

Barnet and Southgate College Corporation

Board of Governors Meeting 3 October 2017

Minutes

Time	18.30 – 18.55	
Venue	Southgate Campus boardroom	
Present (governors)	Ann Zinkin Graham Duncan David Byrne Mervin Archer Sue Baldwin Sheila Dawson Bernard Manson Christalla Tsattala	Chair Vice Chair Principal and CEO Staff Governor
In attendance	Toni Beck Stephen Forster Lizzie Jones Tracy McIntosh Melissa Drayson	Dir Quality and Learner Experience Dir Finance and Corporate Ops Dir of Organisational Development Dir of Employer Partnerships Clerk to the Corporation
Apologies	Fiona Bulmer Peter Harrison	Dir of Curriculum
Vacancies	Student Governors External Governor	

Item	Action lead
1. Preliminary Items Chair's welcome and introduction	
<p>The Chair welcomed Melissa Drayson to her first meeting as Clerk and governors introduced themselves. Melissa gave a brief introduction, including her background and experience as a FE Clerk and Company Secretary.</p>	
<p>It was noted that Zubair Bazwan was eligible to remain as Student Governor for the second year of his term of office, and it was being established whether he wished to continue.</p>	
<p>Governors were thanked for their attendance at student functions, including the recent graduation ceremony. The presence of governors was much appreciated by staff and students.</p>	

The Chair reported that she had joined, with the agreement of the Board, the AOC London Regional Board. It was hoped that her involvement would have benefits for the College.

1.i Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Fiona Bulmer. Peter Harrison (Director of Curriculum) was also unavailable for the meeting.

1.ii Confirmation of eligibility, quorum and declarations of interests

It was confirmed that all present were eligible to take part in the meeting, there were no new declarations of interests and the meeting was quorate.

1.iii Notification of urgent items of other business

None received.

2. Minutes

2.i Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2017

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record and, subject to amendment of one minor typo, were signed by the Chair.

2.ii Matters arising and any outstanding actions

All key actions had been completed or were in progress. Clarification was provided on the size of the contract with one subcontractor (item 5).

ACTIONS:

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| i. | Another tour of Southgate Campus would be arranged for governors unable to attend on 30 September. | Principal |
| ii. | That reformatted Management Accounts would be brought to the November meeting | DFCO |

3. Assurance items

3.i Principal's Report

Supporting paper presented by David Byrne, Principal and CEO

The Board noted the report and there was further discussion of the following:

- Enrolment had started well across the board and was particularly strong for adult learners.
- Curriculum areas where recruitment was less strong included Hair and Beauty and Motor Vehicle. In the latter case, there was a lot of interest but numbers had been capped until quality issues were addressed.

- Staff involved in the KPMG and Skills Funding Agency (SFA) learner numbers audits were thanked for their hard work and responsiveness. Both audits had gone well.
- The Board noted progress on the strategy to develop Assisted Living Technologies provision, including the building of key partnerships and the potential development of Higher Apprenticeships and Foundation Degrees.
- Frustration was shared about the number of individual skills strategies in place across London, and the absence of the co-ordination encouraged by the Area Review. The College would continue to co-operate with other providers and agencies to encourage a coherent approach.
- Of the many student highlights reported, it had been particularly inspiring to hear from former students who were launching a branded merchandising company, and to note the significant part that BSC had played in their success
- There were several challenges ahead in terms of changes to qualifications and policy, but the College was in a strong position to meet them.
- The current picture in terms of college mergers and strategic alliances was noted. Governors were shown a tube map with clusters of colleges marked geographically. The College would continue to be open to any discussions which would lead to a pan-London approach to create clear curriculum pathways.

3.ii. **Enrolment update**

Supporting paper by Lizzie Jones, Dir of Org Development

An update was provided. 16-18 numbers continued to rise slowly. It was explained that internal targets were set above funding targets to allow for drop-outs. Both 19+ funded student numbers and adult learning loans were on target.

In response to governor questions, it was confirmed that, following a detailed review, the HE recruitment target had been reduced. Numbers were increasing and there was confidence that the target would be achieved by February 2018.

4. **Learner Experience**

4.i **Safeguarding Annual Report 16-17 and policy review**

Supporting paper by Toni Beck, Dir of Quality and Learner Experience

Thanks were recorded to Fiona Bulmer for her contribution throughout the year as designated Safeguarding Governor. She had

given rigorous challenge in terms of monitoring the completion of actions by the team. Her comments on the two policies presented for approval had been incorporated.

The general finding, which was shared across Colleges, was that the number of referrals, the complexity of issues and the number of students with mental health issues was getting worse. The ability of the Safeguarding team in dealing with increasing challenges was commended.

There was further discussion of the following:

- Agreement that comparative data from previous years would be included in future reports.
- Confirmation that MASH stood for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Confirmation that The Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy was effective. There had been few cases in the previous year.
- Work was underway to share data anonymously between Colleges to identify common issues. Governors were pleased to see a strong mental health strategy being put in place and suggested that good practice in schools might be explored.
- Reasons for the gender difference in service access may reflect a greater reluctance among males to self-refer.
- Concern was expressed that the reduction in Prevent referrals might reflect the unpopularity of the legislation among some people.
- There was a high level of engagement with Barnet Council although pressures at Council level was having an impact on speed of response and college staff workload.

There was a discussion about the need for future standing items on Safeguarding, along with other key legislative areas. It was considered that the safeguarding report might be scheduled to tie in with the Safeguarding Governor's meetings and that, at other meetings, an exception-reporting approach be taken.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **That the revised Safeguarding Policy be approved.**
- (ii) **That the revised Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy be approved.**

ACTIONS:

- i. **That the need for refresher governor training in Safeguarding and Prevent be explored.** Clerk
- ii. **That a standing item on Safeguarding, Prevent, Equality and Diversity and Health and Safety be scheduled, with substantive reports from the ELG and lead governors as required.** Clerk

4ii Annual Teaching and Learning Report
Supporting paper by Director of Quality and Learner Experience

Governors thanked the DQ&LE for a useful report. It was particularly interesting to see feedback from staff who had been through the new Developmental Observation of Teaching and Learning Scheme (DOTLA) process

The overall conclusion was that DOTLA had made a positive impact on teaching and learning. The focus would be widened in the current year to include tutorial and enrichment activity.

In response to governor questions it was clarified that there was guidance and training available to staff to ensure that lesson observation was tailored to the point in time and other expectations for different subjects.

It was agreed that there would be considerable value in governors shadowing Lesson Observations, and for governor feedback to be brought back to the Board.

AGREED: governors interested in shadowing a Lesson Observation to contact the DQ&LE via the Clerk.

Govs

4iii Higher Level Skills National Student Survey 2017
Supporting paper by the Director of Curriculum

The report was presented by the Principal in the absence of the Director of Curriculum. Overall the response to the National Student Survey (NSS) has been very positive, with levels of satisfaction above national average in most areas. The one area scoring below national average was Learning Resources, specifically library resources.

Governors asked about the 75% satisfaction with the Student Union. This question was interpreted as referring to the Student Rep. system.

The outcomes would help with the aim to achieve gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). In response to governor questions, it was confirmed that there was a large overlap, but some differences, between the two frameworks.

Governors commented that the positive feedback reflected their conversations with graduates at the recent graduation.

The Board saw the results as testimony to the commitment of staff, sometimes beyond the call of duty, and asked that governors' thanks be passed on to staff.

5. Audit Committee

5i Report from meeting on 21 September 2017
Audit Committee Minutes presented by the Chair of AC.

The Board noted that this had been an additional meeting to pick up three outstanding Internal Audit Reports. The outcomes of these audits were contained within the Minutes but no concerns had been raised.

The Board noted the recommendations of the Committee relating to monitoring of governor attendance, and the need to undertake a Governance Self- Assessment.

An evaluation of the skills on the Committee showed an adequate level of accountancy skills. It was considered, however, that banking experience would be helpful. Two expressions of interest had been received from Governors in joining the Committee.

There was also a need to fill the vacancy for a co-opted member with sector audit experience from outside the college.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **the Board approved the Audit Committee recommendation that a governance self assessment be undertaken with discussion at the December Board Away Day** Clerk
- (ii) **that Mervin Archer be appointed to serve on the Audit Committee.**

5ii Update on outstanding audit recommendations

Oral report by Chair of Audit; supporting paper by the DFCO

The Chair clarified two points relating to outstanding actions:

- The reference to completion of capital monitoring reports actually related to post capital project completion evaluations. These were awaited for the LLDD project and Colindale.
- The Fire risk assessment paper was considered useful. However, governors' concerns had related specifically to actions following the Grenfell Tower fire to provide assurance about fire safety.

In both bases, it was confirmed that information had been sought from third parties which would enable a report to be brought to the November Board meeting.

Governors asked that the Board should be alerted should Priority 1 (high) audit recommendations become overdue, especially those relating to fire safety and health and safety. There had, however, been very few Priority 1s and all had been dealt with to date.

ACTIONS: that final reports on Post-Completion Capital Project Evaluation and Post-Grenfell fire risk assessments be brought to the November Board meeting. DFCO

Strategic Items

6. Proposed KPIs 2017-18

Supporting paper by the Principal

Similar KPIs were presented as 2016-17, with the inclusion of the new accountability measures.

Governors also noted that A Levels targets would be set against the best providers rather than benchmarks, which would provide an appropriate level of stretch.

Governors raised the following points and questions:

- The point was made that progress scores would need particular attention, as this had been an area for improvement in previous years;
- Targets and measures of success for disadvantaged students should be clearly articulated
- The use of employer engagement as evidence of work placement was questioned. The college would need to ensure that all engagement activities were sufficiently substantial;
- Whilst the counting of authorised absence as a positive attendance was supported, governors asked at what point persistent authorised absence might be flagged as a problem. It was confirmed that both sets of figures were picked up in individual student assessment.
- It was confirmed that the KPIs would be double checked against the new strategic plan to ensure that they aligned.
- Targets for the year would be proposed following the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) return on 20 October.

ACTIONS:

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|------|---|-----|
| (i) | That measures would be proposed to assess progress in disadvantaged students. | ELG |
| (ii) | That targets for 2017-18, set against three-year trend data, would be brought back to the November Board meeting for approval. | ELG |

7. Annual Finance Strategy 2017 -18

Supporting paper by the DFCO

The Board noted that the Strategy remained unchanged from the previous year.

RESOLVED: that the Financial Strategy 2017-18 be approved

8 Property Update

Oral report by the Principal

The governor tour of Southgate Campus had been very helpful in terms of sharing ideas about the quality of the campus, future space requirements and current fitness for purpose. Board approval was sought for the proposal that the college's property advisors be asked to present ideas and options to the November Board meeting.

RESOLVED: that a campus options report be commissioned and presented to the Board at its November meeting

Principal

9 Board and Committee membership 2017-18

Supporting paper by the Clerk

The Clerk tabled a corrected Committee membership list. There were some discrepancies between membership and the terms of reference of the Search and Remuneration Committees and these would be resolved. It was also noted that Bernard Manson's end of term of office should be clarified. The proposed actions were agreed.

ACTIONS:

- i. **That the skills audit should be reviewed**
- ii. **That a recruitment plan for up to two external governors should be put in place, according to the skills needs of the Board**
- iii. **That the Committee membership and chairing arrangements for 2017-18 be approved.**

Clerk
Clerk

10. Urgent other business notified in advance

There were no items of other business.

11. Upcoming dates for college events

The dates were noted. Governors were particularly encouraged to attend the Student Awards Ceremony on 23 November.

The first part of the meeting concluded at 8.15pm.

Signed:(Chair)