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College  
Board of Governors**

**Minutes of a meeting held at the Brighton East Campus  
Monday 20 November 2017 commencing at 4.30pm**

- Present:** Nick Juba (CEO), Ian Lowrie, Scott Marshall, Joy Mercer,  
Julie Nerney (Chair), Debbie Waring (Staff Governor)  
Marty Wilks
- In attendance:** Steve Baldwin (observing), Sarah Box (Assistant Clerk), Sharon Collett  
(Principal), Rhiannon Phinbow (HR Director), Jon Rollings (COO).
- Apologies:** Natalie Brett, Jenny Brooker (Governance Adviser), Eileen Houghton,  
Jim Hynes (Staff Governor)

**WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

102. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

**MINUTES**

103. The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2017 were taken as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Schedule of decisions**

104. The Board received and noted a schedule outlining the progress of actions from the minutes of the last meeting. The Chair advised that Item 75 was complete and requested that in future reports, all actions were listed separately for ease of tracking.

**STAFF SURVEY OUTCOMES**

105. The HR Director presented the key findings and recommendations from the Staff Survey. The response rate of 47% was considered to be positive and the Board were asked to note that the survey had been conducted in July 2017 immediately after merger, which will have impacted on the scoring of certain questions. The benchmark data from York College was received in September allowing a full analysis to take place.
106. The findings of the survey in many ways confirmed what the Executive team were aware of regarding staff views, particularly in relation to the impact of the major restructuring activity taking place post-merger on perceptions of job security.
107. The discrepancy of scores between sites was also discussed and members reflected on some of the reasons why feedback from staff was generally more positive in Shoreham and East Brighton and lower in Broadwater and West Durrington.

108. The HRD confirmed that the findings would provide helpful evidence to underpin the People Strategy to be reviewed at Board later in the academic year. Staff perceptions concerning the quality and frequency of communications were discussed, and the Principal confirmed plans for increased visibility of the Principal and Assistant Principals had been introduced, particularly at the Broadwater campus. The new monthly 'team brief' was also discussed as a tool to ensure consistent information was cascaded through the organisation and allowed feedback to be reviewed at Senior Leadership Team meetings.
109. Governors queried how the information would be used to drive improvement and how staff would be engaged in arriving at solutions to the issues raised. It was confirmed that HR would be working with the Assistant Principals and Heads to develop action plans at departmental level.
110. Improving 'all staff' communications through a new intranet, the establishment of a single staff forum and monthly team meeting briefs would all be used for disseminating information across the MET.

**RESOLVED:**

**The Board noted the findings of the staff survey.**

**EQUALITY OBJECTIVES, STATEMENT AND SUCCESS MEASURES**

111. The Principal confirmed that the objectives and measures of success were based on the Strategic Plan priorities. A significant amount of work had already been undertaken to widen the College's demographic, but there was more to be done. The Chair suggested using role models (e.g. alumni) to help encourage diversity.
112. The Board considered the equality objectives, statement and measures of success and requested that the Equality & Diversity monitoring board further consider the measures to ensure that each one was quantifiable.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) **The equality objectives and equality statement be approved**
- (ii) **That the equality success measures be approved subject to refinement by the Equality & Diversity monitoring board to ensure that each measure is quantifiable**

**CEO REPORT: NOVEMBER 2017**

**Executive Summary**

[A confidential item was taken at this point. See confidential minutes 145-148]

113. Presenting the key risks and issues, the CEO confirmed that the Phase three consultation had now concluded. It was acknowledged that it had been an unsettling and difficult time for staff. However, there had been strong engagement from individuals and teams, resulting in improvements to the original proposals. The Board

were assured that the financial implications of these amendments remained within tolerance of the original costings.

114. The principles and approach to Phase 4 of the restructure were to be considered at an Exec away day on the 27 November.
115. The Chair suggested an information session on the development of the local and regional economic strategies at the next Board away day.

### **Quality**

116. The Principal focused on attendance figures to date. The Board was advised of a number of changes to improve the early availability of reliable data using the two predecessor systems whilst ensuring accurate reporting.
117. The Board considered the root cause of student attendance being under target. It was agreed that the English and Maths condition of funding rule was an underlying problem which demotivated many students. Governors reflected on the unlikelihood of government policy in this area changing in the near future. The rates for English and Maths and Apprenticeships were disappointing, but extensive measures had been taken to address poor attendance. This work had resulted in a slight improvement for attendance figures for all areas.
118. It was suggested that the link between apprenticeship attendance at college and employer expectations in the workplace could impact on attendance. The Principal confirmed that this issue was being addressed with the creation of a new post to help strengthen engagement between employers, apprentices and the course teams. This would also ensure improved links between theory and practice by synchronising the activity wherever possible.
119. The First Impressions Survey had been completed. Curriculum teams were analysing the responses with a view to providing detailed feedback during the quarterly performance reviews. Governors would be provided with further information on the results at the December Board meeting.
120. The data used to inform the Teaching, Learning and Assessment KPI was discussed and it was suggested that instances of teaching requiring improvement could be incorporated. The Principal explained that a unified approach for GBMet had been presented to the unions, which would provide the basis for the information in the December CEO report. It was agreed that Joy Mercer would further discuss the issue with the Principal outside of the meeting.

### **Funding/Contract Performance/Finance**

121. The COO highlighted that the two red indicators in the report related to apprenticeships and advised it was unlikely that the adult component of the non-levy apprenticeship contracts would be achieved. The sector wide difficulties in this area were discussed and were attributed to uncertainty around contract values and the impact of the new arrangements. Performance relating to recruitment of apprenticeships from levy paying employers was more encouraging, although the extended sign up arrangements had had an adverse impact on cash flow.

122. Governors were advised that there were still some complexities with the HE figures due to some students repeating modules from the previous year. This could result in a further reduction to the full year forecast for income, in addition to the shortfall of £300k from reduced recruitment which had already been reflected in the Colleges forecasts following the post enrolment review.
123. It was noted that the full year forecast remained in line with the budget, following the review undertaken at the end of the first quarter. The reduced HE income was offset by savings in pay costs from reduce resource requirements.

**RESOLVED:**

**To amend the format of the CEO report to include a letter to illustrate the red, amber and green status.**

### **Human Resources**

124. The HR Director confirmed that chasing appraisal paperwork continued to be a high priority, and that the relevant Senior Leadership Team members had been enlisted to assist.
125. The cultural issues relating to completion of performance appraisals would be considered as part of the People Strategy. One barrier in completing the paperwork had been that some of the managers responsible left during Phase two of the restructure. It had been agreed that in the future, HR would ensure that any member of staff leaving the organisation had completed the necessary appraisal documentation before their departure.
126. It was agreed that the AoC benchmark figures would be included in the HR KPIs where applicable. The Exec team would discuss best ways to report against the HR data.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Exec team consider presentation of HR figures in future reports.**

### **Risk Management**

127. All significant risks had been reported and discussed as part of the CEO report.
128. The Board welcomed the new format of the risk register and the COO confirmed that the new framework would be rolled out to create individual departmental risk registers.
129. The CEO informed the Board that he had received a letter from the outgoing Chief Executive of the ESFA regarding financial health. The letter would be circulated to governors for information, and they were invited to contact the CEO and COO with any questions.

## **2016-17 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT**

130. The Chair confirmed that Joy Mercer had agreed to become the interim designated Safeguarding and Prevent lead governor, pending the outcome of the forthcoming recruitment process for new governors. The proposed appointment was welcomed by Members.
131. Providing some context to the data within the report, the Principal confirmed that there were approximately 3500 16-18 students, split equally across Worthing and Brighton.
132. The Principal advised that work was well underway to ensure that a single college assurance framework was embedded at all sites. Members sought assurance that there was sufficient support in place for staff. It was confirmed that compulsory compliance training was in place with a 100% completion rate. Heads of Department also met for safeguarding updates/training, often using real life scenarios as case studies.
133. Board members also noted the increase in support required by students. Dedicated mental health advisors work with staff to guide them through the safeguarding process. In addition, an extra pastoral learning mentor had been recruited to help support the work of the safeguarding team, and an increase in hours for mentors at Worthing and the Safeguarding Coordinator had been planned from January 2018.
134. Members were advised of their duty to complete the compliance training. Records would be checked to ensure all training was up to date, and governors would be contacted if necessary.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (i) The Board approved the 2016-17 Safeguarding report**
- (ii) That Joy Mercer be appointed interim designated lead governor for Safeguarding and Prevent**
- (iii) That the Governance Adviser contact governors with any outstanding compliance training requirements.**

## **2016-17 REVIEW OF HE QUALITY AND 2017-18 HE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN**

135. The Board confirmed that they had read the report and were assured that the quality of the College's HE provision met the required standards.
136. The CEO acknowledged that the format of the report, which was largely prescribed by external agencies, did not present information to governors in the most accessible format. Members agreed however, that the monthly reporting of HE quality data via the CEO report, the recent TEF exercises at both predecessor Colleges and the HE quality improvement plan gave substantial assurance and oversight of the quality Higher Education at GBMet.
137. It was agreed that a deep dive session on HE would be added to the March away day agenda, and the HE strategy and roadmap would help to inform this discussion.

138. The Principal advised the Board that from 2018/19 the College would move to a single Assessment Report (SAR) and College Improvement Plan (CIP) covering all aspects of the College offer including Higher Education.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) **The Board approve the annual quality assessment of HE, and confirm their assurance of the quality of the provision**
- (ii) **The Board schedule of business be updated to include an HE deep dive item on the March away day agenda.**

**GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT**

139. The Board expressed their thanks to the Governance Adviser and Chair for the work involved in producing the report, and agreed the following recommendations:

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) **That governance for 2016-17 be graded as ‘Good’**
- (ii) **The proposed governance self assessment narrative is included in the 2016-17 College SAR, subject to suggested changes to the areas of development**
- (iii) **That the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges be formally adopted.**
- (iv) **That the Board seek to benchmark themselves against other Boards.**

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR PREPARING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION**

140. The COO presented the implementation plan. It was identified that full roll-out and the addition of more details to the departmental data registers would be a key feature.

**APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITORS**

141. The Board was advised that Wylie & Bisset had been appointed as internal auditors by a recent selection panel comprising the CEO, COO, Eileen Houghton (Chair of Audit Committee) and Rob Lee (Co-opted member). The contract was for a three year period commencing 10 November 2016 with the option to extend for a further two years.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**e-governance**

142. The Chair requested that members provide feedback on the preferred format of Board papers. Any thoughts on moving to a digital option or continuing with hard copies were welcomed.

## DATE OF NEXT MEETING

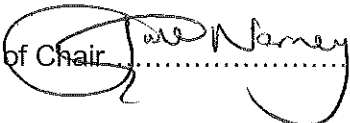
143. It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled to take place on Monday 18 December at 4.30pm at the Broadwater Campus.

## MEETING EVALUATION

144. An evaluation of the meeting was led by the Chair. The following points were agreed:

- Although it was purposeful, the discussion at times had become very detailed.
- The agenda had been over ambitious, and governors would have liked more time to consider issues in depth.
- The CEO suggested a more rigorous approach to agenda planning and review of papers, ensuring a balance of strategic and assurance items.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.

Signature of Chair  Date 18/12/17