

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College
Board of Governors**

**PART A: Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Google Meet
Monday 27 April 2020 at 4.30pm**

Present: Duncan Adams, Gary Anderson, Steve Bassam (Vice-Chair), Sue Berelowitz (Chair), Natalie Brett, Martin Colyer, Claire Hopkins (Vice-Chair), Jim Hynes (Staff Governor), Sean Jacob, Nick Juba (CEO), Maida Mofida Nasab (Student Governor), David Russell

In attendance: Jon Rollings (COO), Helena Thomas (Principal), Sarah Box (Governance Manager),

Apologies: Scott Marshall

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

339. The Chair welcomed the Board, especially new members who were attending their first meeting and noted apologies from Scott Marshall. Board members gave brief introductions.
340. The Chair noted that Item 14 on the agenda would be removed as a new evaluation method would be implemented in due course.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 30 MARCH 2020

341. The minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2020 were agreed with the exception of one amendment to Part 1: minute 332, which should include the following action:

'Action: Confirm amendments to template with legal advisor and resubmit the policy to the May or June Board meeting for approval'.

It was agreed that the minutes would be updated to reflect the changes. The Chair's electronic signature would be applied to the revised version.

Approved:

The Board formally approved the minutes of the 30 March 2020 as a true and accurate record subject to the amendment recorded above. The Chair of the Board's signature would be applied to the revised version.

Action:

Amend the action to minute 332 prior to publication of March minutes. (GM)

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

342. The Committee received and noted a schedule outlining the progress of actions from the minutes of the last meeting, which were all complete or due for report at a later date.
343. The action amended in the minutes at 341 would be incorporated into the schedule.

Action:

Incorporate the action noted at minute 341 in the schedule for tracking. (GM)

COVID-19 UPDATE

344. The CEO noted that a separate update on the operational and financial impact of Covid-19 had been produced for both the March and April meetings. There had been some overlap with content in the paper and the CEO report this month, and he proposed that the next update would be fully incorporated in the CEO report. He explained that last month's report to the Board had focused on the work undertaken by management and staff to move all teaching and learning to an online provision and to enable support staff to operate remotely. Since then he had provided the Board with weekly situation reports. The operational position as of Monday 27 April was detailed as follows:

- As of 21 April, a supervisory provision available to all vulnerable students was being provided on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Central and Broadwater campuses.
- More information was becoming available on the various vocational examinations and assessments students will be required to take during the summer term.
- Initial planning for the new academic year had begun. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) were reviewing delivery at a qualification and course level and making an initial assessment of how the learning might be delivered face-to-face, remotely or through flipped or blended learning. The CEO noted the early stage of this work and confirmed that the planning assumption was for a September start, although emerging guidance from government on social distancing would influence the approach.
- Three surveys had been launched for teaching staff, support staff and to capture the student experience of online teaching and learning and remote delivery. The initial results from the staff surveys had indicated a generally positive experience and engagement had been good to date. Data from the student survey would be shared at the June Board.
- The Pelham redevelopment continued to make good progress. There was only a slight delay to the project programme of five days and the supply chain issues highlighted at the last Board had improved.

Reflecting on the operational update, the Board:

- Requested the opportunity to review and consider plans for September accepting that these would be in their early stages of development
- Noted the feedback from the Student Governor who reported her experience with the online teaching and learning. She highlighted the challenges of having more than one course in a Google classroom group and the method of flagging new course content to students.
- Noted the feedback from the Staff Governor who reported that he continued to see high morale, a strong commitment to the college and positivity about the leadership during the crisis from staff across the College. Communications had been well received and staff were looking forward to the CEO's forthcoming webinar. There was also an appreciation for the CPD offer recently introduced by the Professional Development team. He confirmed that staff felt they were being supported and that learning walks and observations were continuing as planned.
- Considered the challenges for delivering Apprenticeships in the current environment and assurance was sought this had been taken into account in the planning for the 2020/21. In response, the CEO noted that it was not yet possible to establish the full impact as the situation, and particularly the number of furloughed and other affected apprentices was evolving. He assured the Board that each provision type was being considered in the planning, but noted that there had so far been significantly less

government guidance and support for apprentices during the crisis. The Principal confirmed that assessor staff had not been furloughed and were continuing to deliver their usual caseload. A clearer picture would emerge once assessors had carried out a review and completed analysis on all their apprentices.

345. A confidential minute was taken at this point

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

BOARD APPOINTMENT UPDATE

356. The Governance Manager explained that the paper outlined the final appointment of the recent recruitment campaign delivered by Peridot Partners. It was recommended that Christopher Bennett was appointed as a new co-opted Audit Committee member for a period of 3 years, subject to DBS and reference checks. A summary of his experience had been circulated to members with the papers.

357. A confidential minute was taken at this point.

358. The Chair noted section 4 of the bye-laws to the articles of government which require the annual ratification of committee membership at the Board's last meeting before 31 July.

Resolved:

The Board approved the appointment of Christopher Bennett as a co-opted Audit Committee member.

Action:

Ratify committee memberships as part of the governance review and thereafter in accordance with the revised I&As. (GM)

STUDENT VOICE/FOCUS

359. The CEO noted that this item on the agenda normally provided the opportunity for the Board to view a short video detailing the student experience. It had not been possible to produce the video during the current crisis but he assured that the item would be re-introduced at the earliest possible opportunity.

360. The Student Governor confirmed she had no items to raise under this item.

CEO REPORT

Executive Summary

361. The CEO presented his report, explaining to new members that it covered all operational aspects of the college and acted as one of the primary assurance items on Board agendas. He highlighted the key points as follows:

- A confidential minute was taken at this point.

Action:

Duncan Adams to meet with the Marketing and Communications team, CEO and Principal. (GM)

Quality

362. The Principal presented the Quality report, highlighting the areas of focus:

- A key area of work over the term would be to contact c9,000 students to ensure the awarding body requirements are clearly communicated. This would be a substantial project and teachers will be caseloaded to ensure that student achievement data is submitted in a timely manner. She advised that once the awarding body requirements are confirmed there is a risk that students will drift from remote learning activities and not re-engage. In order to avoid this, a summer programme of virtual activities was in development both for internally progressing and new students.

Funding and Finance

363. This item had been discussed under the COVID-19 update but in response to a query, the CEO confirmed that next month would see the return of the regular figures reporting performance against budget and areas of under performance against budget.

HR

364. Members requested a revised organisational chart reflecting the changes in structure to the Marketing and HR departments.

Action:

Circulate revised Marketing and HR organisational charts. (GM)

Property

365. This item had been covered under the COVID-19 update.

Risk Management

366. The Board received the update on Risk Management as detailed in the CEO's report.
367. A confidential minute was taken at this point.

NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT RATES

368. The Principal outlined the improvements in the College's achievement rates and its ranking in the top quartile nationally, and top place in Sussex. She noted that the key areas of improvement had been recognised at the start of Term 3 in the previous year, and subsequently tracked via the College Improvement Plan (CIP) thereafter.
369. In response to a query the Principal confirmed that the challenges with Level 1 had generally involved Functional Skill delivery and significant work had taken place to improve this provision which included observations and learning walks, CPD, improvements had been noted to student attendance percentages to sessions as well as an improving picture in the mid-term achievement results for this year.

Action:

Provide further analysis of the data to include explanation on the reason for the variance in performance. (Principal)

PEOPLE STRATEGY AND STAFF SURVEY UPDATE

370. The CEO explained that the update was intended to give Board members assurance on the actions undertaken since the results of the staff survey had been published. He noted that low staff morale continued, but that he had been encouraged to hear that the COVID-19 communications had been welcomed.

371. The Staff Governor noted the improvements with leadership and management since the action plan had been implemented. He advised that the COVID-19 crisis had united the college, giving a sense of a fresh start with new methods of teaching students.

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

372. The Board approved the Scheme of Delegation

Resolved:
The Board approved the Scheme of Delegation

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

373. The Chair noted that the risk section would need to be revised with a committee governance model in place. The Board approved the Financial Regulations subject to the following amendments:

- Amend any reference in the document to SFA to ESFA
- Amend the word Principal to CEO in the penultimate bullet point in Section B: Corporate Governance 2.1
- Hospitality and Gifts section - add a reference to governors in addition to staff.

Resolved:
The Board approved the Scheme of Delegation subject to amendments

Action:
Update the Financial Regulations with amendments. (COO)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

374. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 1 June 2020. The meeting would be confirmed in due course.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

375. The CEO announced that the meeting had been Gary Anderson’s final one and thanked him for his services to the College and the Board. Gary had initially been an ‘entrepreneur in residence’ at CCBH before joining the Board and continuing a term at GB MET after merger. Gary’s level of commitment and understanding to ensure the long term financial health of the organisation had been outstanding and the CEO extended his appreciation on behalf of the college.

376. In response, Gary thanked the CEO for his words and wished the new Board the very best of luck, confirming he would always remain a friend of the College.

The meeting closed at 6.43pm

Signature of Chair.....  Date 29.06.20