



CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11th DECEMBER 2019

Present: Lucy Barrow, Joanne Finnerty, Sue Higginson (Principal), Sandra Johnson, Lorraine Jones, Tim Kelly (Chair), Phil McKeown, Paul Smith, Michael Taylor, Jayne Winders, Vix Wrigley

In attendance: Michael Norton, Deputy Principal
Christine Carter, Vice Principal – Curriculum
Phillip Jones, Vice Principal – Quality
Joe Finneran, Director of Estates
Jade Gibson, Assistant Principal - Quality
Will Jerram, Assistant Principal – MIS
Andrew King, Head of Finance
Louise Scott-Kelly, Administrator to Governors

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

76. Apologies for absence were received from Anna Barnish, Gary Doyle, Richard Mawdsley, Joe McArdle and Lesley Venables (Clerk to the Governors).

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CLERK

77. In the absence of the Clerk, Louise Scott-Kelly was appointed as temporary clerk for this meeting only.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

78. The following interests were declared:
- Lucy Barrow declared that she was on secondment from Wirral Council to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.
 - Tim Kelly declared an interest in any matters relating to the Merseyside Pension Fund.
 - Phil McKeown declared a standing interest in respect to his position as a partner of a local legal firm.
 - Paul Smith declared that his spouse is employed at the College.

APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNOR

79. **Resolved** That Michael Taylor be appointed as a student governor until 31st July 2020.

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

80. The Principal gave a verbal update on recent College activities. Governors noted that it had continued to exceed its enrolment targets and, as a result, the Senior Leadership Team

would be formulating proposals as to how the growth in learner numbers would be accommodated.

SHARING RECENT SUCCESSES

81. The Board received the routine report on the College's recent successes. Governors commended the vast range of curricular and extra-curricular activities involving staff and students, together with the high level of positive coverage on social media.

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) 2018/2019 & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) 2019/2020

82. The Assistant Principal – Quality presented the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2018/2019 and the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2019/2020.

83. The SAR had been validated by a moderation panel which included the Chair of Governors, who had been nominated to undertake this task by the Quality and Standards Scrutiny (QSS) Committee.

84. The Board was informed that each department had undergone a performance review based on the content of their departmental SAR which informed individual action plans for further improvement.

85. All areas had been graded as 'Good', with the exception of High Needs provision which had been judged as 'Outstanding'. The Overall Effectiveness of the College was graded a 'Good', however, the Assistant Principal – Quality explained that it was felt to be at the high end of the spectrum and the College had another year to build on previous year's improvements, thus a picture of consistently good performance was emerging. Whilst there had been improvements in outcomes for apprenticeships, the College was in the midst of a quality improvement programme, working with Burnley College. Significant progress had been made and the in-year 2019/2020 graph of performance showed a step up in overall and timely improvements.

86. The SAR also included the 2018/2019 Student Outcomes data (which had been reviewed by the QSS Committee at 16th October 2019 meeting) to support each grade.

87. The Assistant Principal – Quality explained that the SAR had been produced in accordance to the new Education Inspection Framework, which had an increased focus on Personal Development. The Board noted that the positive outcomes for 2018/2019 reflected the College's investment in personal development and the Principal added that student progression would continue to be a focus for 2019/2020. The Student Governor also shared feedback with the Board on the positive impact his tutor has had on his student experience.

88. The Board discussed the 'Value Added' data included in the SAR, which measured the amount of academic improvement from the start of the student's journey. The Value Added in both students' English and maths skills had increased, year on year, over the last three years.

89. The Chair of Governors requested whether there was any benchmarking data representing the top 10% performing colleges to compare with the College's English and maths value added data. This would be explored for further review at the next meeting.

90. Although there continued to be a relentless focus upon improving attendance for English and maths programmes, the Board noted the progress on the value added data presented and acknowledged the College's strategies in this area, which would continue to be monitored by the QSS Committee.

91. The Board reviewed data on the performance of learners who were classified as 'uplift' (students from a ward of high deprivation) compared to their 'Non Uplift' peers. A total of 66.2% of 16-18 student enrolments were derived from areas of high deprivation (uplift). Within the Wirral Borough, the Progress 8 attainment gap between uplift and non-uplift was 13.99pp, however, the College's Full Study Programme (with English and maths plus vocational and personal development) attainment gap was 1.1pp.

92. The Board commended the Senior Leadership Team on the outcomes and the high levels of support from staff which underpinned students' performance, particularly for students from vulnerable groups. Governors agreed that the SAR evidenced a substantial closing of the achievement gap and reinforced the College's strategic vision of being an inclusive College.

93. A governor enquired as to how the College intended to promote the student outcomes, particularly to local businesses who wanted to support their community. The Principal responded that there were a variety of strategies to promote the College regionally and nationally. For instance, the Principal was now a Board member for the Association of Colleges (AoC) Nationally. At regional level, the Principal and Deputy Principal regularly met with the Liverpool City Region, Local Authority and elected members to develop a full understanding of the curriculum pathways for all students to aspire and achieve. Furthermore, there was a strong relationship with the Wirral Chamber of Commerce and local businesses in employer forums, with Vice Principals and Assistant Principals represented on a variety of specialist groups.

94. The Marketing department had a more bespoke and targeted approach with schools and social media coverage to promote the College.

95. The Assistant Principal – Quality also presented the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2019/2020, which was based upon the outcomes of the previous year plus any emerging actions from the current year. Any areas from 2018/2019 highlighted for improvement were recorded on the QIP for the current year and progress would be closely monitored by the QSS Committee. It was important to note that this was a 'living document; that would be updated termly, as a minimum to ensure that it reflected required actions, not just an annual review of performance.

96. The Board thanked the Assistant Principal – Quality for the concise report.

97. **Resolved** That the SAR for 2018/2019 and the QIP for 2019/2020 be approved.

BALANCED SCORECARD

98. The Deputy Principal presented the latest version of the Balanced Scorecard. The following items were rated Amber: Apprenticeship Income, Commercial Income, Overall Apprenticeship Achievement Rates, Timely Apprenticeship Achievement, the number of Out Of Funding (OOF) apprentices and Pay to Income Ratio. No items had been classified as 'Red'

99. The Amber items relating to apprenticeships, were progressing well and being continually scrutinised through the project underpinned by the Skills Capacity Fund with a partner, non-competitor 'Outstanding' graded college.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)

100. The Principal presented the closedown of the 2018/2019 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan and provided the Standards and Actions for Implementation for 2019/2020. Both documents had been reviewed recently by the College's EDI Committee at which the Chair was the governor representative.

101. A revised EDI Policy was submitted for implementation in 2019/2020.

102. **Resolved** That the Equality & Diversity Policy for 2019/2020 be approved

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Meeting Held on 27th November 2019

103. The Board received for information the minutes from the Audit Committee meeting held on 27th November 2019.

104. The Deputy Principal presented the Financial Statements for 2018/2019 and the External Auditor's Letters of Representation, which had been previously reviewed by the Audit Committee.

105. Governors noted that the College had made a modest surplus in 2018/2019 and that that the financial and growth targets had been met or exceeded. The College's financial health position continued to be graded as 'Good, which compared favourably to many others in the FE sector.

106. The Audit Committee had recommended the approval of the Financial Statements for 2018/2019 and the External Auditor's Letters of representation for both the Financial Statements Audit and Regularity Audit.

107. The Board also received for information the Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2018/2019, which summarised the work of the Committee and concluded that the Committee had discharged its responsibilities in accordance to the Terms of Reference.

108. **Resolved** That the Financial Statements and the Letters of Representation for both the Financial Statements Audit and the Regularity Audit for 2018/2019 be approved and signed by the Chair and the Principal and be forwarded to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

109. The Head of Finance presented the Management Accounts as at 31st October 2019. The College continued to be in a positive financial position and financial health plan remained at the lowest boundary within the category of 'Outstanding.'

RISK MANAGEMENT

110. Governors received the latest Risk Register and were advised that no new risks had been added and no adjustments had been made to the scoring since the last meeting. The Audit Committee would continue to monitor to the risk register in detail.

HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE – TERM 1

111. The Director of Estates presented an update on the Health & Safety Risk Register for Term 1. The methodology for reporting any Health & Safety incidents was now concise and enabled the Estates team to identify any trends and implement actions as soon as possible.

112. The Board was also assured that all campuses had been surveyed for any asbestos, which resulted in a clear report.

113. In response to questions about governor representation on the Health & Safety Committee the Staff Governor confirmed that she undertook this role.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

114. Governors received a draft Health & Safety Policy for 2019/2020. There had been no major changes from the previous version beyond changes to job titles.

115. **Resolved** That the updated Health & Safety Policy for 2019/2020 be approved.

GOVERNOR PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

116. The Board received a report that summarised the outcomes of the Performance Reviews undertaken with individual governors. The Chair detailed the areas for improvement and training needs, such as clarity in Board report regarding Further Education acronyms and finance for non-financial governors.

117. It was agreed that the Clerk's report was beneficial for both governors and the Senior Leadership Team. The Principal would work with the Clerk to address the issues raised and formulate a suitable training plan.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

BOARD MINUTES – 23rd OCTOBER 2019

118. **Resolved** That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

119. Governors received a progress report on the actions identified at the previous meeting. The Deputy Principal advised that the College had been successful in a number of capital project bids and had progressed to the next stage of the bid process. The Board would be notified of the final outcome when this was confirmed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday 18th March 2020



Signed: _____ Date: 18 March 2020
Chair