Barnet and Southgate College Corporation
Board of Governors Meeting
25th March 2021

MINUTES

Time	18.15: Pre-Board briefing on the NFL Sports Partnership 18.30: Board of Governors meeting	
Venue	By videoconferencing and in Wood Street	
Governors present (Quorum: 6) ***attended by Zoom**	Adam Goldstein	Chair
	Alessandra Almeida-Jones*	
	Mervin Archer*	
	Sue Baldwin*	
	Fiona Bulmer	
	Sheila Dawson	
	Graham Duncan*	Vice Chair
	Imelda Galvin*	
	Jenny Jarvis*	
	Darren Mepham	Chief Executive
	Sakina Quettawala	Student Governor
	Cait O'Riordan*	
	Christalla Tsattala*	Staff Governor
	Ann Zinkin*	
In attendance	Neil Coker*	Principal and Assistant CE (P/DCE)
	Tracey MacIntosh*	Exec Director Commercial (EDC)
	Mark Sellis*	Exec Director Corp Services (EDCS)
	Melissa Drayson*	Clerk to the Corporation
	Seni Majekodunmi	NFL (pre-board briefing only)
	Tom Kiley	NFL (pre-board briefing only)
Apologies	Nana Brew	
	Mark Sweeny	
	Ezgi Yaman Ozturk	

Some items have been redacted in the published version on the grounds of commercial or personal sensitivity.

PART A:

Item		Action lead
0.	**Pre-board briefing on the NFL Sports Partnership** *Seni Majekodunmi and Tom Kiley*	

A summary of the presentation and governor Q&A is provided as an appendix to the Minutes. The presentation slides were circulated to governors after the meeting.

1. Preliminary Items

Consent was granted for the meeting to be recorded to assist with the minutes.

1.1 Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. He noted the lengthy agenda and reminded colleagues that papers would be taken as read to allow time for discussion.

1.2 Apologies for absence and quorum.

Apologies were as listed above. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate

1.3 Confirmation of eligibility 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

1.4 Notification of urgent items of other business

There had been no advance requests to raise any other business.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

i. Meetings on 27th and 28th January

There was one correction to the attendance at the 28th January meeting. Subject to this amendment:

The minutes of the Board meetings on 27 January and 28 January were APPROVED as a correct record. Confidential sections were confirmed.

ii. Matters arising and outstanding actions

Supporting paper by Melissa Drayson, Clerk

Progress against and completion of actions was noted, including those covered on the agenda. The Equality & Diversity report would now be brought to the May Board meeting.

3. Chief Executive's Report

Supporting paper by Darren Mepham, CE

The Board noted the paper, which focussed on the FE White Paper, Return to Learning, Matrix Accreditation; the most recent Corporate Risk Register and the monthly KPI report that had been circulated by email previously. Governors raised questions and challenges on the following:

- There was discussion of the need to identify opportunities for growth post-Covid, including those that would arise from an improvement in Ofsted grade to Good (e.g. T-Levels) . Governors would welcome a clear idea of the routes, progression pathways and resource requirements of different options. It would be important to link any proposals back to the strategic plan. Management responded that ELT were developing the curriculum plan for 2021-22. This would include consideration of new and future opportunities, including T Levels. It was noted that the first tranche of T Levels was due to start in September in other colleges, and it would be useful to learn from their experience. Proposed changes to the qualifications framework would also play a part in future curriculum decisions;
- Examples were given where management had responded quickly to new opportunities in the current year, including the Lifetime Skills Guarantee with new courses starting in April, and successful bidding for ESF funding;
- An employer engagement strategy was also being developed. It was not yet clear how the 'commissioning role of employers', proposed in the White Paper, would be implemented, but it would be important to ensure that the college was central to these discussions.
- It was confirmed that full Ofsted inspection would recommence in September. The college was preparing for a likely visit in late Autumn 2021/early Spring 2022.

Return to Learning

Governors congratulated management on their handling of return to learning and mass testing. Questions were raised about measures to address gaps in learning. A mixed approach was being employed, including teaching beyond the end of term, early enrolment for September to establish support needs before the new term began,

All students would receive a guaranteed progression pledge to enable them to move up to the next level.

Corporate Risk Register

The Audit Committee had discussed the risk register in detail at its recent meeting, as set out in the draft minutes (Item 7). The Committee had expressed concern that the residual score for finance risks remained 'red' after mitigating actions were taken. It was also recognised that the Business Improvement Plan was a key mitigating tool for financial stability and growth. In addition, governors suggested that the risk around employer engagement/White Paper should be added to the register.

There was discussion of the Board's risk appetite. Whereas this was currently low in terms of financial risk, it was recognised that risks would need to be taken in order to achieve growth.

Matrix Accreditation

The Board asked that their thanks be passed to staff for the successful Matrix accreditation.

February KPIs

The Board noted the commentary accompanying the February KPIs. It was confirmed that indicator for year-end student outcomes was based on predicted pass rates based on teachers' judgements, and not achievement. This reflected a recommendation from the recent data integrity internal audit report. The forecast was slightly worse than previous months, with an amber rating indicating that more students were being identified at risk of not passing. The rating was, however, expected to fluctuate throughout the year.

An additional indicator for retention had been added. Data had been subject to detailed scrutiny by the QTSEG. The rating was Green. Attendance also remained Green, although there had been a small decline on the previous two months.

Growth in sector-based work academies had been strong, with income £100k above budget. This was therefore rated Green. Conversely, both apprenticeship and ESOL recruitment had been hit hard by the latest lockdown, had not achieved planned income growth and were rated Red.

Financial indicators for income and predicted year end deficit were both under budget and continued to be rated Red. The cash balance was rated Green (above profiled cashflow) partly due to a one-off grant related to Covid.

AGREED: That further consideration be given to the best place for oversight and discussion of the strategic objective of growth within the governance structure. AG/MD

4. Quality and the Student Experience

4.1 Quality, Teaching and Student Experience Group report – 11th February and 18th March
Presented by the QTSEG Chair

The Board noted the minutes and summary of the 11th February meeting. The Chair of QTSEG provided a verbal overview of the meeting on 18th March. It was reported that the data being provided to the Group was of a high quality and very informative. This represented a major step in the right direction. The Group had enquired about the inclusion of value-added data. The Principal reported that all students were being monitored against individual stretch targets. If the stretch targets were achieved, this would be evidence of positive value-added. A project was also underway to apply the ALIS value-added programme for A-Level students more effectively.

There had been discussion of relaunching the governor engagement strategy with a half-day governor immersion visit for all governors in the summer term.

The Board noted the recommendations relating to the HE Self Evaluation Document (SED) and the Office for Students (OFS) requirement to report compliance to governors on consumer law in the context of the pandemic

AGREED:

(i) **Dates for summer term governor immersion visit to be agreed.**

(ii) **That the Higher Education Self Evaluation Document be APPROVED**

(iii) **That the OFS Covid compliance statement be APPROVED.**

4.2 Student Governor report

Presentation by the Student Governors

The report had been put together by the two student governors, with input from the three campus lead reps and the 283 course reps. Course rep forums had been held in late January, attended by 61 people. Governors noted the student voice mechanisms put in place, plans to reach a wider range of students and raise awareness of who the course reps, campus reps and student governors are.

A ‘you said, we did’ approach was being taken to student feedback.

An important issue that had been raised by students was around safety on campus, especially for female students in the light of the Sarah Everard murder and the national focus on women’s safety. Many students had reported that they did not feel safe leaving campus on dark evenings. This had triggered discussions about better lighting and increased visibility of college security personnel. Other actions being taken developing included tutorial content around the issues. The importance of influencing male student awareness and behaviour was agreed.

Management confirmed that the comments about testing had been fed back to the testing company. Governors considered that the point made about the lack of social space deserved further attention in the light of continued social distancing rules. Concern was raised that, if there were no designated spaces on campus for students to socialise and eat safely, they would congregate in groups in the street or other public spaces and cause a potential annoyance.

The Student Governors were thanked for an informative report. Governors asked how they might be involved in the 'you said, we did' loop to gauge the difference the new student feedback mechanism was making to the student experience.

AGREED: That an update on key student issues should be brought to each meeting SQ/ EY0

4.3 Safeguarding

Termly safeguarding update
Supporting paper presented by the Principal

Governors noted the report and raised a number of questions:

- Assurance was sought about support for victims of sexual violence who might come forward in the wake of the Sarah Everard murder. Management reported confidence that the institutional response and underlying safeguarding processes were solid, but the issue would be kept under review and any increase in cases would be reported back to governors.

- The increase in referrals from community link and LLDD was queried. This was due to an increase in reporting following the centralisation of LLDD safeguarding within the college team, and the appointment of a safeguarding specialist within LLDD.

Safeguarding Policy
Supporting paper presented by the Principal

In accordance with the action from the previous Board meeting, the Safeguarding Policy had been reviewed against the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance. The Safeguarding Governor had read through and endorsed the final version.

RESOLVED: That the Safeguarding Policy 20-21 be APPROVED.

5. Human Resources and Organisational Development Report
Supporting paper presented by the Exec Director Corporate Services

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

- It had been some time since the Board had discussed the People Strategy, and that new governors had not seen it, it was suggested that it would be helpful to have a focus on it at a future Board meeting.

- Governors asked whether there were plans to retain flexible working after the pandemic. Unions and the Head of HR had been working together to identify the benefits from the previous year of home working, whilst ensuring that there were sufficient opportunities for staff to come together in person. An onsite staff development day would be held in July if possible. A remote working policy had now been agreed.

- It was noted that sickness and turnover data was not included in the report. The Board agreed that it was important to report periodically on HR KPIs, especially turnover and sickness absence, possibly using a dynamic approach so that only a variance triggered a report. The staff Health and Safety committee had received data on sickness absence regularly during Covid.

- The first meeting of welfare and wellbeing group had taken place that day, with participation by all union reps. The object was to influence a positive organisational culture through a focus on wellbeing. Positive feedback had already been received from an external Quality consultant on a perceived shift in culture.

- In response to questions, it was confirmed that a full staff survey would be undertaken in the summer term to compare results with the last survey in 2019. The survey would also cover workload and a feedback loop would be in place to encourage staff to participate.

- Governors suggested the use of 'employer of choice' measures for recruitment. These would be shared with management (JJ)

The Board acknowledged that it should receive reports about staffing more frequently but that it was not always possible to scrutinise them in depth at full board meetings. This raised the question of where, within the governance structure, oversight of HR and organisational development matters should sit.

AGREED:

(i)	**That the existing People Strategy would be shared with governors with a view to scheduling a review;**	MS
(ii)	**That sickness and turnover data would be shared with governors and incorporated into future reports;**	MS
(iii)	**That consideration be given to the appropriate oversight of HR&OD within the governance structure**	AG/ MD

6. Finance and Resources

6.1 Finance Scrutiny Group Report

Minutes of the meeting of the 4th March presented by the FSG Chair

The Board noted the minutes and written executive summary report. Headlines were that the period 6 management accounts showed an improved position to period 5 although the overall forecast year end deficit remained adverse to budget. Management had identified £200k further savings and had been urged by FSG to try to increase this figure.

An update was given on the ESFA and GLA decision to set a tolerance level of 90% delivery for adult education budget delivery. Unlike many colleges, this was considered unlikely to result in any clawback in 2021-22 as the college was delivering at this level through its partners.

An in-depth report on the curriculum review would be provided at the next meeting as part of ongoing Business Improvement Plan monitoring.

The Fees Policy 2021-22 had been presented with only minor updates and was agreed for Board approval.

It was reported that no application for the FE Capital Transformation Grant would be made in this round.

RESOLVED: That the Tuition Fees Policy 2021-22 be APPROVED

6.2 Bank Loan update
Verbal update by the EDCS

Governors asked for the current timescale for finalising and approving the final loan terms and paperwork. The target deadline was now 29th April.

7. Audit Committee Report
Minutes of the meeting on 11th March presented by the AC Chair

The Board noted the minutes and the executive summary report. There were no items for approval, but several items were flagged to be brought back for approval in June, including the Business Continuity Plan, the Counter Fraud Strategy and the appointment of a new Internal Audit Service.

8. Governance and Policy

Clerk to the Corporation recruitment
Verbal update by the Chair

The Board was updated with progress. Having taken soundings from other colleges, a role description was being drawn up for a Head of Governance and an external agency would be engaged to lead the recruitment. Governors sought assurance that there would be a degree of overlap between the incoming and outgoing postholders to ensure a smooth handover. Governors were invited to express an interest in joining the selection panel.

9. Other urgent business

Governors provided feedback on the meeting. These included a request to bring finance items to an earlier time on the agenda. It was recognised, however, that it was equally important to give sufficient time to curriculum and quality issues.

10. Dates of forthcoming meetings

20 May, 15 July 2021

11. PART B

The Part B Minutes of the meeting on 28th January (circulated to external governors only) were **APPROVED.**

AGREED: The chair invited all governors to send any further comments on the contents and actions by email.

The meeting closed at 20.42

Signed: ………………………………………………………………………..(Chair)

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF PRE-BOARD BRIEFING 25 MARCH 2021
NFL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

The presentation gave governors an overview of the NFL partnership, focussing in particular on the vision and intention of the programme. This provided a unique opportunity to blend education, sport and character training to create positive outcomes, opportunities and a greater sense of social responsibility for young people.

The partnership had been operating since September 2019. Current student numbers, performance and progression pathways were as follows:

- 3 students in Business L3 were all making expected progress and with attendance between 92 and 95%
- 81 Yr 2 Sports students
    - 79 considering USA Colleges / Universities
    - 50% UK HE applications
    - Overall attendance 96%
- 22 A Level leavers:
    - 73% with University Offers
    - 2 awaiting offers so 82% UK HE applications
    - 4 not applying to UK HE: 3 applying to USA Colleges, 1 x further NFL year
    - 5 firm offers at Nottingham to do Sports / NFL
    - All working at grade profiles very hjgh (AAB, AAC, ABC for example)

The scheme set a target of 100% positive pathways for students. The bursary programme enabled students to access the scheme who might have otherwise experienced barriers to participation. A further analysis of numbers showed that 25% of students would not have stayed in education if it hadn't been for the scheme.

The purpose built gym facility at Southgate Campus resided in the old Gladys Child theatre space. The space was also used by other sports academies.

The 2020-21 plan had been focussed on student development based on the three cornerstones of education, football and the Character and Community programme. The remainder of the year would be focussed on delivery of the spring and summer schedule, and recruitment for 2021-22. Getting the right students, with the resilience to undertake the demands of the course, was vital.

Mid to long term goals included the development of Supplementary Programmes in Extended Diploma in Sports Media and a HND, Sport & Coaching; the growth of the football programme and introduction of a women's programme and development of further key strategic partnerships i.e Middlesex University and Tottenham Hotspur FC

The success of the programme so far had been down to team effort and strong relationships between the college and NFL. Colleagues at the college were thanked.

Governors thanked Seni and Tom for their presentation and the excellent outcomes so far. Those who had been to New River and observed the scheme for themselves testified to the rigour of the approach to ensuring high levels of student attendance and engagement.