

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2019, Board Room, Silbury Campus
17:00 – 19:05

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance 2019/20	Present at this meeting
Tony Berwick	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Rebecca Carrington	Independent	0 of 0	No - agreed absence
Alan Cook	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Peter Cox	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Nathan Indge	Staff	1 of 1	Yes
Liz Marr	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
David Meadowcroft	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Julie Mills	CEO	1 of 1	Yes
Stephen Norrish	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Ruby Parmar	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Charlynn Pullen	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Aniesa Shah	Staff	1 of 1	Yes
Gwynneth Tan	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Manish Verma	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
		0 of 0	
Dotun Adeoye (resigned 2.10.19)	Independent		
Attendance % this meeting		100%	14 / 14
Attendance % year to date		100%	14 / 14

Regular attendees: Annie Allen (CPO), Imelda Galvin (COO), Chris McLean (Principal: College), Karen Brown (Head of Governance)

Other attendees (in part): Marc Gillham (Head of Funding & Data), Amy Langford (Head of Student Support and Student Development), Lindsey Styles (Director).

Welcome and Procedural

- 1.1 Alan Cook, Aniesa Shah and Anne Allen were welcomed to the meeting. Dotun Adeoye has tendered his resignation due to increased work commitments. Apologies had been received from Sally Alexander.
- 1.2 **Declarations of Interest**
None previously declared.
- 1.3 **Check-in**
Governors introduced themselves.

2.1 Safeguarding and Prevent / SEND *(presentation since uploaded)*

Lindsey Styles and Amy Langford reminded governors that the Board had approved the SEND Annual Report and Safeguarding & Prevent Annual Report, in June 2019 and July 2019 respectively. The purpose of this development session was to remind governors of their statutory responsibilities and for the Board to be assured that the College is fully compliant. Liz Marr is the governor lead for SEND and Safeguarding and meets separately with Amy and Lindsey.

SEND

The College must implement the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years and the annual SEND Report provides assurance to this effect.

2019/20 context

- The needs of 1500 students, identified as SND, have been assessed since the start of term. Of the 1500, 286 disclosures were not known until enrolment.
- There is a good team in place with no staff vacancies. All staff, including bank staff, have been trained. The College works with the Milton Keynes SENDIAS (SEND Information, Advice and Support Service).
- There is 1:1 support for high needs students who have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan).
- The high volumes of student need, recent resignations and high staff sickness is placing significant demands on the remaining team members.

Safeguarding and Prevent

The College has a responsibility to ensure that students know how to keep themselves safe in and outside the College (referred to as contextualised safeguarding). There are student tutorial programmes to give students the guidance and skills they need to keep themselves safe. The annual Safeguarding & Prevent Report provides assurance that the College is meeting its statutory duty. In addition, the College commissioned Elucidate Ltd to carry out an audit of Safeguarding in March 2019 and satisfactory assurance (highest level of assurance) was given.

2019/20 context

- In the past two weeks, since the start of term, there have been 200 safeguarding incidents involving 118 students. Most incidents result from mental health issues.
- The College Safeguarding team is smaller than previously; there is a smaller team of trained mental health first aiders which has increased the workload. Further training is being rolled out.
- The College continues to work with external agencies.

Governors asked questions to which Amy and Lindsey responded:

What happens when students have high needs and there is no funding? Do you apply for funding?

The College works with several local authorities and it is very rare for high needs not to have been identified at an earlier stage of their education. We expected 34 high needs students and 31 have already started.

SEND students that have needs and require support, but are without an EHCP (Educational Health Care Plan), have no specific funding allocated. We must therefore maximise our work with partners.

Is there a link between staff stress/absence and high needs students? What us the College doing for staff wellbeing?

We are compiling a Heatmap to ascertain if there is a correlation with student issues.

What is the long term strategy for SEND and safeguarding? Does the College predict future needs and build specialisms?

Yes, for example we have trained a team of mental health first aiders but we have to work within budget parameters. The numbers are not growing but the incidents are getting more complex. We are working with other colleges and consistently striving to enhance the service.

The College has a good reputation for meeting the needs of high needs students and therefore the numbers increase year on year.

What does good look like and what are the weaknesses which we may need to invest in?

We are pleased that we have closed the gap for ALS students in English and maths which is positive. The challenge is resources to support Entry / Level 1 and some Level 2 students.

Is there a Quality Improvement Plan?

We are currently working on the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) which will highlight any improvement actions. The SAR will be reviewed at the CQG meeting on 22nd October and it will then come to the Board for approval.

Have you considered the staff absence and the pressure which is being placed on staff workloads?

It is no worse than last year but student mental health issues do cause stress on staff.

Does home life hamper your work and how do you manage this?

Contextualised safeguarding, for which we are responsible, includes home life. We liaise with parents and other agencies.

The Board received the update on SEND and Safeguarding and asked for a further update, via the CQG, later in the cycle.

Strategic Priorities

2.2 CEO's Report to the Board *(previously circulated as Paper 1)*

FEC Diagnostic Visit

Since circulating the CEO's report, the letter relating to the FE Commissioner Diagnostic Assessment visit on 24th and 25th July has been received confirming the recommendations. The team will return before or after Christmas and the College will need to demonstrate that progress has been made. The Finance Group will look at the recommendations and actions in more detail.

Institute of Technology

The Heads of Terms with Bletchley Park is the only item outstanding.

Discussion minuted as confidential

The Board:

- **Received the CEO's report**
- **Approved the submission of the planning application to MK Council for the restoration project at Bletchley Park, noted the key milestones and noted that the College will procure the consultant team using the EU compliant 'SCAPE Consultant Framework'.**

2.3 Finance

Marc Gillham was welcomed to the meeting

a) 19/20 Student numbers against target (pre Day 42) and financial impact (previously circulated as Papers 2 and 4a)

Chris McLean and Mark Gillham referred governors to Papers 2 and 4A and they highlighted the following:

(i) 16-19

- The College has recruited 563 more students than last year, which is 320 over the budget target. The College has resourced the budget target and with c23 less teachers than last year, workloads are high. Some group sizes are above 30 necessitating changes to rooms, timetabling, IT, etc. Some programmes have significant waiting list. There are three vacancies for E&M teachers. Heads of Schools and Deputies are teaching. The Learning Support team is stretched and cannot support Level 2 students.
- The College over-recruits in anticipation of losing students prior to Day 42. However, entry criteria was rigorously applied so we do not expect to lose as many students as previous years. If student numbers are 200 over allocation by Day 42, there may be an opportunity to submit a growth case for additional funding. Without this there is no budget to recruit more staff due to the lagged funding model.

(ii) Apprenticeships

Early indications are that the recruitment target will be met.

(iii) Adults

Adult recruitment is on track.

(iv) Higher Education

The forecast recruitment is 29 students below target (potential £73k contribution shortfall). The Sports Degree did not recruit sufficient numbers and Business withdrew a course. A sub-contracting partner may be able to make up the shortfall.

Governors asked questions to which Chris and Marc responded:

What is being done to support Level 2 students who should move to Level 1, but can't because Level 1 is full? Should we expect that they will fail?

This applies to six students and they will be supported. We are advertising for another role and we have access to bank staff. It may be possible for the six students to move to Level 1 in a different programme.

We are also auditing the skills of business partners to ascertain if they could teach some sessions.

Classes of over 30 put further pressure on teachers. What are we doing to support staff wellbeing and to reward effort?

Teachers are being supported to work smarter e.g. setting assignments which are easier to mark.

Has every student who applied been offered a place?

No, the entry criteria was maintained.

Governors expressed concern that if class sizes and staff wellbeing are not addressed, the quality of the student experience will drop and students could leave. There is a point when courses are 'full' otherwise quality suffers because there are too many students in a class. Also, teacher workload and wellbeing is included in the new Ofsted EIF.

Governors asked for a report outlining the issues, actions being taken to maintain quality, and the budget implications. The report should be circulated to the Board and discussed at the next CQG meeting.

Action 2: Chris McLean

The College will know on 18th October (Day 42) if student numbers are significantly above allocation.

b) Financial Health - 2018/19 Year end outcome (previously circulated as Paper 3)

Imelda Galvin led on this item.

- Subject to audit, the College year-end operating surplus was £719k (budget £12k surplus).
- Campus year-end was £571k deficit which was £122k better than budget (£693k deficit)
- With the exception of 'contribution as a % of income ratio for OLASS' and 'staff costs as a % of income for both Campus and OLASS', all KPI targets have been achieved.
- The College's ESFA financial health is 'satisfactory' (the ESFA has renamed satisfactory as 'requires improvement'). The ESFA points score has increased to 150 points for 2018/19 (budgeted 130 points). The 2019/20 financial health score is budgeted at 160 points.
- Apprenticeships is starting to deliver an increased contribution as well as quality.

- The cash flow is improving despite the £1.3m negative change in payment terms relating to the PEF contract. The year-end cash balance was £2,794k
- Capital expenditure was below budget.
- From the November Board meeting, the College will report against the 2019/20 budget.

The Board congratulated the ELT on the year-end position. The ELT had assured the Board that the budget would be achieved, despite the tough decisions which had been necessary and over achievement was a bonus.

The Board:

- ***Noted the current position, and risks, with student recruitment against targets***
- ***Noted the 2018/19 final position (subject to audit)***
- ***Noted the July 2019 KPIs***
- ***Noted the update on the campus investment budget***

Marc Gillham was thanked for attending and he left the meeting

2.4 Student Experience / Achievement *(previously circulated as Papers 4 and 4a)*

Chris McLean drew the Board's attention to Papers 4 and 4a.

Headlines:

- There are c270 student outcomes to be confirmed but the headline forecasts show good progress
- Vocational achievement (including English & Maths) is 88%, and 3 percentage points (pp) higher than the most recent national rate.
- GCSE English and maths high grades have improved by 1 pp and 5 pp respectively. Both subjects are 7 pp above the most recent sector rates.
- Functional Skills English improved by 1 pp and is now 4 pp above the most recent national rate.
- Functional Skills maths improved by 14 pp and is now 5 pp above the most recent national rate.
- 16-18 vocational will be 84%, a reduction of 1pp and 3 pp below the most recent national rate. The main contributing factors to this underperformance are:
 - Sub-contracted Music provision (notice has been given to end this subcontracting partnership).
 - Science (41% of the 107 students achieved). A full report will be presented at the next CQG meeting. Active Industries is self-assessed as inadequate.
- Adult vocational will be 94%, the same as last year, and 5 pp above the most recent national rate.
- Apprenticeship 16-18 and adult overall achievement has reduced by 5 pp and 19 pp respectively however they remain 7pp and 6pp above the most recent national rates. The move to the new standards has caused a drop in performance nationally. The College is the fifth best apprenticeship provider in the country.
- Higher Education achievement will be 80%, the same as last year.

The Board congratulated the team on the results.

The Board noted the forecast achievement for 2018/19

2.5 People Strategy and KPIs (previously circulated as Paper 5)

Annie Allen introduced herself as the new Chief People Office (in role c3 months) and referred governors to the new People 'Strategy on a Page' (SOAP), which is included in Paper 5.

Good progress has already been made in a short time.

Annie explained that there have been many leadership changes in the People Services Team and the team require upskilling in business partnering. HR policies, processes and working practices are rigid and not fit for purpose. The HR Information System is not supporting business conversations and the Board has already approved the budget to replace it (as part of the 2019/20 capital expenditure budget).

The proposed KPIs are interim and will be developed over time as information systems improve. There will be regular pulse surveys to obtain feedback from staff so that prompt action can be taken.

Interim Staff KPIs

KPI	Current baseline	Target 2019/20
Attrition (staff turnover) – voluntary, involuntary and TUPE	71% ¹ (2018/19)	<15%
Sickness Absence	Not available	<5 days per employee per year (average)
Legal Costs	£45,000	On budget
Recruitment Costs including Agency Fees	£50,000	On budget
Employee engagement (Pulse Survey Score)	Not yet available	Above 7.5
Employee wellbeing (Pulse Survey Score)	Not yet available	Above 7.5
Safeguarding pre-employment checks: non compliance	1 (member of staff was sent home)	0
BAME target to be added		

¹ High due to staff restructure and TUPE activity in relation to Prison Services in 2019

Governors asked questions to which Annie responded:

Do you have a timeline and have you prioritised the activity?

Yes, the ELT will sign off the timeline and will monitor how actions are progressing via a dashboard. The People Services Business Partners are now in role which will allow Annie to start looking at the IoT and PEF.

Have you engaged with the ETF regarding leadership development programmes?

Charlynn Pullen offered to make an introduction.

The Board:

- ***Gave feedback on the emerging People Strategy and endorsed the priorities for the next 6 months as:***
 - ***Implement the Remuneration and Reward strategy***
 - ***Establish a Leadership development programme***
- ***Approved the interim Staff Performance Targets/KPIs***

Governance and Compliance

3.1 Search & Governance Committee Meeting 30th July 2019 and 30th September 2019

The report from the 30th September meeting will be available for the November Board meeting.

The Board ratified decisions previously approved by email:

- **The appointment of Alan Cook to serve a three year term, subject to a satisfactory DBS check**
- **The appointment of Richard Bartlett-Rawlings to serve a three year term, subject to a satisfactory DBS check**
- **The appointment of Neil Sainsbury to serve a three year term, subject to a satisfactory DBS check**

The Board asked the S&G Committee to consider the gender balance of the Board.

3.2 Agenda items next meeting

- Student Achievement / Experience:
 - Final SAR grades 18/19 (by School)
 - Academic KPIs and target SAR grades 19/20 for approval
 - Report from CQG 22/10/19
 - Briefing on T Levels
- Financial Health:
 - 19/20 student numbers against plan / post 41 days
 - Report from the Finance Group 30/10/19
- Prison Services
- Report from S&G 30/9/19
- Fraud Policy & Process

Consent Items

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

- 4.1 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 12th July 2019** (previously circulated as Papers 8 and Confidential 8a
Matters arising – see below
- 4.2 College Seal 2018/19 – The Board noted that the College Seal was not used in 2018/19**
- 4.3 Board Business Plan for 2019/20 as a working document** (previously circulated as Paper 9)
- 4.4 The Freedom of Information and Data Protection Annual Report** (previously circulated as Paper 10)

Next Meeting 6th November 2019, 5pm - 7pm

Date raised	Actions arising from the last and previous meetings	Action Owner	Current position
17 th July 2019	The completed checklist (Annex A Financial Planning	Imelda Galvin	Carry forward

	Checklist) will be circulated to the Board		
	Assure the Board that the College is compliant with the European Accessibility Act.	Imelda Galvin	This is an agenda item for the College's Risk Group meeting on 18 th November 2019