



MIINUTES

BOLTON COLLEGE BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 April 2019 - (PART A)

Time: 5.00pm
Venue: Boardroom

Members present: Dr Andrew Roberts (Chair)
Mr Andrew Fawcett (Vice Chair)
Dr Chris Ball
Ms Gulnaz Brennan
Mrs Kate Flood
Mr Dave Haslam
Mr Luke Jones
Dr Kondal Kandadi
Ms Sue Lomax
Professor HH William Morris
Mr Roger Peet
Dr Gill Waugh
Mr Bill Webster (Principal)

In Attendance: Mr Mark Burgoyne (Deputy Principal)
Ms Joanne Green (Director of Quality)
Ms Fatema Hussein (Clerk to the Board)
Ms Sharon Marriott (Director of Curriculum)
Ms Jane Marsh (Director of HR)
Mr Tim Openshaw (University of Bolton)
Ms Kate Wallace (Director of Apprenticeships)
Ms Karen Westsmith (Director of Adults & HE)
Mr Garry Westwater (Director of Finance)
Mrs Patricia Foster (Secretary)

1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1.1 WELCOME TO MEMBERS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which commenced at 5.05pm.

Mr Luke Jones was welcomed to his first meeting as the Student Governor. Mr Jones was a Level 2 Performing Arts Student who had been at the College for three years.

Dr Chris Ball was welcomed as the University nominated Governor. Dr Ball was a former college Principal with significant experience in both FE and HE.

1.2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Ms Maresa Edwards, Professor George Holmes, Ms Stephanie Nixon and Mr Tony Unsworth.

1.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted particularly in relation to the University of Bolton reciprocal governance arrangements and also paid positions.

Dr Kondal Kandadi had notified the Board that he was a Board member at Alliance Learning and Mr Garry Westwater had recently been appointed Treasurer of the Anderton Centre.

1.4 REQUEST FOR AN ITEM TO BE UNSTARRED

Members were reminded that starred items on the Agenda would be taken as read rather than being presented. However, Members could ask questions of the report author, or ask for any item to be unstarred for full discussion.

1.5* MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

The minutes of the meeting held 12 February 2019 (confidential and general publication) had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record and authorised for publication (Part A).

1.6* MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Members received a summary of actions arising/outstanding from previous meetings.

Item 1.1

It was noted that with regard to the death in service insurance payment, it had been confirmed that there was no clause within the College's insurance policy to cover this.

Item 2.1

The Chair requested that the Digital Strategy be included as a future agenda item and the Principal anticipated that the relevant information would be ready for the next meeting of the Board on 1 July 2019.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Matters Arising/Action Progress Log be noted.

ACTION:

Clerk / July Board Agenda

1.7* MINUTES (SUB-COMMITTEES):

1.7* (i) Resources Committee of 20 March 2019

Members received the minutes of the meeting and a verbal update from the Chair of the Resources Committee.

It was noted that the fall in nursery numbers had been as a result of the requirement to ensure that staff to child ratios were correct, and not due to the outcome of the inspection.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

1.7* (ii) Audit Committee of 20 March 2019

Members received the minutes of the meeting and a verbal update from the Chair of the Audit Committee and the following points were noted:

- The Committee had discussed the importance of ensuring consistency with regard to College and University Risk Registers
- Committee membership and the Governor appointment process had also been considered as part of the review of the PWC Group governance advisory report
- It would be useful to have an independent member of the University's Audit Committee to serve on the College Audit Committee (to be identified following the skills audit).

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

1.7* (iii) Standards & Performance Committee of 19 March 2019

Members received the minutes of the meeting and the following verbal update from the Chair of the Committee:

- The Committee had discussed areas which were considered to be at risk of not meeting targets (such as Engineering and Maths), and these were being closely monitored
- Similarly, apprenticeship achievement would be carefully observed as figures for 16 year olds were currently down when compared to the same period in the previous year
- The Early Years provision would shortly undergo a mock inspection
- The provision was expected be re-inspected by Ofsted by November 2019
- Members had been pleased to note the College's improved position in the Department for Education Performance Tables.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

2.1 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented the fourth report under the new 'designated Institution' Bolton College, which provided an overview of key issues. He highlighted the following key points:-

Matrix Accreditation

- A three-day re-accreditation visit in respect of the Information, Advice and Guidance Matrix Standard had recently taken place

- This had confirmed that all identified strengths from the previous review (undertaken in 2016) remained in place, noting that there were a number of 'exemplary features'

AOC Beacon Awards

The College had won an AOC Beacon Award in the category of the Effective Use of Technology in Education. The Board agreed that this was a wonderful achievement and asked that congratulations to all those concerned be recorded.

Bolton College Medical School (BCMS) Greater Manchester Capital Bid

- The College was awaiting the final outcome letter from GMCA, at which point it would have thirty days in which to accept the offer
- The GMCA was aware that the College was keen to accept the offer
- Discussions were currently ongoing with the University to finalise the plans for the matched funding, with the backstop of the CBRE as the named funding route

Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy

- The College and the University were currently developing relevant Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategies
- This would fulfil an Office for Students (OfS) requirement and would also ensure a comprehensive approach to a growing area of focus
- Funding had been secured from the AOC to drive a number of projects in this area
- The College had taken a lead role in the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) project

Other College News

- The Principal would shortly be trialing a monthly e-communication to Governors to share the many 'good news' stories which occurred daily and which would keep Governors informed of any upcoming events.
- Members were delighted to hear of student Keira Byland's recent outstanding success at the Special Olympics in Abu Dhabi, winning gold in all three of her cycling events and making her a winner of six gold medals in total.

Performance

Members noted the performance data relating to apprenticeship achievement, attendance, class sizes and staff.

Governor Questions

- How did the overall achievement figure for apprenticeships for 18/19 compare to the same time last year and what this was based on?

It was confirmed that this was taken from ILR data. There were 108 learners left to achieve before the end date. In year achievement for 18/19 was 58.6% and this was an improvement compared to last year. There were fewer students due to achieve in the current academic year and there would be more leavers than achievers in May 2019. All legacy learners had now been removed from the data

- Why had no target been set for levy apprenticeships?

College did not have a contract value for the levy and no internal budget had historically been set but could be considered for the future

A Governor requested 'like for like' figures for the previous years' achievement be included and it was agreed that this would be added to future reports.

It was also suggested that consideration was given to setting some internal targets for levy apprenticeships

ACTION:

Director of Apprenticeships

It was **RESOLVED** that the Principal's Report be noted.

(Change in the Order of the Agenda)

2.3 COLLEGE KPI DASHBOARD

The Executive Director of Finance presented the College KPI Dashboard, which provided a summary of College performance against key indicators

Governor Questions

- What were the specific risks associated with a new partner having been taken on and what mitigating measures had been put in place to address this?

The Principal clarified that this was a partnership agreement rather than a sub-contracted arrangement, and that this had been discussed in detail by the Standards & Performance Committee. The key risk was due to it being a new arrangement but College had ensured that the appropriate quality measures had been put in place

- Could in-year targets for apprenticeship volumes and income be included in the dashboard?

The KPI Dashboard was submitted to the University for oversight and was a summary/assurance document of key headline indicators and it was important to keep it this way. However, in discussion members agreed that apprenticeships were important for both the College and the University, and the Dashboard would be updated to include 16-18 volume count and income target (levy and non-levy).

It was **RESOLVED** that the College KPI Dashboard be noted.

ACTION :

EDSP (Tim Openshaw)

(Change in the Order of the Agenda)

2.2 ESFA VISIT – UPDATE

The Principal gave a verbal update on the recent meetings with the EFSA in order to review the progress of the designated institution. He highlighted the following key points:-

- Two meetings had been held with the ESFA and one of these had been a joint meeting with the College and University in attendance
- Both meetings had been detailed and thorough and a full update on the merger had been provided
- ESFA had requested some qualitative information on the benefits of the merger, for example case studies, STRIVE bids etc. and how the objectives were being achieved

- The College's Financial Plan had been reviewed, and it had been confirmed that everything was on track.
- ESFA had also been provided with PwC's Group Governance Advisory Review, which had provided some additional assurance on the implementation of group governance arrangements
- The FE Commissioner's Office would visit the College around November 2019 to review designated institution progress.
- It was noted that there were still issues to be resolved between the EFSA and the OfS regarding access students
- College's financial health grading for 2017/18 had been moderated to Satisfactory

It was **RESOLVED** that the verbal update on the EFSA visit be noted.

(Change in the Order of the Agenda)

2.4 LEO2 UPDATE/REVISED 2018/19 FORECAST

The Executive Director of Finance presented the LEO2 Update which provided a brief update on the forecast to 31 July 2019.

It was noted that:

- The forecast Operating Surplus had improved slightly from £101k at LEO1 to £129K
- Bank covenants would be closely monitored and would be reported in the Management Accounts with effect from March 2019
- Cashflow would become slightly stretched, March being the 'low watermark' for cash before improvements were shown.

Governor Questions

- Why were the bank covenants rated as amber, and not green if no breach in the covenant was anticipated?

It was confirmed that although there was nothing to suggest a breach, it was wise to retain the risk at amber until there was absolute certainty.

It was **RESOLVED** that the LEO2 Update/Revised 2018/19 Forecast be noted.

2.5 2018/19 ACHIEVEMENT TARGETS

The Deputy Principal presented the Achievement Data Report which provided an overview of achievement rates across different funding categories for the year 2017/18, together with targets for 2018/19. The report had been considered in detail at the meeting of the Standards & Performance Committee and the targets within the report had been agreed and recommended to the Board for approval.

Governor Questions

- The Chair requested clarification on Table 6 –as the number of 'Leavers' in 2017/18 appeared to be more than the number of learners

This would be checked and quantified by the Deputy Principal but was likely to have been caused by the timing of the applied methodology.

ACTION:

Deputy Principal

- Were the targets for 2018/19 pitched at the correct level, given the College's aspirations to become 'outstanding'?

It was confirmed by the Deputy Principal that the targets were agreed at the recent Standards & Performance Committee; however, these would be upwardly adjusted at an appropriate time once a clearer picture emerged of what needed to be put in place to achieve 'outstanding'.

The Chair stated that it was important for the Board to be informed of the key areas for improvement if the College was aspiring to be outstanding, and this included the targets.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the report on 2017/18 Achievements Target be noted; and
- (ii) the recommended targets for 2018/19 as detailed within the report be approved.

2.6 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY

The Director of Quality presented the College's Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy (MHWS), and the following points were noted:

- Although the College had supported the mental health and wellbeing of its students for a number of years (as recognised by Ofsted in its last two inspections), it did not have a coherent strategy that identified good practice and areas for improvement
- The College intended to develop two strategies: a learner-facing MHWS led by the Director of Quality and a staff-facing MHWS led by the Director of Human Resources.
- The self-assessment tool provided an indication of what the College felt was the current position and helped to identify areas of focus.
- It would be highly beneficial for the College to have a 'lead' Governor for mental health and wellbeing to ensure regular reporting to the Governing Body
- Professor HH William Morris, who had significant experience in the field of mental health, volunteered for this role

Governor Questions

- Was there any commonality of the MHWS with that of the University?

The Director of Quality confirmed that there were some similarities but no complete overlap as the College was required to address a number of specific elements; however, as the separate strategies developed there would be the opportunity for some parity. Both organisations already shared good practice and interacted in many ways.

Governors were pleased to note the positive statements within the report and the many examples of good practice already being undertaken by the College, as well as the development of the Strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy be received and the approach to the development of the Strategy be endorsed; and
- (ii) Professor HH William Morris be appointed a 'lead' Governor to act as a mental health and wellbeing champion.

2.7 HUMAN RESOURCES MID-YEAR REPORT 2018/19

The Director of HR presented the HR Mid-Year Report, highlighting the following key points:-

- Sickness absence - overall sickness absence stood at 4.86%, a slight reduction when compared to the same period in the previous year. Long term absence stood at 2.65% and short-term absence at 2.21%.
- The number of staff (FTE) stood at 454 compared to a target of 444. The increase was a targeted strategic increase in permanent staffing in response to specific workforce planning requirements. The overall headcount was 570.
- Employee Relations Cases – the numbers of disciplinary, dignity at work, grievance, performance management and probationary dismissal cases were at the general expected level and demonstrated that the College continued to have an approach to employee relations cases that was considered, appropriately managed and decisive.
- Merger - the College had successfully discharged its responsibility with regards to TUPE as part of the merger process.
- Trade Union relations - following the merger, the University and the College had been notified by UCU that they were no longer in a position to sign up to a proposed Trade Union and Management Framework agreement
- The University and the College had, therefore, agreed to take the framework off the table and currently there was no joint forum for Trade Union consultation/negotiation across the Group (although internal organisational arrangements remained).

Governor Questions

- With regard to performance management, a Governor asked for further details on the process.

The Director of HR explained the various steps, which varied according to whether it involved teaching or non-teaching staff. Teaching staff had an initial 'walk-through' followed by meetings with Heads and HR. Outcomes could involve putting a mentoring system in place or implementing an action plan process, culminating in the member of staff being retained or exiting. For non-teaching staff, managers were required to raise any issue with HR. As each case was dealt with on an individual basis, it did not affect the overall end of year performance

- Could performance targets for staff in different areas of the College be shared with Governors?

The Director of HR cautioned against sharing this information in light of GDPR but would investigate whether the information could be anonymised in such a way that it could be shared. However, the Chair reminded Governors that their role was one of oversight rather than becoming involved with operational matters.

- Was there was evidence of a shift towards stress related absence and would it be useful for Governors to receive a more detailed breakdown of sickness absence by category and for this to be shown in a local and national context?

The Director of HR confirmed that there was no evidence of a shift towards stress related absence. A more detailed breakdown of absence by category would be provided to the Resources Committee along with the local and national context.

It was **RESOLVED** that the HR Mid-Year Report be noted.

ACTION:

Director of HR

2.8 SAFEGUARDING MONITORING REPORT 2018/19

The Director of HR presented the Safeguarding Monitoring Report 2018/19 which provided an overview of the safeguarding work in the College during 2018/19 and progress towards planned development.

The following key points were highlighted:-

Safeguarding and Training

- All staff and volunteers were required to undergo compulsory training which covered safeguarding of children/adults at risk; Prevent; lockdown; CEOP/e-safety; and British Values.
- New staff were also required to attend a session with the Director of HR and the Student Services Manager on ways to keep staff safe whilst undertaking their roles.
- The College took the issue of safeguarding extremely seriously and worked with a number of agencies
- The Director of HR was a member of Bolton's multi agency Prevent Steering Group as well as the North West FE Colleges Prevent Group.
- To date, the College Safeguarding Team had received and supported 205 cases, and five Prevent referrals (all adults).

Prevent and Data Sharing Agreement

- The Prevent Regional Co-coordinator for the North West, Nigel Lund, was of the view that there was benefit in having a data sharing agreement between FE and HE to allow appropriate safeguarding information (linked to Prevent)
- This would ensure safeguarding arrangements remained in place in the event of a FE learner being offered a place at a Greater Manchester HEI
- At the time of writing the report, the College had signed the data sharing agreement and was awaiting signature by the University.

Modern Slavery

Members noted the Modern Slavery Statement at Appendix 4.1 to the report which required Board approval and signature by the Chair of the Board, prior to it being published on the College's website.

Progress towards actions for 2018/19

It was noted that all actions with regard to safeguarding were in place, including those required as a Group.

Governor Questions

- Were Prevent cases were being identified quickly by the College and was there any evidence of extremism becoming more right-wing?

It was confirmed that the College identified cases very quickly. The majority of Prevent referrals were related to right-wing extremism

- Where did knife crime sit within the College's safeguarding agenda?

It was clarified that this was covered by a number of policies including the Safeguarding Policy, Learner Behavior Policy and the Disciplinary Procedures. There was also some reliance made on learner disclosure and tutor observation in terms of identifying certain behaviors

It was also noted that:

- The College worked closely with the Police Service on College security arrangements and had recently appointed an additional 'roving' security guard
- It was important to maintain a balance between having appropriate security arrangements in place and 'over-screening'
- Every college had different policies on knife crime and good practice was shared at meetings of College Chairs. The Chair agreed to circulate to Governors an advisory paper on knife crime which had been distributed at a meeting of College Chairs.

ACTION:

Chair / Clerk

The importance of British Values was noted and Dr Gill Waugh offered to share details of a presentation given recently to University students.

ACTION:

G Waugh

It was **RESOLVED** that the Safeguarding Monitoring Report 2018/19 be noted and that the Annual Report would be received in the Autumn Term.

2.9 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Executive Director of Finance presented the Financial Regulations, which had been considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting held 20 March 2019.

It was noted that the Regulations had been revised post-merger and had been produced solely with a College focus rather than a University/Group wide focus and that where further approval was required, this should be seen as being the normal course of business of a parent/subsidiary relationship.

Governor Questions

- Which members of staff were authorised to sign College contracts?

It was confirmed that these were the Principal, the Deputy Principal and the Executive Director of Finance who were authorised to sign contracts up to a value of £100k; anything above this value required Board approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Financial Regulations be approved.

2.10 2019/20 TUITION FEES

The Executive Director of Finance presented the Tuition Fees for 2019/20, as considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 20 March 2019.

Members noted the schedule of fees at Appendix 1 to the report, noting that any changes proposed were minimal and had been applied on an inflationary basis.

Members discussed the Augar Review of Tuition Fees, noting that any policy changes would take 2-3 years to embed. The biggest short-term impact would be on EU students who would be affected by Brexit; there would, therefore, be a need to identify alternative income streams to sustain the Group.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Tuition Fees for 2019/20 (as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report) be approved.

2.11 ANNUAL HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

The Executive Director of Finance presented the Annual Health & Safety Report 2017/18. The following points were highlighted:-

- The Facilities Department was continuing to work closely with departments to fulfil a broad commitment and service delivery across all College sites.
- With regard to work plan objectives 2018/19, a key activity was to understand the implications of the latest updates to Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) Health & Wellbeing of Respiratory Systems & Promotional Awareness in the Environment.
- It was noted that achievement of the objectives would require significant investment.

Members commented that the RIDDOR statistics were encouraging, particularly when taking into account areas such as construction, engineering and hairdressing where accidents could very easily occur.

The Chair commented that the report was an important document and congratulated all concerned on the improved accident statistics.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (ii) the updated Health & Safety Policy at Section 5 of the Annual Health & Safety Report 2017/18 be approved.

2.12 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The Clerk reported that:

- The terms of office of two current Governors, Ms Maresa Edwards (Staff Governor) and Ms Willow Scarle (Student Governor) were due to end in the summer term and elections would be arranged for the Autumn term.
- As reported earlier in the meeting, Dr Chris Ball had been appointed as the University's Governor nominee.

- The audit of Governor skills was currently underway and recommendations would be presented at the next meeting of the Board on 1 July 2019, including appointing members to sub-committees.

It was **RESOLVED** that the verbal update on Governor Membership and Terms of Office be noted.

2.13 STARRED ITEMS:

2.13 (i) INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2018/19

Members received the Internal Audit Plan 2018/19.

It was noted that RSM had been re-appointed as the College's Internal Audit Service Provider until 31 July 2019.

This one-year extension would allow the College and the University to align current contractual dates. A new Group Internal Audit provider would be appointed with effect from 1 August 2019 and a tender process was underway.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the tender process underway for a Group-wide Internal Audit Service provider be noted; and
- (ii) on the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Internal Audit Plan for 2018/19 be approved.

2.13 (ii) 2019/20 FUNDING ALLOCATION

Members received details of the Funding Allocations for 2019/20.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Funding Allocations for 2019/20 as detailed in the report be noted.

2.13 (iii) APPOINTMENT OF DR CHRIS BALL TO THE COLLEGE BOARD

It was **RESOLVED** that the Board formally ratify the appointment of Dr Chris Ball.

SECTION C – UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 GROUP ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE REPORT: ACADEMIC GROUP IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

The Deputy Principal presented the University Group Academic Governance Report: Group Quality Improvement and Enhancement Plan (GQIEP), produced by the University's Assistant Vice Chancellor (Office for Students).

The Plan aimed to identify any improvements required by the College and the University and provide an action plan for these to be achieved.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group Quality Improvement and Enhancement Plan be endorsed and recommended for approval by the University Board at its meeting to be held 9 April 2019.

3.2 COLLEGE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF FOCUS

Members received the College's Annual Statement of Focus which detailed a draft set of priorities for consideration by the College when formulating its Annual Strategic and Operating Plan for the year.

The statement had been based around three key themes which featured in the College KPI Dashboard and had been considered by the University's Resources Committee.

It was suggested that a section be included on how the University would update the College on progress and vice versa.

With regard to the theme relating to benefits from the merger, further details would be added as the Group progressed. The Group would strive to achieve all possible benefits.

A Governor suggested that an evaluation of impact and the tangible benefits of the merger needed to be developed

It was clarified that the statement had been compiled as an informal view by the University on the College's key priorities and that the detail would be within the College's Strategic Plan. During the transition year, the Statement was felt to be a good starting point; however, there may be some benefit in the future of consolidation the Statement of Focus and the Group Quality Improvement and Enhancement Plan.

ACTION:

EDSP (Tim Openshaw)

It was **RESOLVED** that the College's Annual Statement of Focus be recommended for approval by the University Board at its meeting to be held 9 April 2019.

3.3 GROUP RISK REGISTER

Members received the Group Risk Register, which provided an update on the development of the approach to Risk Management at Group level.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group Risk Register be noted.

3.4 PWC GROUP GOVERNANCE ADVISORY REVIEW

Members received for information the Group Governance Advisory Review compiled by the University's Internal Audit Provider, Price Waterhouse Coopers.

Governor Questions

- Referring to Section 3.1.2.2 of the Review, a Governor asked for clarification on the roles of the Accountable Officers.

It was confirmed that the University's Vice Chancellor was the Group Chief Accounting Officer and that the College Principal was the College's Chief Accounting Officer.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group Governance Advisory Review be noted.

4. SECTION D – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Terms of Reference

The Clerk reported that the Terms of Reference of the College's sub-committees required University Board approval on 9 April 2019. Minor amendments had been made to the ToRs of the Resources Committee and the Audit Committee.

(ii) Reserved Business Items:

4.1 PAY AWARD

4.2 SENIOR POSTHOLDER PAY

The above were discussed as part of reserved business.

5. SECTION E – FUTURE MEETINGS

Governors' Meetings:

The dates and times of future meetings were noted as follows:-

5 June 2019 at 5.00pm (Resources Committee)

12 June 2019 at 3.00pm (Audit Committee)

12 June 2019 at 5.00pm (Standards & Performance Committee)

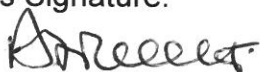
1 July 2019 at 5.00pm (Board)

Governors' Evening:

25 September 2019 6.00pm - 8.30pm.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 7.10pm

Chair's Signature:



Date: