

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College  
Board of Governors**

**PART 1: Minutes of a meeting held at the Brighton Central Campus  
Monday 24 February 2020 at 4.30pm**

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

**In attendance:** Helena Thomas (Principal), Jon Rollings (COO), Rhiannon Phinbow (HRD), Sarah Box (Governance Manager), Martyn Howe (Assistant Principal) for Item 6 only.

**Apologies:** Scott Marshall

**WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

**235.** The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies from Scott Marshall.

**236.** Priority areas on the agenda were confirmed as:

- i. 2 year Financial Plan
- ii. Student Voice item
- iii. Equality and Diversity Annual Report

**237.** The Board were reminded of the evaluation questions to be considered at the end of the meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27 JANUARY 2020**

**238.** The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Part 1 - Minutes of the meeting held 27 January 2020 – for public record

Part 2 - Minutes of the meeting held 27 January 2020 – confidential

Part 3 - Minutes of the meeting held 27 January 2020 – confidential not for public record, Executive, Staff or Student Governors

***Approved:***

***The Board formally approved the minutes of the 27 January 2020 as a true and accurate record. The Chair of the Board signed the master copy.***

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**239.** 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.

**CHAIR APPOINTMENT AND GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT PROGRESS UPDATE**

240. The Governance Manager provided an overview of the Chair recruitment process. She noted that during their search phase, Peridot Partners had approached over 140 individuals for the position and had presented a high quality field of candidates for shortlisting by a panel consisting of both Vice-Chairs, CEO and Governance Manager.
241. Prior to interviews, the CEO had met with or held telephone meetings with potential candidates. Four of the strongest applicants were invited to attend final panel interviews on 19 February. It was noted that one applicant withdrew due to unforeseen circumstances, leaving three individuals for final consideration on the day.
242. The Governance Manager advised that the interviews had provided the opportunity for the panel to understand each candidate's motivations and their commitment to the role, their understanding of the College, the focus for their first six months, their experience and approach to Chairing and how they might balance the challenges of finances, inclusion and student outcomes.
243. Following the interviews, the panel came to a unanimous decision to recommend Sue Berelowitz as the new Chair of the Board. Members were advised of Sue's background as the former Deputy Children's Commissioner for England and Chief Executive of the Office of the Children's Commissioner and as a senior leader in children's services as Local Authority level. It was also noted that she has extensive experience as a Chair and had spoken in depth at interview of fostering and facilitating an environment of trust and mutual respect in her role as Chair of Freedom from Torture.
244. A confidential minute was taken at this point.
245. Peridot had provided assurance that they had already received a collection of strong applications for the Chair of Audit and Board member positions, and the CEO noted that these would be considered taking into account the skills mix of the current Board and the new Chair.
246. Board members considered the comparative ease of transitioning existing trustees into the role of Chair, and it was agreed that a succession plan for Chairs and Vice-Chairs would be introduced once the Board was fully constituted.
247. The CEO expressed his thanks to both Vice-Chairs for their involvement and expertise in the recruitment process.

***Resolved:***

***The Board approved the appointment of Sue Berelowitz as Chair of the Corporation from 01 April 2020.***

***Action:***

***Introduce a succession plan for Chair/Vice Chair roles. (GM)***

**2 YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN/INTEGRATED FINANCIAL MODEL (IFM) – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

**STUDENT VOICE/FOCUS: FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT**

***The Assistant Principal joined the meeting.***

260. Following the video footage of students talking about assessment and feedback at GB MET, members commented on the various methods of feedback described by students. Ranging from formal examinations and assessments, informal feedback from the teacher and peer assessment.
261. The Assistant Principal advised that students were not always aware of the nature of feedback. This had been evident in student survey results and had been addressed as part of preparations for Ofsted, ensuring that students were aware and teachers were

reminded of the various methods and the benefit of each. It helped to illustrate the iterative process of learning and demonstrated sequencing in the classroom.

***The Assistant Principal left the meeting.***

- 262.** The Vice-Chair shared feedback on the recent Construction/Engineering and Childcare, Health & Social Care, Sport, Public Services Student Council meeting she had recently attended at the Brighton East Campus. She had spent time in the refectory prior to the meeting discussing progression choices made by Health and Social Care students in their 3rd year, and the positive experience a group of electrical engineering students had encountered studying together from Levels 1-3. They described the support received from teaching staff throughout their journey, and their clear understanding of how to request support or assistance if required, particularly in a safeguarding context.
- 263.** The Chair highlighted the various opportunities for the Board to engage with students and encouraged attendance wherever possible.

***Action:***

***Consider scheduling Board meetings at the Brighton East campus as part of the Board's schedule of business. (GM)***

**CEO REPORT**

**Executive Summary**

- 264.** The CEO presented his report and highlighted the key points as follows:
- Applications for 16-18 courses were tracking slightly ahead of the same point last year. He advised members that Quarterly Performance Reviews (QPRs) were taking place during the week and targeted plans for internal progression would be a key focus of these meetings. Applications to adult courses were reported as higher than the previous year, while HE numbers were down on target but this may be explained by applicants preferring to apply both externally and internally.
  - A matrix inspection to externally review the initial advice and guidance (IAG) was scheduled to take place in the first week of March. Sessions would take place with students, apprentices, managers, teachers, support staff and external partners.
  - The senior team would be visiting Havant & South Downs College to understand how they have delivered improvements to their apprenticeship outcomes.
  - A confidential minute was taken at this point.

***Action:***

***Provide detail on turnaround time for offers (Exec)***

**Quality**

- 265.** The Principal presented the Quality report, highlighting the key areas of focus:
- There were concerns regarding the FE retention dip of 2%, the highest percentage of withdrawals was evident in Hair & Beauty and Con Eng departments. APs were focusing on this issue with their Heads of Departments, ensuring that every alternative option had been investigated prior to a withdrawal being approved.
  - The slight dip in FE inclusions attendance was highlighted to members, the cause being a new Prince's Trust Group, which had commenced in Worthing.
  - The attendance to Maths and English is still an area of concern. The Principal advised that work with teams continued to ensure that students were fully supported. Some MIS Data cleansing of records was required for those students not expected to attend due to exemptions

- The Chair commented that the Apprenticeship update provided at Appendix 8 clearly defined the actions in progress. She was pleased to note the first learners to complete their EPAs at the end of February had received distinctions.
- The Principal added that the standardisation meetings had highlighted the requirement for assessors to produce higher quality reviews. To address this, further CPD had been put in place to help assessors better describe the student's progress in their development of skills, behaviour and knowledge, and to encourage a coaching element to the role. This is a different nuance from the requirements of an assessor under the old frameworks. The Board discussed the lack of investment in training at national level following the introduction of the government policy to transition from apprenticeship frameworks to standards.
- The Principal drew the Board's attention to the data provided in the new suite of monitoring reports provided in Appendices 1 - 6. She explained that these were presented in order to support Board understanding and provide the basis for further review and analysis. This month, the key areas of scrutiny were the variances in attendance between Northbrook MET and Brighton MET and by level. It was advised that campus level support models, rather than a college-wide approach, were being considered to address the issues.
- In addition, the attendance issues highlighted in the data were discussed including the gaps between BME and white students, and looked after/care leavers. The good practice recorded in Appendix 6 had helped TLA to share successful strategies to improve attendance at L1 and L2.

## **Funding and Finance**

- 266.** Due to the earlier item on the 2-year Financial Plan and IFM submission, the Board confirmed that much of the detail had been discussed previously. The amendments made to the format of the report were welcomed, noting that further impact assessment should be provided in future reports.
- 267.** A confidential minute was taken at this point.

## **HR**

- 268.** The HRD reported that the GB Skills TUPE transfer would be launched early next month and confirmed there would be a cost implication for the pension scheme.
- 269.** 86% of appraisals had been completed. Two departments had significantly lower completion rates. The HRD assured that the CI appraisals have taken place but had not yet been entered on the online system. Enterprise completion was low due to staff absence and a high number of sessional lecturers who had been offered optional appraisals.
- 270.** A further discussion took place on the hard to fill vacancies and members discussed the ETF's Taking Teaching Further programme which would be investigated as a possible solution.
- 271.** A confidential minute was taken at this point.

## **Property**

- 272.** A tour of the Pelham redevelopment had taken place prior to the Board meeting for members to view progress.
- 273.** A confidential minute was taken at this point.
- 274.** A confidential minute was taken at this point.

## **Risk Management**

275. The Board received the update on Risk Management as detailed in the CEO's report. All risks had been discussed under relevant items, and staff morale had been considered at the January meeting covered by the staff survey actions item.
276. The CEO advised that the Executive were tracking advice around Covid-19 extremely carefully although the decision had not yet been taken to add the virus to the top ten risks. The position would be reviewed at Executive meetings each week. The CEO confirmed that he had been involved at city planning level and the Executive were clear about protocol and college response should a case be reported.
277. A confidential minute was taken at this point.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT**

278. The Chair commented on the outstanding progress in closing the achievement gaps for students who had declared a learning difficulty or disability and students who were eligible for Free College Meals.
279. The CEO concurred, explaining that the 1 in 3 of GB MET students had declared a learning difficulty or disability and were supported by the college to achieve their desired education. This figure far exceeded the national trend for General and Further Education Colleges.
280. The Board discussed the highlights of the report, commenting as follows:
- Members asked for clarification on the polar quintile. The Principal assured that double counting on postcodes was not an issue but would confirm for clarification.
  - The categorisation of GFE colleges. Many colleges provide vocational and sixth form elements which would account for the differential comparison data.
  - The possibility of further grant provision to help support the diverse nature of GB MET students.
  - The work still required to close achievement gaps for BAME students. Targeting support for asylum seekers via the Fonthill Foundation had successfully addressed gaps in achievement for this group. The Principal advised that teachers and support staff were working hard with all students. It was noted that 40% of all BAME students had another factor to consider and were being supported with these. She also cross referenced with the data provided in the Quality CEO report appendices, highlighting that the figures showed issues with retention for BAME students.
  - The Board suggested that when used as a public document, the case studies should be placed at the front of the report to illustrate the College's approach and commitment to E & D and the real life impact it has had on students.

### **Action:**

***Confirm polar quintile postcode counting (Principal)***

### **Resolved:**

***The Board formally approved the 2019/20 Equality and Diversity report.***

## **AOP MID-YEAR REVIEW**

281. The Board noted progress with the Annual Operating Plan. The progress rating for Apprenticeships had been discussed in full earlier in the meeting.

282. The CEO noted that it had been helpful to recast the AOP following feedback from Board members last summer. The result had been a more strategic level plan and he advised that the mid-year review gave a fair summary of progress to date.

**TUITION FEES POLICY**

283. The Board approved the Tuition Fees Policy (including HE)

**UPDATED INSOLVENCY GUIDANCE**

284. The Board noted the updates to the insolvency guidance.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

285. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 30 March 2020 at the Broadwater Campus.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

286. The Chair advised that in addition to the recruitment update earlier in the meeting, Gary Anderson and Scott Marshall had been asked if they would extend their tenure for one month to the end of April. This would allow for a smooth transition for new Board members.

287. The Chair extended the Board's grateful thanks and best wishes to the HRD who was attending her last Board meeting before leaving the College.

**MEETING EVALUATION**

288. Board members provided feedback which was recorded separately.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm



30 March 2020

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