

Minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting held in the Boardroom on 23 March 2022

Present:

Karen Buchanan
David Brown
Gareth Jones
David Meakin
Gillian Bardin
Luke Gott
Fiona Lugiano
Jim Sutcliffe
Jen Fawcett
Mohammad Urahman
Guy Thomas
Philip Turner
Kate Quinn
Paul Henderson

In Attendance:

Simon Jordan
Sarah Crossley
Simone Lomas
Stuart Arnfield
Neil Burrows

Contributed by email:

Gerald Griggs

Apologies

Richard Thorley
Richard Robinson

Declaration of Interest

- 1 There were no declarations of interest noted.

Draft Minutes of the Board meeting held on 8 December 2021

- 2 The minutes of the Board meeting on the 8 December 2021 were accepted as an accurate record, proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by Gillian Bardin.

Matters arising from the minutes

- 3 Paragraph 4 – Simone Lomas confirmed that the Health and Safety Executive “Leading Health and Safety at Work” reference document was emailed to Governors.
- 4 Paragraph 26 – Simon Jordan confirmed that he had spoken with David Brown and that they had agreed the current structure was effective but that they would review the model annually and consider the suggestion to increase the support in relation to the Governor Safeguarding Lead.
- 5 Paragraph 37 – Simone Lomas confirmed that the redacted minutes had been published on the website.

- 6 Paragraph 42 – Simone Lomas confirmed that Jen Fawcett and Mohammad Urahman had been formally informed of their appointment to the Governing Board.
- 7 Paragraph 50 – Neil Burrows advised that the request to define the incidents/accidents currently noted as ‘Other’ to be more specific had been addressed in his report at Appendix C.
- 8 Paragraph 53 – The Health and Safety Lead Governor was considered at the Extra- Ordinary Search and Governance Committee a subsequent meeting with a contact of Gillian Bardin has been arranged.
- 9 Paragraph 60 – Simone Lomas confirmed that she had signed the loan agreements on behalf of the Governing Board.

Student Council Minutes – 17 January 2022

- 10 Sarah Crossley advised that Kate Quinn attended the Council meeting. Stuart Arnfield had attended the meeting and updated students on the new Starbucks offer in the Atrium and Fitness Evolution. Council members were asked to focus on the Atrium Activities in relation to them being what students like to be involved in, whether Student Support is helpful and supportive and the Experts in Residence opportunity for entrepreneurs and business to help lead on certain projects. Comments at the meeting were productive, with actions taken away for further consideration.

Quality Committee – 26 January 2022

- 11 Sarah Crossley advised Governors of the items that were considered at the meeting, referring to the Review of the Customer Voice and the existing mechanisms and ideas of how to capture customer feedback, what the current strengths are and what further enhancements could be made going forward. The meeting was overwhelmingly positive, with the sharing of good practice that is currently happening across the College.

Draft Safeguarding Group – 10 February 2022

- 12 David Brown advised that the offer of support for the Governor lead role would remain under review but was grateful for support. He reported that numbers were high with some concerning emerging themes. Behavioural issues were inherent from secondary schools – this being negatively impacted by the closure of schools during the pandemic.

Accommodation Working Group – 22 February 2022

- 13 David Meakin advised Governors that both projects had finished on budget but had been subject to an extension to the deadline. There was still an extensive snagging list that should be completed over the next month. John Turners have been appointed as the main contractor for the Low Carbon project to renovate existing classrooms to a new level of digital and sustainable practical areas to learn in.
- 14 Paul Henderson asked to be considered to join the Accommodation Working Group.

Action: Simone Lomas

Draft Academic Board – 23 February 2022

- 15 Karen Buchanan advised that four papers were considered by staff; Burnley College Health and Safety Structure and Responsibilities, Public Value and Human Trafficking and Slavery Statement, Draft Ofsted Inspection Feedback and The 'Good for Me Goode for FE' Social Value Initiative. All four reports were well received by staff and points raised for consideration.

Draft Extra Ordinary Search and Governance Committee – 23 February 2022

- 16 David Brown updated Governors of the current position as a result of resignations from the Board and thanked Governors who had offered to step up to Chair and Vice Chair positions. The meeting had been arranged as a result of the introduction of the External Reviews of Boards that has been made a regulation, along with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda. A further meeting with the Chair, Vice Chair, Principal and Clerk is being arranged to understand the practicalities.

Draft Human Resources Committee – 23 February 2022

- 17 David Meakin referred to the presentation to the Committee relating to the introduction to the HR Department demonstrating the roles each member of the team undertook and the individualised support and the different concepts that were being introduced. Focus on staff health and wellbeing and attracting and retaining top talent remained a key priority of the team.

Draft Curriculum and Standards – 2 March 2022

- 18 Fiona Lugiano advised members of the presentation they had received from Jon Habiak and Humera Khan relating to the High Needs Curriculum Offer, they focussed on the changing picture of High Needs learners, the existing SEND Curriculum and the Ofsted feedback. School leaver applications are ahead at the same point last year by 13%.

Draft Finance Committee – 16 March 2022

- 19 Guy Thomas referred to the presentation that had been delivered by Paul Sharples, David Lord and Lydia Simm relating to the Skills Development Fund. They outlined the project, explaining its scope and key priorities. Ashley Alderson and Paul Sharples of Northwest Business Training provided an update on the activities and income being generated from a commercial viewpoint.
- 20 The half-year position at the end of January indicated that the College had posted a positive position at an operating level. The forecast for the full year also indicates that the budget will be achieved and that the College continues to report Outstanding Financial Health. A word of caution in relation to the Pension Liabilities was noted again.

Draft Audit Committee – 2 March 2022

- 21 Jim Sutcliffe advised of the Health and Safety presentation that the Committee had received from David Price, David Lord and Chris Platt explaining how the Expert Knowledge Forum aligns to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing strategy.

- 22 Jim informed Governors that the Audit Committee had recommended that the Full Board consider and approve the appointment of ICCA as the College's internal auditors for a 3 year term and to approve the appointment of RSM as the College's external auditors also for a 3 year term.
- 23 The recommendation to approve ICCA as the internal auditors and RSM as the external auditors was proposed by Fiona Lugiano and seconded by Guy Thomas.
- 24 Governors unanimously endorsed the Risk Register Report and Action plan.

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Annual Strategic Conversation 2020/21

- 25 Karen Buchanan introduced the paper explaining that the Ney review and recent FE White Paper had actioned the ESFA to hold Annual Strategic Conversations with Colleges with the aim to look holistically at colleges' strategy and plans.
- 26 On 2 February 2022 David Brown, Richard Thorley and the Colleges Senior Management Team met with senior staff from the ESFA and FE Commission. The meeting was held at the College, starting with a tour, showcasing the Sports Centre and specialist facilities across the campus.
- 27 The meeting was deemed to be extremely positive and useful, a letter from the ESFA corroborating this was shared with Governors.

Governors' Calendar of meetings 2022/23

- 28 Simone Lomas introduced the report advising Governors of the suggested dates for formal Board and Committee meetings in the 2022/23 Academic Year.
- 29 Governors' attention was made to the Themis Awards event noted on the calendar on 9 February 2023 TBC. Once the National Apprenticeship Week dates have been confirmed for next year, the date of the Themis Awards event would be fixed.
- 30 Governors were asked to inform Simone of any changes they would wish to make to the calendar.

Health & Safety Update

- 31 Neil Burrows informed Governors of the latest position identifying key statistics in relation to accidents and near misses. He confirmed that there had been one accident that had led to a RIDDOR (Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) report being submitted on 22 February 2022.
- 32 Neil advised that David Shorrocks had visited the College in February 2022 focusing on the new teaching block and sports facility extension. David has reported a positive outcome to the practices he witnessed, he will be attending College later in the year to conduct further reviews of our activities and procedures.

- 33 The appointment process to recruit a Health and Safety Co-ordinator has been successful, they will commence employment on 23 March 2022.
- 34 Jim Sutcliffe raised a question about the 'digital platform for monthly emergency light testing' asking whether there is no longer a requirement to check the lights physically. Stuart Arnfield explained that the system would now highlight if lights are not working rather than having to go around each one to check.
- 35 The Health and Safety Policy was presented for Governors to consider and approve. Members were advised that this policy sets the tone and expectations of the College.
- 36 The Board noted the progress during 2021/22 and unanimously approved the Health and Safety, and Wellbeing Policy, proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by Luke Gott.
- 37 The policy to be displayed on the Colleges website.

Action: Simone Lomas

Governors' Strategic Event January 2022

- 38 Simone Lomas introduced the report which summarised the content of the Governors Strategic event that had been held both remotely and in person in January. Governors were hosted in the new 'I' Building and on the Teams platform by the Senior Management team discussing the data in terms of success of the College and an analysis of student achievements and results for 2020/21 by Simon Jordan and Sarah Crossley. Karen Buchanan, Stuart Arnfield and Neil Burrows provided an overview of the national and local developments in the sector.
- 39 Neil updated Governors on the Strategic Development Fund project (SDF), whilst Stuart presented the Colleges Financial Comparison and our position against that of local colleges.
- 40 Governors had received in advance of the meeting an updated version of their Self-Assessment Report, Action Plan and Time-line for their consideration.
- 41 Governors were keen to return to the Coniston Hotel for the residential in January 2023.
- 42 The Board approved the Governance SAR for 2020/21, proposed by Fiona Lugiano and seconded by Guy Thomas.

Update on Governance Issues for Spring term 2021/22

- 43 Simone Lomas introduced the report advising that the minutes attached to the paper had been redacted for their consideration. Governors approved that the redacted minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting held on 24 March 2021 should be published on the website.

Action: Simone Lomas

- 44 Simone advised Governors of the role changes in the Committees, with Governors taking up Vice Chair positions and additional commitments on the Remuneration Committee.

45 It was noted that the Corporation Seal had not been used.

46 Governors noted the report.

Governors' Strategic Planning Overview Document

47 Karen Buchanan informed that items marked in blue refer to items that have changed and that the initials at the side of each paragraph refers to the Senior Manager responsible for this area of work. Governors were invited to ask any questions on the information presented.

48 Karen referred to paragraph 2.30 – Pay and Conditions; advising Governors of the current position in relation to UCU declaring a dispute and balloting staff for strike action commencing 21 March 2022.

49 Kate Quinn advised of her experiences in terms of union disputes and offered to support the College. Karen was grateful for the offer and will contact Kate outside of the meeting.

50 Gerald Griggs by email referred to point 2.48 asking whether the College would be concentrating on specific types of Elite Athletes. Karen explained the types of athletes that Fitness Evolution were working with, confirming that she would include a list of the athletes and their specific sport in future reports.

Action: Karen Buchanan

51 David Meakin asked what an Anatamage table is, Karen explained that it was a virtual operating table predominately used by the Health and Social students.

52 Governors noted the report.

Corporate Performance 2021 & 2022

53 Karen Buchanan introduced the report and informed Governors of the format adopted. The report notified of the performance of the College in relation to its Strategic Objectives and Goals.

54 Jim Sutcliffe raised a point relating to Table 13 Staff outcomes; that staff are leaving the organisation, does the College share its successes widely enough to attract new staff. Simon Jordan explained how there had been a shift in employees now 'holding all of the cards' and that the College did need to promote the opportunities it offered and to be conscious of the language being used in adverts; whether it would be understood externally.

55 Kate Quinn believed that the Number 1 College in the Country is a big attraction to prospective employees, she asked whether the College had considered its unique selling point for example, flexible working, culture – being part of a family, the employer brand, having a more targeted approach.

56 Governors were pleased to note the position being reported.

Sustainability Statement Update

- 57 Simon Jordan referred to the report explaining that sustainability is a big agenda and how important it had become to all key stakeholders of the College and wider community. The College is involved in many projects to promote sustainability and where possible aligns its practices with the sustainability agenda. Simon gave examples of the activities being undertaken by the College including a round table event held as part of the COPBC26 initiative with local employers attending the event and students holding them to account.
- 58 Gillian Bardin had been delighted to see the COPBC26 on the social media platforms linked to the College – they were exceptional.

Website Compliance

- 59 Simone Lomas introduced the report, appraising the Governors of the regulations the College works within in relation to ensuring it continues to comply with what is published on the website.
- 60 The scope of the information required to be published will continue to grow/change as regulations and guidelines change depending on funding body requirements.
- 61 Jim Sutcliffe asked for the “name of the member of staff who deals with queries from parents and other members of the public” to be clearer on the website.
Action: Simone Lomas

Remote Learning Statement and 16-19 Tuition Fee Funding 2021/22

- 62 Sarah Crossley introduced the report, explaining that although there have been no national or local lockdown restrictions, government guidance around self-isolation has required some learners to access their education remotely. The updated Remote Learning statement was attached to the paper for Governors to consider.
- 63 The 16 – 19 Tuition Fund Statement was also considered by Governors, this is predominantly to be used to support small group tuition for 16-19 students in English, maths and courses where learning has been disrupted during the pandemic.
- 64 Governors noted the report.

Academic Results

- 65 Sarah Crossley reminded Governors of the assessment practices that had taken place during the pandemic. Last year learners received their grades awarded and determined by teachers Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs), the year previous they had been determined by Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs).
- 66 This summer exam series 2021/22 will see a return to the traditional exam format, the DfE, Ofqual and JCQ have made an adaptation that is not usual; the release of advance information for the majority of subjects at GCSE, AS and A level qualifications.

- 67 Gillian Bardin asked about Students who developed Covid during the exam series, what plans are in place. Sarah explained that the JCQ have guidelines and contingencies (extenuating circumstances) that the College follows in relation to learners who are ill.

Approved by Chair, David Meakin

Signed: David Meakin

Date: 21 April 2022

NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following Board meeting.