

**Greater Brighton Metropolitan College
Board of Governors**

**Part 1: Minutes of a meeting held at the West Durrington campus
Tuesday 28 May 2019 at 4.30pm**

Present: Julie Nerney (Chair), Nick Juba (CEO), Gary Anderson, Jim Hynes (Staff Governor), Scott Marshall

In attendance: Jon Rollings (COO), Helena Thomas (Principal), Sarah Box (Governance Manager), Peter Scragg (Northgates) for beginning of Item 4 only.

Apologies: Natalie Brett, Claire Hopkins, Anwar Musa (Student Governor), Joy Mercer, David Russell, Rhiannon Phinbow (HR Director)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

242. The Chair opened the meeting at 4.30pm and noted the smaller group size with apologies from Claire Hopkins, David Russell, Anwar Musa, Joy Mercer and Natalie Brett. The Governance Manager and CEO would consider the timing of next year's May meeting in order to avoid the half term/bank holiday break. The Governance Manager was welcomed to the first meeting since her recent appointment.

The Board were updated on the impact of the #LoveOur Colleges week of activity in the middle of May. The Chair and CEO had held productive conversations with two of the three Brighton & Hove MPs, with meetings with Caroline Lucas and the two West Sussex MPs were to follow. The campaign had landed well in Whitehall with productive meetings with HM Treasury and questions at PMQs and Treasury Questions.

It was reported that officials and advisers are clear that the case has been well made with cross party backbench support for a change to the base rate of funding. However, the change in prime minister and inevitable shuffle of ministers which will follow is a risk; as is the increasing likelihood that instead of delivering a 3 year CSR, there will be a short term one-year budget instead. This would make big decisions both harder and more competitive.

As a result, all colleges will need to continue with the efforts around the campaigns to maintain pressure, and the Chair advised that as a Board it would be prudent to plan on the basis of there not being any change to the funding rate this year until the political situation becomes clearer. She also noted the first use of the insolvency regime with Hadlow College which, although an unusual case, is a salient reminder of the new environment colleges are operating in.

Action:

Consider rescheduling the May 2020 meeting to the Monday before half term week with slightly later circulation of papers. (Governance Manager)

MINUTES

243. The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2019, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Part 1 – Minutes of the meeting held 29 April 2019 – for public record

Part 2 – Minutes of the meeting held 29 April 2019 – confidential

Approved:

The Board formally approved the minutes of the 29 April 2019 as a true and accurate record. The Chair of the Board signed the master copy.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

244. The Board 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.

STRATEGIC ITEMS

245. PELHAM REDEVELOPMENT – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

246. CURRICULUM PLANNING 2019/2020 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

247. PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY UPDATE – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

248. STUDENT VOICE

The Board were shown a short audio/video illustrating how GB MET students benefit from the Additional Learning Services (ALS) provided. Members gave positive feedback on the item and requested further inputs from the Student/Staff Voice.

ASSURANCE ITEMS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT – May 2019

249. Executive Summary

The CEO presented his report and highlighted the key points as follows:

- With great sadness, the CEO reported that a music student from Northbrook MET had passed away the previous week following a short illness. He expressed his personal thanks to the course Curriculum Manager for her professionalism and sensitivity in liaising with the affected parents and students.
- An Expression of Interest had been submitted for the college to deliver a second round of T Levels, but a letter had been received in the previous week stating the application had not been successful. The CEO and Principal would be appealing against the decision, making the case that the Greater Brighton

region should have at least one provider of T Level and that GB MET would be well placed to deliver this technical qualification.

- There were no further updates from Unison on the ballot recently carried out.

A discussion was held on the requirement for introducing a finance committee as per the FE commissioners letter circulated. The CEO considered that the approach taken by the Chair for the Board to take corporate responsibility for all matters relating to the organisation drive stronger standards of governance. He confirmed though that the Executive would happily support a finance committee if the Board recommended it. The Chair considered that committees with a narrower focus can often lead to siloed thinking from Board members in areas of expertise, and the current arrangement of discussing all matters fully at Board meetings – including financial matters – had the additional benefit of Board members learning from other's expertise.

Resolved:

That the current approach will be maintained and that a finance committee is not currently required.

250. Quality update

The Principal presented the update on quality matters in the CEO's report covering the following key points:

- A dip in retention figures had been observed as anticipated and attendance for 16-18 had plateaued at 87%.
- The focus for QPR 3 had been to show progress against each department's Quality Improvement Plan and to determine if the actions taken to improve standards has had a positive impact. The assessment of staffing levels and sickness, finance and progress against each college KPI are also reviewed. In addition, HoDs were asked to provide an overview of the predicted achievement for each of their areas, and a summary of actions plans for students with red/amber RAG ratings. A further assessment of predicted achievement indicator will take place in mid-June.
- Predicted achievement for Creative Industries showed some initial signs of declining performance and there were also challenges in Construction (Brighton) and Inclusion. Sports, Early Years and Health and Hair and Beauty have both seen improvements to attendance indicators.
- The Principal advised that in-year reporting against key indicators such as attendance and retention has provided earlier indicators for at risk areas.
- The Principal and COO have spent a great deal of time obtaining a robust understanding of the quality in Apprenticeships which has resulted in the development of a new report which provides a high level of detail at framework level.
- 348 out of 374 staff had been observed at least once via Learning Walks (LW) to date. There should be a minimum of two opportunities, each approx. 20 mins, with final recommendations for any CPD requirements at the end of the session. The Principal noted that the challenge with the process is that there aren't enough LWs taking place, however this is being addressed in the planning for 2019/20. Another important element for improvement is linking the impact of CPD with appraisals and monitoring the improvements/outcomes. It was noted that David Russell is feeding into the LW process directly with the Principal.
- The Chair requested that the Apprenticeships action plan is updated to illustrate the issue linked to each action and suggested the Exec team look at best practice from other providers.

Action:

- **Ensure that opportunities for Board members to participate in Learning Walks are incorporated in the Schedule of Business for 2019/20 (Governance Manager)**
- **Provide further detail of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment metric and the Progress metric in the KPIs (Principal)**
- **Consider best practice from other Apprenticeship providers (Exec)**

251. Applications

The CEO confirmed that applications for 16-18 were tracking ahead of schedule compared to the previous year. 19+ applications had increased since the last report, but were still 52 below and HE applications and acceptances were both tracking ahead.

252. Finance and Funding and Contract Performance – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

253. HR update

Members queried the high level of long term absence. The CEO and Principal assured that these had been investigated as part of the QPR3 meetings and there were sound explanations for each. It was also confirmed that any member of staff on sickness absence and involved in the Curriculum Planning process would have been included in the communications.

254. Property

Covered under the Pelham Redevelopment item.

255. Risk Management update

The Board received the update on Risk Management as detailed in the CEO's report. All risks had been discussed under relevant items.

256. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY: 2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT

The CEO presented the Equality and Diversity annual report highlighting its importance at demonstrating the College's commitment to supporting inclusion and social mobility, with 30% of students living in a disadvantaged postcode and 39% self-declaring a learning disability. Thanks were extended to the HRD and all involved in production of the document and the CEO had committed to writing a foreword to introduce the report.

There was concern at the overall gaps in achievement for those learners with disabilities, claiming free college meals and on a ward uplift.

The Board were inspired by the report and welcomed the key message regarding the critical role of the organisation. Feedback on the document included:

- To include a foreword by the CEO.
- To include a narrative on the actions being taken to address the achievement gaps.
- To present in a more concise summary document with a stronger narrative, rather than multiple charts, about the role the College plays in providing opportunities, so that it can be used as an effective communication tool.

Members also discussed how to balance the extraordinary level of support provided to GB MET students with the challenging financial environment. The Chair advised that in her work with the AoC National Steering Group for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, she would explore any avenues for specialist grant funding.

Received:

The Board received the Equality and Diversity Annual Report

CONSENT ITEMS

257. HEALTH AND SAFETY MID-YEAR REVIEW

The Board noted the Health and Safety mid-year review.

258. DATA BREACH PLAN

Resolved

The Board formally approved the updated Data Breach Plan.

259. PRIVACY STANDARD

Resolved

The Board formally approved the updated Privacy Standard.

260. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Resolved

The Board formally approved the new Whistleblowing Policy.

261. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reminded members of the dates for forthcoming events:

- Hair and Beauty Show - 14 June
- MET Achievers - 19 June
- Creative Industries End of Year Show - 20 June
- Board awayday - 17 June

262. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 24 June 2019 at Brighton Central Campus.

263. MEETING EVALUATION

Board members provided feedback which was recorded separately.

The meeting closed at 7.28pm.

Signature of Chair  Date **24/6/19**