

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College
Board of Governors**

**PART 1: Minutes of a meeting held at the Brighton Central Campus
Tuesday 17 December 2019 at 4.30pm**

Present: Julie Nerney (Chair), Nick Juba (CEO), Gary Anderson, Jim Hynes (Staff Governor), Claire Hopkins, David Russell, Scott Marshall, Maida Mofida Nasab (Student Governor)

In attendance: Helena Thomas (Principal), Jon Rollings (COO), Rhiannon Phinbow (HRD), Sarah Box (Governance Manager), Cathy McDonnell (Head of Learning and Development) for Item 4 only, Martyn Howe (Assistant Principal) for Items 4 and 5 only.

Apologies: Natalie Brett

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

160. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies from Natalie Brett.
161. Priority areas on the agenda were confirmed as:
- i. Teacher Development Framework
 - ii. Sign off of the annual accounts
 - iii. Apprenticeships
162. The Board were reminded of the evaluation questions to be considered at the end of the meeting.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 25 NOVEMBER 2019

163. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2019, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Part 1 – Minutes of the meeting held 25 November 2019 – for public record

Part 2 – Minutes of the meeting held 25 November 2019 – confidential

Approved:

The Board formally approved the minutes of the 25 November 2019 as a true and accurate record. The Chair of the Board signed the master copy.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

164. 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.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND OTLA

Cathy McDonnell and Martyn Howe joined the meeting

165. The Chair introduced the item stating that although the Executive would not normally present strategic items for the Board to note, it was important for members to be sighted on the framework for developing professional teaching practice and, thereby,

enhancing the quality of teaching and learning provided to students. The Head of Learning and Development and the Assistant Principal presented an overview of the Teacher Development Framework, outlining the key elements of ongoing teacher CPD and reflections, research projects/scholarly activity and teacher learning communities.

166. The Board welcomed the new policy and noted its strength in providing the necessary support for teachers to help them develop their practice as well as assess the quality of teaching and learning within the college.
167. During the session members noted the following:
- The presentation and policy illustrated the characteristics of a strong CPD programme, which was evidence based and not remedial.
 - The importance of sustaining the CPD over time was highlighted in order to ensure that positive changes are embedded in staff practice. A reflective log would be incorporated in the appraisal framework to encourage momentum with learning.
 - Opportunities should be provided for teachers to undertake deliberate practice, which is separate from their day to day practice.
 - The expert input provided by coaches, as evidenced in the footage shown, was commended and the Board recognised the importance of the development and support provided by the coaching team. The Head of Learning and Development explained that a survey to measure the impact and effectiveness of the coaching would be complete by the end of January 2020.
 - In addition to the expertise provided by coaches, staff would receive opportunities for further learning via ETF led sessions at the January CPD day. Discussions were also underway to try and develop a Learning and Development forum with other colleges, which would provide a support network and opportunities for collective problem solving.
 - It was noted that while the policy did not include a specific reference to the national Professional Standards the standards had been reviewed as part of the work on the TDF and that the underpinning principles are reflected in the final policy.
 - The effectiveness of the framework might be considered for review by the Audit Committee.

Action:

Arrange a follow up session for the Board to receive staff feedback on the new framework at the Spring or Summer away day, to include results of coaching survey. (Governance Manager)

STUDENT VOICE: TEACHING AND LEARNING

168. Linking to the previous item, the Assistant Principal explained that this month's video footage was intended to give the Board an indication of the quality of TLA from the students' perspective.
169. Members were delighted to observe how students were able to articulate the differentiation in their learning as a result of studying at the college, and the teacher's skill and ability to help them understand their chosen subjects.
170. One student had identified how different her experience at the college had been in comparison to sixth form. She described greater independence with her learning, which had helped maximise creativity.

The Board thanked the Assistant Principal and Head of Learning and Development for the informative presentation and life-affirming video footage, which had helped illustrate the efforts made by staff to change students' lives,

Cathy McDonnell and Martyn Howe left the meeting

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REGULATORY AUDIT 2018/19 (INC. GB SKILLS)

171. The COO provided an update to the matters outstanding in the draft audit findings report, explaining that they were close to finalisation. A minor change in the wording of the going concern section had been made. Whilst it had been established that there was an element of double counting in the enhanced pension provision, it had been agreed with the auditors that the impact was immaterial and would not be adjusted. The final post balance sheet procedures were mostly complete with final checks taking place.
172. The COO proposed that the final version of the Financial Statements were signed by the CEO and Chair after the meeting, which would include all updates agreed post the Audit Committee.
173. The Chair requested the Audit Committee's view on the signing of the statements. The Chair of the Audit Committee reminded the Board of the uncertainty with the going concern review in December 2018, and that members had taken the correct decision to file the accounts late, after the immediate issues had been addressed. He explained that this year's position is different, although there remains material uncertainty as acknowledged in the Financial Statements. On this basis, the Audit Committee's view was to proceed with approval, although it was highlighted to the Board that the notes in the accounts detailed the serious nature of the financial position.
174. The CEO expressed his thanks to the COO and his team for their work in preparing the Financial Statements for approval, and to the Governance Manager for work on the Audit Committee Annual Report.
175. The Chair commented on the substantial assurance provided on the follow up audit on apprenticeships, subcontractors and partnerships. It provided comfort to sign off the accounts knowing that sound systems of internal control were in place. She added that it was disappointing to note that the internal audit recommendations were 33% higher than benchmark. The COO noted that whilst this was high, the benchmark did consist of a relatively small sample.
176. Based on the COO's update and the view of the Audit Committee, the Board unanimously agreed to approve the Financial Statements for signing by the Chair and CEO.

Resolved:

- ***The Board approved the External Audit Report (Management Letter).***
- ***The Board approved the Financial Statements for Greater Brighton College for the year ended 31 July 2019***
- ***The Board formally received the Annual Audit Committee Report to inform consideration of the Annual Financial Statements.***

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

177. The Audit Committee report and minutes were noted by the Board. The usefulness of the RSM emerging issues was recognised and members discussed how this could be used further.

Received:

The Board received the Audit Committee report and draft minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2019.

CEO REPORT

Executive Summary

178. The CEO presented his report and highlighted the key points as follows:
- Letters had been received from the ESFA confirming that the financial scores for 2017/18 and 2018/19 were 'satisfactory' and 'requires improvement' respectively. The letters were appended to the report and showed the college's financial health benchmarked against the sector
 - A confidential minute was taken at this point.
 - Some further coverage of the recent Ofsted inspection was noted in the form of one print and three online articles which would be circulated to Board members for information.
 - An update on the Pelham redevelopment, incorporating detail of the student decanting arrangements, would be provided to the January Board meeting.
 - A confidential minute was taken at this point.
 - Board members noted the success of GB MET students winning a recent competition to decorate the viewing pod of the i360.
 - Creative Arts students had also submitted designs for the gates for the new build. Judging had taken place and the designs would be circulated to the Board.

Action:

Circulate Ofsted press coverage and competition designs to members (Governance Manager)

Quality

179. The Principal presented the Quality report, highlighting the key areas of focus:
- HE attendance continued to track below target. This is being carefully reviewed by managers and course teams. It was noted that in previous years teachers could use a 'P' mark in the register to denote those students who were undertaking project work off site (this was a positive mark). It was felt however that the use of the P mark was not always accurately used and a decision for 19/20 was to remove this. This retraction is contributing towards the dip in attendance. The HE managers are working with MIS to review this. The First Impressions Survey results were discussed and the Principal confirmed that the results had been positive overall, indicating that the work to improve the enrolments process had been a success. It was noted that the completion rate had been lower than anticipated at 71%. In response to a query, the CEO confirmed that research was taking place with students who had decided to attend BHASVIC or Varndean instead of GB MET, and this information would be set out in an analysis paper for the January meeting. The number of students who had not been informed about work placements was considered. The Principal confirmed that the root cause of this had been identified and strategies were in place to ensure that all students received this information in the future.
 - A detailed discussion was held on the low attendance in maths and English. The Principal shared the Board's concern, although pointed out that the data was broadly comparable with December 2018 figures and involved the same curriculum areas, which suggested that success rates might not be impacted. Members were cognisant of the difficulties experienced and were encouraged to hear that different models were under consideration to drive improvement.

Funding/Contract Performance and Finance

180. The COO reported that a pre-Board finance discussion had taken place earlier in the day with the intention of understanding how the finance information could be better presented to make it more succinct, easier to interpret and to link the data to the

funding and contract elements. These improvements would be presented in the January CEO report.

181. He advised that the current position remained broadly the same as reported in last month's report and no additional forecast changes had been made. The key points were as follows:

- The first funding report for the AEB had been submitted and reviewed in detail and members were advised that additional provision will be required to meet the contract value. Plans were underway to consider how best to achieve this, ensuring that the costs associated with delivery were minimised by using in-house options where possible.
- Pay was above forecast in the month, but below forecast for the year. The COO highlighted the high expenditure on Apprenticeships assessing costs and ALS costs in the month, although it was noted that the ALS spend will be offset by additional high needs income.
- Non-pay variances were broadly considered to relate to the timing of expenditure, although the COO confirmed that the IT variance was due to higher than anticipated contract renewal costs. Board members requested that when significant variances to costs are highlighted for further review that these are tracked via matters arising so that the outcome is clear.
- The Vice Chair/SID asked for assurance regarding the overspend in the month and suggested it would be helpful to understand the effect on the full year position.
- It was noted that the risk scores in the upsides/downsides report had not changed significantly in the month. The COO confirmed this and that it reflected that the position hadn't worsened since the November CEO report.
- A confidential minute was taken at this point.

Action:

Provide an update on the IT non-pay variance (COO)

HR

182. The HRD reported that 43% of appraisals had been completed to date and the QPR meetings had provided the Executive with assurance that appraisals were a key focus for all departments. It was confirmed that the online system made reporting and following up outstanding appraisals significantly easier.

183. The Board were updated on the work undertaken in response to the staff survey. Heads of Departments had analysed the results for their areas and created action plans which had been reviewed as part of the QPR process. A series of externally led focus groups had also taken place during the month. The themes emerging from these groups had been collated in a report, which would be used to inform a college wide action plan.

184. The CEO confirmed that the details of the report would be incorporated in a broader piece of work, which would update the Board on the Executive's progress with addressing the cultural elements of the people strategy.

Property

185. The COO updated the Board with the latest information on the Pelham redevelopment. The Main Contractor was now reporting a two week 'float' in the programme which if continued would allow recovery of the initial two-week delay, and bring the project back to its original completion date.

186. The WBC loan had not yet been signed off by the sub-group of Board members, although the documentation was substantially complete. Due to the Chair's annual

leave, the Board agreed that if the paperwork required signing after 24/12/19, the sub-group would consist of the Vice Chair/SID, CEO and COO.

Risk Management

187. The Chair noted that only the Ofsted risk had not been covered under previous agenda items. The CEO advised that there was still a possibility of a monitoring visit before the end of term. He assured the Board that the Executive were confident that the work to address the High Needs recommendations was complete and the team were prepared for the visit.

APPRENTICESHIPS

188. The Chair noted the exceptional amount of work required to produce the report and asked colleagues for feedback on whether this additional effort was resulting in a product which provided the appropriate level of assurance to the Board. After consideration, members agreed that the detail provided was predominantly operational and the Board could be informed by some higher level, strategic measures which would enable them to continue to test and challenge, progress against the action plan.

189. The Executive welcomed the approach and thanked the Board for the feedback. The CEO agreed that Exec would consider some options for regular Board updates, recognising that some information would be take place via updates in the QIP and CIP reviews

Action:

Exec to consider how to provide strategic level apprenticeship updates to Board.
(Exec)

REMUNERATION ANNUAL REPORT

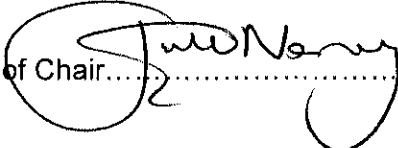
190. The Board approved the Remuneration Annual Report.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

191. The Chair announced to colleagues that she had taken the decision not to renew her tenure at the end of March. It had been a privilege to have Chaired the Board for both GB MET and one of its predecessors, but after 7 years she felt that it was good governance practice to step down from the role. The campaign to recruit new Board members would now be extended to include a Chair, with a plan in place to recommend appointment of a Chair to the Board in February, and Board members to the Board in March.

MEETING EVALUATION

192. Board members provided feedback which was provided separately.

Signature of Chair.......... Date..... 27/1/20.....