

Meeting of the Governing Board held on Wednesday 28 June 2023



Present:

David Meakin - Chair
David Brown
Gareth Jones
Gillian Bardin
Curtis Wilson
Jim Sutcliffe
Guy Thomas
Paul Henderson
Philip Turner
Karen Buchanan
Gareth Jones
Steve Wilkinson

Contributed:

Richard Thorley
Anita Wright

In attendance:

Simon Jordan
Simone Lomas
Kate Wallace
Neil Burrows
Sarah Crossley
Stuart Arnfield

Apologies for Absence:

Fiona Lugiano
Gerald Griggs
Benji Crampton
Eishan Bilal
Richard Robinson
David Tomlinson

Declaration of Interest

- 1 There was no declaration of interest noted.

Draft Minutes of the Board meeting held on 22 March 2023

- 2 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by David Brown.

Matters arising from the minutes

- 3 **Paragraph 23:** Simon Jordan confirmed that he had contacted Richard Robinson in terms of the financial and legal support for students.
- 4 **Paragraph 32:** Karen Buchanan confirmed that the letter from the ESFA in relation to the meeting with them and the FE commissioner had still not been received.
- 5 **Paragraph 40:** Neil Burrows confirmed that the reporting of incidents had been amended and would be presented at this meeting.

- 6 **Paragraph 57:** Simone Lomas confirmed that the minutes had been redacted as agreed by Governors and published on the website.

Draft Minutes of the Committees Student Council – 27 April 2023

- 7 Sarah Crossley updated Governors on the key developments that had been discussed at the meeting:
- Careers Strategy
 - Learning and Teaching Strategy
- 8 The meeting was positive with some valid and useful points made by students that will be considered and fed back at the next meeting.

Strategic Planning – 3 May 2023

- 9 Simon Jordan detailed the items that were presented at the meeting. The meeting was hosted in the 'I' building teaching block. Governors were split into three groups:
- **Accountability Statement -** The draft version of the Accountability Statement was discussed with some minor changes agreed. Governors unanimously approved the high quality, glossy version to be uploaded to the Department for Education portal.
 - **New T Level Suite –** Governors were presented with the context behind the new Early Years Learning Environment, the intention of which is to provide immersive learning experiences in preparation for learners going into industry placement.
 - **Governors SAR** Governors were asked to consider the SAR by conducting an exercise called Red Teaming. The Governors SAR was approved subject to the changes they had made as part of the exercise.

Academic Board – 10 May 2023

- 10 Simon Jordan explained that staff had been asked to discuss and consider the Single Equality Policy, review and comment on the College's Strategic Development Fund and the Institute of Technology and comment on the new Careers Strategy. The actions will be presented to the first Academic Board of the new year.

Safeguarding Meeting 10 May 2023

- 11 David Brown explained that the meeting had highlighted concerns with an increasing trend of safeguarding referrals that matched the national picture. The meeting had referred to 'Martins Law' relating to the Terrorism Protection of Premises Bill. Governors had been reassured that the College is putting plans in place in line with legislative requirements.

Search & Governance Committee – 10 May 2023

- 12 David Brown reported that a hybrid way of working, in terms of enabling Governors to attend Committee meetings remotely if attendance was proving difficult, had been agreed. Attendance at Board meetings remained unchanged.
- 13 Jim Sutcliffe asked whether David Shorrocks was still advising the College in relation to Health and Safety. Karen Buchanan informed Governors that David was still working with the College in an advisory capacity and that she would arrange for him to attend a future board meeting to advise Governors strategically regarding Health and Safety.

Action: Karen Buchanan

Human Resources Committee – 10 May 2023

- 14 Philip Turner provided details of the meeting; that Governors had received and approved a paper to make a provision for a Pay Award to be made for 2023/24 for the Finance Committee to consider.

Curriculum & Standards Committee – 17 May 2023

- 15 Gillain Bardin explained that the meeting had received a presentation about Government Performance Measures and that Gerald Griggs had provided reassurance from a third-party perspective that the College was in a good position and had the right strategies in place for improvements to move forward positively.
- 16 Governors had been informed of the plans in place to increase the attendance figure to above 90%.

Accommodation Working Group – 26 April & 12 June 2023

- 17 David Meakin updated Governors of the position in terms of the Summer Works and North Campus projects; that Speakmans and John Turners had been appointed main contractors and that they were making good progress. Stuart Arnfield advised that the College had been successfully awarded the T Level bid.
- 18 Jim Sutcliffe asked for an update on the issues that they had been informed about in relation to the spa in Fitness Evolution. Stuart confirmed that the work had been completed satisfactorily.

Quality Committee – 13 June 2023

- 19 Sarah Crossley noted that the Committee had reviewed the College Charter in line with the development of College Core Values (Leadership for all, Creativity and Curiosity, Care Trust and Belonging, Ambition and Challenge, Collaboration, Build Beyond). The Committee was also asked to contribute to the annual review for all student facing policies.

Audit Committee – 14 June 2023

- 20 Jim Sutcliffe reported that Governors had received a presentation from the Network team, an interesting focus was the partnership that had been developed with RecycleIT to reduce spend on devices. 90% of devices will be purchased this summer from RecycleIT and they come with a five year warranty. This is also supporting the sustainability agenda.

- 21 A discussion had taken place in relation to the reclassification to the public sector and of the potential change in government and the mandating of internal audit services. The internal auditors had advised that they will update the College if and when information becomes available. Jim also advised that the Internal Audit Plan was unanimously approved.

Finance Committee – 21 June 2023 - Confidential

- 22 Guy Thomas referred to the presentation that had been received from the College's Apprentices who had been working on a sustainability project. Apprentices updated Governors on the plans they had and those yet to implement. Guy also noted the Treasury Management position; that it had changed as a result of the bank rates increasing.
- 23 The Committee agreed to an in principle pay award but any pay award decision still requires the approval of the Full Governing Board.

Strategic Objectives and Goals 2023-2026

- 24 Simon Jordan introduced the report, providing context for the proposed changes to the goals; that the College has undertaken a more enhanced review of the observation and Quality Cycle as a result of the introduction of new and enhanced regulation around Student Outcomes and Student Experience by the Office for Students; the additional Careers and Skills judgement as part of Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework; the introduction of new T Level qualifications and the announcement of Level 2 and Level 3 vocational qualification reform.
- 25 In light of these developments a paper was presented to the Curriculum and Standards Committee in May 2023 to consider amending the current teaching grade observation criteria, as well as goal 3 to change from:
- Goal 3 To achieve measured 'effective' teaching grades in excess of 86% and within that more than 26% of measured sessions being identified as 'Bright Spots Best Practice'.

to

 - Goal 3 To evidence innovative learning and teaching excellence demonstrated through at least 90% of Deep Dives graded at good or better with high levels of learning visit outcomes.
- 26 David Brown asked how the term 'high' in the proposed Goal 3 would be measured and defined. Guy Thomas and Paul Henderson requested to receive benchmarking data that would provide comparisons to measure ourselves against.
- 27 Kate Wallace and Sarah Crossley agreed to advise Governors of the activities and criteria that would relate and demonstrate each of the levels awarded.

Action: Kate Wallace and Sarah Crossley

- 28 Jim Sutcliffe asked about the term 'Deep Dive' what does it cover. Kate Wallace explained that it is a term used in the Education Inspection Framework and forms part of the practice during an Ofsted inspection; following a learner's journey with a 360 degree view point allowing all aspects of the learners journey to be viewed and therefore removing the 'snap shop in time' practice.
- 29 David Brown referred to Goal 5 asking how the term 'impactful' would be measured. Simon explained how the goal will continue to evolve; that the Corporate Performance Report details the narrative and confirms that the commercial target is a tangible measure.
- 30 Anita Wright, by email wished to note that she was happy with the proposed changes to the goals but would be interested to know what systems are in place to monitor and track progress with goal 5 in particular the partnerships. Stuart explained that Partnerships is a relatively new area that the College is tracking and it links to some of the aims in the Accountability Statement. The College is still developing the full tracking processes but they include the CRM system that we have in place alongside data from community events and outreach activity. We will develop this fully into next year and report on it through subsequent presentations of this report.
- 31 Guy Thomas asked whether the SMT had considered conducting a survey with employers to obtain measurable feedback, it would be a subtle way of establishing their needs.
- 32 Karen agreed to consider the suggestions with the SMT.

Action: Karen Buchanan

- 33 Governors agreed with the proposed changes to Goal 3 and 5 subject to the assurance provided by the benchmarking data and the considerations made by the Senior Management Team.

Health and Safety Update

- 34 Neil Burrows provided an update of the Health and Safety Operations since the last meeting, he confirmed that the requests to separate the data out of the tables had been undertaken and were presented in the report.
- 35 Neil updated on the staff training that had taken place and that a Health Surveillance had been conducted with 78 members of staff; testing lungs, audio and skin (where applicable). Training EpiPens have been ordered to enable staff to support students with allergies.
- 36 The College Health and Safety Policy has been re designed to meet updated legislation requirements and include feedback from David Shorrocks after his assurance visit in March 2023. The Policy sets out the overarching intent and acknowledgement of statutory duties, the organisational framework for health and safety, and key responsibilities in relation to health and safety.
- 37 David Brown mentioned that the phrase 'reasonably practicable' was included in the Policy 12 times. Neil agreed to amend the Policy, reducing the number of times the phrase is used.

Action: Neil Burrows

Update on Governance Issues for Summer term 2022/23

38 Simone Lomas introduced the report which covered three key areas.

i) Confidential items

The minutes being considered had been redacted in advance of the meeting for Governor consideration. Governors unanimously approved for the minutes to be published on the website with the highlighted redactions.

Action: Simone Lomas

ii) Corporation Seal

It was noted that the Corporation Seal had not been used during this period.

iii) Membership Issues

Simone Lomas advised that Richard Thorley had agreed to undertake a further term of office and that Gareth Jones' term of office would expire in July 2023, the process to recruit the next teaching staff governor has commenced.

David Meakin, on behalf of the Board thanked Gareth for his valuable contribution.

iv) External Review of Governance

Simone advised that the Association of Colleges has been appointed to conduct the Colleges External Review of Governance and that the process will begin in February 2024.

39 Governors noted the report.

Curriculum Strategy and Accountability Statement

41 Simon Jordan introduced the College Curriculum Strategy and the Accountability Statement. The purpose of the Curriculum Strategy is to provide a context as to how and why Burnley College delivers such a varied curriculum and the finalised Accountability Statement which includes the changes agreed on 3 May 2023. The purpose of this document is to highlight the curriculum aims, targets and outcomes that meet local skills needs.

42 The Curriculum Strategy and Accountability Statement have areas that overlap. Moving forward these documents, both of which are required, will be more closely aligned.

43 Governors noted the report.

Corporate Performance 2022 & 2023

44 Karen Buchanan introduced the report and outlined the format in terms of the development of the report.

45 Jim Sutcliffe referred to point 24; that attendance had been reported as a slight drop. Karen Buchanan gave assurances of the plans in place to manage attendance more effectively next year and how the behaviours of students post Covid has impacted attendance this year.

- 46 Jim Sutcliffe noted that the Staff turnover rate was more positive than the previous year, he asked what the plans were to reduce it further. Karen felt that the situation was still precarious and of concern, staff were continuing to go back to industry. Steve Wilkinson asked whether there was any analysis of why staff were leaving. Karen explained that the information is presented at every HR Committee.
- 47 Anita Wright, by email noted that she was interested to understand what methods to forecast student numbers have been used to determine the future financial plan, whether there was benchmarking data available from other colleges as it would provide useful context to our performance and that it was positive to see the reporting on environmental sustainability, are any other ESG measures outside of CO2 emissions being considered.
- 48 Stuart explained that the college builds up the next year's student numbers at a course by course level using data of progressions, applications, intended destinations and, prior year trends. For the later years we use a similar process but a slightly higher level which works differently depending on student type (ie for University we can do this better as they are with us for multiple years but for adult the courses are shorter). There is benchmarking data for some aspects across colleges which are used in various places but not necessarily for everything. On the sustainability measure; it is a summary indicator that is made up of various other measures, this will be discussed more when the annual Sustainability Statement is presented.
- 49 Richard Thorley, by email was keen to understand the reasons for the high level of withdrawals referred to in point 22, he recognised that apprentices are a key growth area for the College and believes there should be a full understanding of the reasons. Kate Wallace confirmed that she had responded to Richard with the details of each withdrawal and of any trends that are being presented.
- 50 Governors noted the content of the report.

Governors' Strategic Planning Overview Document

- 51 Simon Jordan advised members that this document provides a strategic brief on key issues affecting the College. Members were invited to question the relevant senior manager on any topics they wished further information on.
- 52 Attention was drawn to the increase in applications for a further year.
- 53 Governors were pleased to note the report.

Stakeholder Surveys

- 54 Sarah Crossley and Kate Wallace provided an overview of the context behind the formal and informal mechanisms in relation to the surveys and of the actions that had been implemented.

- 55 They concluded that to ensure consistency in the Quality of Education across the College, stakeholder surveys are embedded within the Colleges Quality cycle, to complement existing quality activities, such as learning walks, deep dives and divisional reviews
- feedback from stakeholder surveys enables the College to monitor the quality of provision from an employer, learner and parental perspective, to shape future programme developments.
 - stakeholder feedback is collated and analysed for patterns to inform staff development activity, contributing to curriculum Quality Improvement plans, in addition to divisional and College Self- Assessment Reports.
- 56 Jim Sutcliffe asked for more detail to be included, the report provides feedback not the key areas of development. Gillian Bardin requested that the report should include the percentage engagement figure in terms of the surveys returned.

Action: Kate Wallace

Single Equality Policy

- 57 Simon Jordan confirmed that most Governors have seen the policy previously as it is an annual report. This has been reviewed with no changes requested. The policy has been consulted through the Academic Board process and feedback obtained. During the teaching observations of staff the opportunities where equality and diversity were observed as outstanding practice are recorded and shared and this also forms part of the Divisional and Support area review processes undertaken by the Senior Management Team.
- 58 Simon updated governors on the work undertaken towards the Rainbow Flag following the training that took place at the Governors’ Strategic Residential in January 2023.
- 59 Governors unanimously approved the Single Equality Policy, proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by Philip Turner.

Approved by Chair, David Meakin	
Signed: David Meakin	Date: 22 September 2023
NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following Board meeting.	