

## Barnet and Southgate College Corporation

### Board of Governors Meeting 18 January 2017

#### Minutes

<b>Time</b>	18.30 – 22.20	
<b>Venue</b>	Southgate Campus Board Room	
<b>Present (governors)</b>	Ann Zinkin David Byrne Mervin Archer Sue Baldwin Fiona Bulmer Sheila Dawson Graham Duncan Bernard Manson Christalla Tsattala Pooja Patel Sebahatin Karaasanov	Chair Principal    Vice Chair  Staff Governor Student Governor Student Governor
<b>In attendance</b>	Toni Beck Peter Harrison Lizzie Jones Tracy McIntosh Ian Rule Melissa Drayson	Dir Quality and Learner Experience Dir of Curriculum Dir of Organisational Development Dir of Employer Partnerships Dir Finance and Corporate Ops d Clerk to the Corporation
<b>Apologies</b>	None	
<b>Vacancies</b>	External Governor x 2	
<b>Quorum (6)</b>	The meeting was quorate	

*The published minutes contain some redactions on the grounds of*

Item	Action lead
<p><b>Pre-Board Briefing – The LLDD (Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities) Centre of Excellence</b>  <i>Presentation by David Holloway – LLDD Centre Manager.</i>  <i>Powerpoint circulated following the meeting</i></p> <p>Governors commented positively on the energy and enthusiasm displayed by staff in running the centre. In response to governors' questions, it was confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students were mainly assessed through outreach work in schools</li> <li>• The centre provided specialist education and support for 16-24 year olds though most students joined when they were eighteen</li> </ul>	

- Most students currently received on average three years of Local Authority funding
- Student academic achievement was measured through Promonitor, as with all students. Each student had individual targets which were linked to their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- The Centre had experienced an increase in referrals of students with profound and complex challenges and meeting these types of need required regular physical adaptations
- The Centre was subject to the same quality processes as all others in addition to the raft of SEND/medical assessments.

David Holloway was thanked by the Board for a fascinating and illuminating presentation.

## 1. Preliminary Items

### 1.i Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed governors and staff to the meeting. She stated that, although 2017 had had some challenges, there was much to be enthusiastic about in 2018. The key focus was to ensure the best outcomes for all students.

Despite the discussion in December, management still received a high level of advance questions by email. As a trial in February, therefore, governors would be invited to book a telephone call with a member of ELG to raise questions, instead of emailing. A summary of all telephone conversations would then be prepared and circulated to the Board.

**AGREED: that item 6ii would be considered as a Part B confidential item on the grounds of personal sensitivity.**

### 1.ii Apologies for absence

No apologies were received

### 1.iii 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.iv Notification of urgent items of other business

None received.

## 2. Minutes

### 2.i Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2017

Item 6: A query had been raised in advance questions about regarding the wording, "the receipt from the sale of Graseby House had not yet been included in the cashflow". The DFCCO explained

the rationale for not including the sum at the time that the accounts were produced. This explanation was accepted by the Board and no amendment was required.

Subject to minor correction of one typo, the minutes were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

## 2.ii **Matters arising and any outstanding actions**

*Supporting paper by the Clerk*

It was noted that all actions were either completed, in progress or not yet due for report. There was further discussion of the following:

Item 7: A request had been made in advanced questions for a report on the future of Motor Vehicle, and a Board discussion on whether such a decision to phase out an area of provision should be reserved to the Board. It was clarified [redacted]. The Board would be kept informed of progress on this through the Principal's report.

9 November. Item 3i. The Principal confirmed that the Property Strategy would be brought back to the Board as part of the strategic review discussed earlier that day during the Strategy Day.

It was noted that an action from the Away Day had been to commission an external review of the fire safety schedule which had been brought to the Board in November. This had been supported by the College's legal adviser.

**AGREED: that an external review report of fire safety measures would be brought to the Board with the next Health and Safety report in March 2018**

DFCO

## 3. **Board strategy day outputs: Organisational Review**

*Presentation by the Principal and CEO – powerpoint circulated to governors following the meeting.*

Key points were:

- The Board had provided a clear steer at the Strategy Day to pursue a stand-alone strategy.
- It had originally been intended that weaker areas of provision would be addressed through the process of merger. These would now be prioritised for improvement and change.
- A stock-take had been undertaken at the end of 2017 which had included staff comments and feedback.
- An honest review of structures and processes in the context of changes in the external landscape was being performed by ELG. Process mapping would be performed in key operational areas.

- In the run-up to producing the 2018-19 budget, a range of options would be brought to the Board in March 2018 which would influence the final budget and provide a solid base for the next three-years
- The College would remain committed to exploring new opportunities for partnership and collaboration, particularly those with a commercial focus
- Staff communications would be maintained, with staff being asked to input at appropriate points in the process

Governors asked a range of questions to clarify the scope of the review. It was considered that, although stand-alone had been the preference, nothing should be ruled out at this stage and should partnerships offer a clear advantage they should not be ignored. The focus on process-mapping, to identify areas of strength and weakness, and opportunities for efficiencies, was welcomed.

A question was raised about how the organisational review and the board-led strategic planning process identified in the governance plan (Item 12) linked together. Further discussion of this is minuted under item 12.

**AGREED: that an options paper arising from the organisational review would be brought to the Board on 27 March.** DB

4. **Principal's Report**  
*Supporting paper presented by the Principal*

The report was taken as read and the following key points were noted and discussed:

5.1 The Board was delighted to learn that the College had had another teacher nominated for the TES Teacher of the Year award.

6.2 The joint work with other colleges on the Heathrow Skills Task Force should send a message of flexibility and strategic responsiveness

7.2 There was concern that some London Boroughs might not meet the costs of delivering teaching and support to some LLDD High Needs Students in future. The Board would be updated on action being taken to ensure that these students were able to continue to access the high standard of provision at the College.

7.3 The College had received a significantly reduced allocation for new non-levied apprenticeship provision due to the ESFA budget having been heavily oversubscribed. It was noted that all providers had been affected with some good/outstanding colleges receiving no allocation at all until April 2019, when all employers would have access to the levy pot. The impact on the budget and forecasts would be assessed and scope for savings to mitigate this reduction identified.

Other consequences of this reduction were that demand from SMEs for apprentices was not being met, and that smaller training providers which lacked the infrastructure and capacity to absorb the funding reduction were going bust. The Association of Colleges (AOC) and the Association of Employers and Learning Providers (AELP) were both lobbying government on the issue.

The DfE consultation document on the Insolvency Regime for FE and Sixth-Form Colleges was noted. This had potential consequences for financially weak colleges

**AGREED: Governors to submit any comments on the DfE consultation document to the Clerk by 10 February.**

Govs

5. **KPI Report**

*Supporting papers by the Director of Employer Partnerships*

Two KPIs were in the red sector during the month: English and Maths attendance and 16-18 Learners Numbers:

The positive impact of the texting initiative on English and Maths attendance was noted. There had been a 2% increase in attendance compared to those not part of the initiative. The plan was now to roll this out to other curriculum areas.

Governors asked if January enrolment would offset the slight decline in 16-18 learner numbers. It was confirmed that this should be the case

It was noted that risks to operational surplus (green rated) relating to fee income and adult provision were currently being reviewed.

6. **Finance Reports**

*Supporting papers by the DFCO*

**6.i Management Accounts – Period 4, November 2017**

The updated format was noted and commended for its clarity. There was discussion of the 2017/18 revised forecast which showed the net effect of changes in income and expenditure. An example was the impact of the reduction in apprenticeship allocation. Savings of [redacted] non-pay and [redacted] pay were suggested

Governors discussed the unbudgeted cost [redacted] to settle a dispute [redacted]. This reflected a change to the previous advice that the college did not have to pay the claim, which led to the provision being taken off the books. Although the college could have legally contested the sum, a decision was made to settle.

An analysis of aged debtors was currently underway and an update would be reported to the Board in February.

**6ii Capital Approval SG M Block Phase 2**

*Minuted confidentially as a Part B item*

**7. Quality and the Learner Experience**

**7i Student governor update**

*Oral update by the Student Governors*

Student governors gave positive feedback about the use of different teaching methodologies in the classroom.

Main concerns related to the lack of quiet study areas, including the library which was often busy and noisy. It was noted, however, that teachers would always accommodate students' requests to use classrooms for quiet study. The issue had been a subject of discussion at a recent student representative meeting.

The frequency of fire alarms at Wood Street was a further concern in terms of impact on lessons. Management responded that this had been caused by a fault in the system which was being addressed.

The student governors were thanked for a helpful update and were invited to bring a brief report to each Board meeting.

**AGREED: that a Student Governor report be provided as a standing item to each monthly Board meeting.**

**7ii Quality Improvement Plan 2017-18**

*Supporting paper presented by the DQ&LE*

The QIP had been produced to address the areas of improvement identified in the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), which was approved by the Board in December. The summary report presented was underpinned by a detailed plan which provided more information about responsibilities, timelines and mini milestones. The QIP was monitored regularly and reviewed to reflect progress to date.

Governors raised questions on the following:

- Was there sufficient resource devoted to monitoring and supporting High Risk Learners? Governors were informed that monitoring systems such as Promonitor and ProBoard were being put to more effective use to record and support students' individual progress and performance. The tutorial system was used to put together the strategy for each high risk student. Tutors were able to escalate "at risk" students to a higher level should the indicators suggest they required more support. The appointment of a new tutorial lead had already had a positive impact, including delivering training sessions to tutors.

- What do students think of the increased emphasis on learner progress? The student governors confirmed that their teachers were setting monitoring targets consistently. The resilient-learner initiative was also mentioned, which provided students with the tools to persevere if they encountered obstacles to their learning.
- Are we being sufficiently ambitious in our target grade setting for motor vehicle? This was considered realistic and reflective of the positive aspects to the course including high attendance and good quality assessment.

## 8. **Draft Curriculum Strategy**

*Supporting paper by the Director of Curriculum*

Governors welcomed the strategy. The question was raised, however, whether this should have been produced after a governor-led strategic review process had been concluded. Other governors took the view, however, that the Board had engaged in several strategic discussions during the previous 12-18 months about the educational character of the college, and that the Curriculum Strategy was a welcome step forward in terms of translating this vision into a tangible plan for the College. In recognition of the possibility that not all governors had been party to these discussions, a summary 'statement' would be produced, which would set out the Board's strategic position.

The following points were noted and discussed:

- It was proposed and agreed that the timescale for the Strategy should be extended to 2021
- Given the current external challenges in the sector, it was important to build flexibility and responsiveness into the plan.
- The Curriculum Strategy would evolve in line with the organisational review, with the Review influencing the final options for delivery within each area of provision
- It was noted that Learner Destinations would be one measure of success. The EFSA and Ofsted definitions of 'positive destinations' would be used, although it was acknowledged that the College's own ambitions for its students may go beyond these definitions
- Governors asked that there should be clear alignment between the final versions of the Curriculum Strategy and People Strategy
- Governors sought more information about the proposed Colindale Management Centre. It was explained that this would potentially be developed from a commercial partnership which would be designed to offer ACCA, FMCA and CIPD courses for the College on a profit-share basis. Take-up for these courses was anticipated to be very high.

**AGREED:**

Clerk/

- (i) **that a summary of the Board's strategic considerations at Away Days over the past 18 months would be brought back to the Board as part of the process for the 2018-2021 Plan.**
- (ii) **That the Draft Curriculum Strategy be ratified by the Board**

## **9. Human Resources**

*Supporting papers by the Director of Organisational Development*

### **9.i Annual Human Resources Report**

The Board noted the activities that had taken place during the previous year, and the priorities for 2017-18. Of particular interest was the work of, and value provided by, the staff Change Maker group. The Change Maker group would be instrumental in driving forward changes in culture, processes and ways of working across the College.

Governors asked how staff survey outcomes would be acted upon. One action would be to ensure that outcomes informed forthcoming staff policy review. An action plan had been developed to address specific issues raised, particularly in relation to communication from ELG and feedback on performance. It was reported that the appraisal process had been reviewed and a move away from annual appraisal to more frequent performance conversations was being trialled.

### **9ii Draft People Strategy**

Governors received the report, which they considered clear, positive and appropriately ambitious. There was discussion of some of the targets and measures of success. Governors asked how the target that 95% of vocational teaching staff would have recent industry experience would be achieved. Staff would receive development through both internal development days and a placement programme. The staff governor testified to the value of the placement programme in child care.

**RESOLVED: that the People Strategy 2017-2020 be approved.**

## **10. Safeguarding Update**

*Supporting paper presented by the DQLE and the Safeguarding Governor*

The Board noted that the number of safeguarding referrals remained consistent with the same period the previous year, but that the caseload had proved more complex and challenging. Mental Health provided the largest category of referrals. The expertise within the team had helped to identify female students at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and to support the pan-London policy investigation into this matter.



**11. Capital Reporting and Delegated Authorities**  
*Supporting paper by the Clerk and DFCCO*

There was discussion of the proposed limitation on approval of variances by the Principal, of £100k including cumulative variances in the space of one month. It was clarified that the £100k reflected the limit on approval of variances within the financial regulations.

The following suggestions were made:

- That the limit on the permitted variance should be either 10% of the project value, or £100k, whichever was the greater
- That the trigger for Board approval would be £100k over any given period, rather than within one calendar month.

It was considered that the monthly report should enable governors to track the approval of variances and pick up on any over-use of this provision and to review and adjust the policy if required.

**RESOLVED: that the Major Capital Projects Executive Limitations Policy be approved but kept under review and adjusted if the monthly cap on variance is found not to be workable.**

**12. Governance action plan 2017-18**  
*Supporting paper by the Clerk*

The Board viewed the action plan as an accurate reflection of the key outcomes of the governance self-assessment and Away Day discussion. There was discussion, however, of the contention by one governor that the strategic planning process should be led by the Board, rather than the Principal and ELG. It was noted that the Articles set out that it was the responsibility of the Principal to make proposals to the Board on the educational character and mission of the institution. The majority of governors stated that they were comfortable with this.

The Clerk pointed out that the Action Plan was a high level, flexible and organic document which could be revised at any time or expanded into a more detailed plan for any element.

**AGREED: that a more detailed plan for the Strategic planning process would be shared with governors**

Clerk/P

**13. Urgent Other Business**

There was no other business.

*The Staff and Student Governors and all staff in attendance other than the Principal, Director of Finance and Clerk left the meeting before the Part B discussion.*

Signed: .....(Chair)