



**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 24th APRIL 2018**

Present: Paul Smyth (Chair), Lucky Ali, Anna Barnish, Andrew Davies, Gary Doyle, Joanne Finnerty, Lorraine Jones, Sue Higginson (Principal), Tim Kelly, James King, Tony Mann, Joe McArdle, Jayne Winders

In attendance: Michael Norton, Deputy Principal
Steve Cain, Assistant Principal Finance
Will Jerram, Assistant Principal MIS
Alex Lang, Assistant Principal Quality
Ian James, Clerk to the Governors
Louise Scott-Kelly, Administrator to the Governors

APOLOGIES

208. Apologies were received from Maura Cummins and Richard Mawdsley.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

209. Joe McArdle declared an interest in any matters relating to the University of Chester.

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

210. The Principal updated the Board on the College's recent appeal against the ESFA claw back of funding with respect to 'community' provision. The provision included support for refugees and asylum seekers to learn English. In the appeal, the College had reasoned that the terms of the ESFA contract had been followed and that the provision responded to government priorities. Unfortunately, the appeal had been unsuccessful.

211. The Principal informed the Board that a Vice Principal from an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rated FE College, had visited the College to provide an English and maths presentation to all curriculum managers and to share good practice and strategies for improving attendance.

212. The Principal also informed the Board that Ian James, the Clerk to the Corporation, would be retiring from the College in the summer of 2018 after 19 years' service. The Principal assured the Board that they would be working together to find an appropriate replacement. The Principal would arrange a celebration in September 2018, to enable us to thank Ian for his invaluable contribution.

SHARING RECENT SUCCESSES

213. The Board received the routine report on the College's recent successes (copy attached to signed minutes). The Principal stated that FE News was going to publish an article referring to the College for having virtually no gender pay gap. In addition, FE News also praised the College for its Traineeships performance.

COLLEGE QIP UPDATE

214. The Assistant Principal Quality updated the Board on progress with the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) (copy attached to signed minutes). The QIP was developed from the Ofsted recommendations and SAR outcomes, therefore there was great focus on Apprenticeships. Since the QIP report had been written, the College had successfully recruited an Electrical Assessor.

215. The Board were informed that timetabling was developing well and that for the next academic year study programme students would be scheduled to spend three days in College rather than 2.5 days. English and maths was integral to progression and both the College and students felt that three days would provide more flexibility.

216. The Scrutiny Group had reviewed English and maths in detail and had requested a top level report on the College's position evidencing knowledge, skills and behaviour for apprenticeships and curriculum programmes.

217. Learning Walks continued to progress well. A governor commented that he had attended a maths Learning Walk followed by a visit to the Study Zone. The governor found the Study Zone to be vibrant and accommodating and found that the staff there were enthusiastic and engaging and they advised the governors to visit.

218. The Chair enquired how the College utilised the Virtual Learning Campus or other online resources for students who are unable to attend lessons. In addition, how the College analysed their usage. The Assistant Principal responded that students identified as carers, for example, were always directed to the Virtual Learning Campus. However, there was no specific digital footprint information that monitored students' online activity. This was part of a range of learning activities, recorded in their ILP.

219. Furthermore, the Assistant Principal MIS explained that the College tracked and monitored the progress of students with varying circumstances such as, Care to Lean, young parents or disadvantaged students, supported by Magenta Living. The data showed that there was little gap between them and their peers.

MATRIX RE-ACCREDITATION

220. The Principal introduced the Matrix re-accreditation report (copy attached to signed minutes). The Matrix Standard assessed how well the College provided students with information, advice and guidance (IAG) with regard to education, training and employment and was a requirement for funding. The Matrix assessed Student Services and Employer Services and was led by the Director of Student Services.

221. A governor referred to the 'Areas for Development' and how the College assessed its 'softer' outcomes, such as confidence and social skills. The Assistant Principal Quality explained that 'softer' skills were evidenced and updated regularly in the Individual Learner Reports (ILPs) and in the QIP.

222. The Principal explained that Student Services and Employer Services were assessed because they were independent of curriculum areas. The Matrix report stated that although the assessment focused on two areas, it was clear IAG was evident across the College. Therefore, it recommended that the next accreditation be cross-college. However, a cross-college assessment would be more expensive and the Board questioned if it would be cost effective.

BALANCED SCORECARD

223. The Deputy Principal presented the Balanced Scorecard (copy attached to signed minutes). There were six 'red' rated items; Apprenticeship income, HE Income, Income to plan, Absence Percentage and Attendance Rates on English and Maths programmes. The usual exception reports were provided.

224. The HE Income exception reported stated that the retention rate for full time students was 94.3%. The Chair queried the retention rates for part time students. The Deputy Principal agreed to provide the information at the next meeting.

225. Also, the Chair requested at the May Board meeting the estimated HE enrolment figures based on ILR's to evidence the cost effectiveness of the three new courses.

226. The Principal provided an update on the College's partnership with the University of Chester. The University's student healthcare resource was going to be relocating near the College campuses and the closer proximity would provide opportunities to offer more resources and joint teaching. The College continue to build upon the partnership and this will be another positive aspect.

TERM 2 STUDENT VOICE FEEDBACK

227. The Board received the Term 2 Student Voice Feedback report provided by the Student Engagement Manager (copy attached to signed minutes). The Principal, Chair and Vice Chair also shared feedback from the recent Student Executive Committee that they had attended.

228. The Student Executive was very complimentary to staff across all areas. However, there was an isolated case of a small number of disruptive students and some students were concerned that staff may be too tolerant towards them. The Board were informed that the students referred to had individual issues of which their classmates were unaware. The Wirral had a high percentage of excluding students and the College wanted to retain the students and help them achieve so had invested in recruiting more mentors and creating 'Time Out' spaces.

229. A governor questioned if the disruptive students could be taught separately. The Safeguarding Manager explained that the mentors could support them in the Study Zone, but that they were not qualified teachers. Their role was to help reengage the student to return to class.

230. The Board noted the report and asked for their thanks to be passed to the Student Engagement Manager.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

231. The Deputy Principal updated the Board with the Term 2 review of the Health and Safety Risk Register (copy attached to signed minutes). He explained that the cross-curriculum approach to Health and Safety had improved the College's safety record. Hospitality and Catering accidents had decreased and there had been no accidents reported in Construction.

232. There were 64 near miss accidents reported. The Deputy Principal referred to one near miss incident following a student repeatedly jumping on a section of the safety barrier above the stairwell at Wirral Waters campus. The building contractors had since fixed the problem.

233. The Chair enquired about the ongoing issue with the extractor fan at Wirral Waters. Although the interim replacement was entirely safe, the Chair requested a date of completion.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE MINUTES

Board Meeting

234. **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

Governance & Search Committee

235. The Board received the minutes of the Governance & Search Committee meeting held on 19th March 2018. The Board were notified that the College had received several applications to be considered for 1st September 2018. In addition, the Governance & Search Committee recommended to the Board the reappointment of the Joe McArdle as an external governor for another four year term.

236. **Resolved** that Joe McArdle be reappointed as an external governor for a four year term of office commencing on 1 August 2018

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 21st May 2018