Barnet and Southgate College Corporation
Governing Board meeting
held on Thursday 16th March 2023
18:00
at Wood Street Campus

Present

Adam Goldstein, Chair
Rouzbeh Faramarzian
Jenny Jarvis
Alex Middleton
Darren Mepham, CEO
Diane Moore
Cait O'Riordan
Chalene Scott, staff Governor
Hannah Sheath
Mark Sweeny
Alessandra Almeira-Jones
Sue Baker
Mark Taylor
Thomas Streater
Daniel Yilmaz, Student Governor

In attendance

Maxine Bagshaw, Director of Governance
Neil Coker, Principal
Mark Sellis, Executive Director of Corporate Services
Tracey McIntosh, Executive Director of Commercial Partnership
Greg Haynes, Head of Centre, Southgate & Edmonton Green
Linda Julian, Head of Student Services
Kalust Manukyan, Head of Marketing
Stuart Markham (Fusion)
Luke Ridgwell (Fusion)

Item	Description	Action
1	**Preliminary items** **i) Apologies for absence** Apologies for absence were received from Imelda Galvin. **ii) Declarations of interest** There were no new declarations of interest and standing declarations were noted. **iii) Quorum** Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate	

	iv) Director of Governance appointment – Maxine Bagshaw Board agreed to appoint Maxine Bagshaw as the interim Director of Governance for the period January to July 2023. **v) Student Governor appointment – Daniel Yilmaz** Board were happy to approve the appointment of Daniel Yilmaz as Student Governor from 16th March 2023 to 31st July 2024, or until such time as he ceases to be a student, whichever is the earlier.	
2	**Minutes of the previous meetings** **1) Minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2022** The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions. AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2022 as presented. **2) Matters arising** Board were happy to note the content of the action tracker provided. **3) Notes of the Development Day held on 26th January 2023** Board were happy to note the content of the notes provided.	
3	**CEO's report** Before discussing the CEO's report, the Chair indicated that he would take an opportunity after the meeting to reflect on why there was so much scheduled for discussion today. To assist with the meeting all agreed to take the papers as read. CEO introduced his report which was circulated in advance of the meeting and indicated that it is to be considered in three parts, which are: 1) LSIP update – key matters highlighted were: • Timescales for finalisation • CEO and the QTSE Committee Chair attended a West London event which had a focus on this yesterday which was very helpful and timely Question and challenge from one governor was whether or not it is possible to really evidence the fact that the board has 'reviewed' and also the level of confidence in relation to knowing the local skills needs. CEO indicated that it is 'quite a tall order' to evidence this as there are reems and reems of data which underpin the growth strategy. It was agreed that, when the board	

	is asked to approve the accountability agreement, staff will refer to and rehearse the data which it is based upon (CEO, May 2023). He confirmed that there is a strong connection with the curriculum strategy provided and governors were asked to consider the detailed data references and links at the end of that document. CEO expressed the view that, the accountability statement will be the evidence that the board requires for a review having been undertaken. He reminded that the LSIP is just one part of the information used to identify local needs. In terms of collaboration with other governors, the board asked whether there is more to be done to extend and broaden the interaction. CEO reminded that LSIP legislation is drafted for the whole of the country, however geographical areas do approach it differently. BSC is very much part of a West London focus which appears to be well ahead of other areas. He indicated that a joint statement agreed between the six colleges would be very helpful but that, beyond this, it is not very practical to consider. He confirmed that the six West London colleges are taking an exploratory approach to collaboration, sharing etc. and that some of this work will come through the mayoral academies. Chair commented on the proposal to request a delay to submitting the accountability agreement and governors agreed that they were not supportive of this and instead requested that staff work to meet the deadline. It was agreed that a draft of the accountability statement would be first considered by the QTSE Committee in April 2023, prior to a final version then coming to the board meeting in May. Staff provided assurance that the college does have its agreed template in place and therefore is not 'starting from scratch'. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided. 2) Accountability agreement It was confirmed that this would be presented for board approval at the May meeting which is ahead of the submission deadline to the ESFA (CEO, May 2023). 3) Growth CEO advised that, at the request of the Finance Committee, there are some colleagues joining to give assurance regarding the learner journey work being done. Greg Haines, Linda Julian and Callust Manukyan were welcomed to the meeting and a presentation was provided. Key matters highlighted were: 1) Marketing awareness • College sees the customer journey as a funnel • College uses a range of different channels including Youtube, Facebook etc. • Marketing involves a lot of school visits and the school liaison team has been reorganised. There are external	CEO CEO

	visits to expand reach and schools are also invited in, with the aim being to build relationships. • There are many ways to promote using outdoor spaces. Marketing priority is by digital means, however there is a local presence. 2) <u>Consideration</u> • Applicants take one of several actions e.g. visiting the website, viewing ads etc. • Repetition is important • Customer data is collected even if they don't apply so that the college can proactively engage • Most successful impact is via use of google and email 3) <u>Applications</u> • Macro conversion is a key aim • From this point marketing is not the sole contact • Internal inquiries management team start to support the process 4) <u>Retention</u> • Applicants then receive an offer letter • Communication starts via applicant and parent hubs • Applicants receive regular emails • This period can last between October to September in the following year. Governors encouraged staff to summarise what has changed i.e. what is new. Key matters highlighted were: • School liaison work – internal and external offer. Key is building the relationships. • Work done by the school liaison team is structured and purposeful. • All enquiries are managed internally. • There is a structured contact form which has become part of the email journey • College has introduced a call back system • What is now offered is a very personal service Question from one governor was, what kind of message the college is pushing that is different and differentiates the organisation. Staff indicated that they have spoken to every curriculum area and discussed the 'typical' type of student and 'desired' student. This has led to different messages being created for each area. All are subject specific but then have a focus on the wraparound aspects including; added support, friendly environment and experienced staff. It was confirmed that the introduction of the taster days are new, which include: • An opportunity for the college to 'convince' in terms of the offer and the benefits • Applicants are able see more practical examples • There are small group tours • Activity sessions are planned and an example given was in e-sports where there are a round of tournaments	

	In addition to the onsite activities, members of staff in the curriculum areas are going out and about much more and this allows them to give potential students a better idea of the whole package. It was explained that the Purlos message system allows the college to deal with applicants much more personally than has ever been the case before. One governor asked whether there is any sense of where there will be the greatest impact. Staff advised that the college is currently 600-700+ more applications when compared to the same point in the prior year. That said, staff explained that conversion is much more complicated and that this is where the organisation needs to see the impact within a very competitive environment. In relation to the schools, one governor asked whether there are any opportunities for really embedded relationships with some. Staff confirmed that there are and that there has been a focus on schools with no sixth form provision. The visits arranged are an opportunity to showcase what the organisation has and does and there is a need to bring more school staff in to see this. Staff confirmed that the college is being more strategic in terms of its approach now. One governor asked whether staff are effectively tracking so that impact can be guaranteed, given finite resources available to attract. Linked to this, as the college is no longer doing interviews should there be a way to gauge the temperature/interest so that there is an opportunity to retarget and refocus as and when required. Staff explained that the changes made mean that, rather than relying on too many points of contact which can be distant and disparate, there is now a two week turnaround of a much more personalised service. This also allows the college to pick up any additional learning support needs much earlier and plan more effectively. It also means that firm conditional offers can be made more quickly than has previously been the case. As an observation, the board all agreed that it was encouraging to see the effort being committed to making change. One governor asked whether the changes are being embedded out in to the broader teams. Staff provided assurance that it is really a whole college approach with a positive opportunity for teams to work together. This is allowing a much more consistent approach. Staff described the current arrangements as a far more efficient service when compared to historic interviews which had limited success or impact. Staff confirmed that there has been positive feedback in response to the digitised service now in place. In terms of the report provided by the CEO, challenge from governors was that they would want to see more reference to data and the links to KPI reporting, rather than the narrative which is qualitative. One governor asked for a brief update on T Levels. In terms of the capital bid it was confirmed that the outcome will be known in July	

	2023. In relation to the September 2023 offer, applications are being monitored with two out of the five courses looking healthy. Least likely to run is plumbing. One governor asked what the situation is in terms of a rebrand and where this fits in compared to where the organisation is now. CEO confirmed that a local rebrand has been completed regarding the sites but that a decision has not yet been made whether to go with a whole college rebrand. Intention is to create a number of hubs and/or centres of excellence. Challenge from governors was that they would need to know with more clarity the direction of travel in relation to this. Board then received an update in relation to SDF and were advised that one project has now been completed, including the instillation of electrical charging points and solar panels. This gives the college further opportunities for green skills at the Southgate Campus. Colindale Campus can also now offer courses on air pump technologies. In relation to the hubs and/or centres of excellence, a question from one governor was whether or not it is possible to determine the criteria and also agree what they will be called. All acknowledged that the 'centre of excellence' concept is all about branding. CEO advised that current thinking is that 'skills academies' will be used but it is not the intention to have set criteria and a quality badge. There is no intention to withdraw the label/badge if criteria haven't been met, however assurance was given that areas of provision will only be badged as skills academies if there is confidence regarding the quality of the offer. Challenge from the board was that the departments need strong industrial backing and external accreditation to support this. It was agreed that a report on skills academies would be provided to the next meeting with a focus on • Our approach • Targets • Timescales for development • Success criteria (CEO, May 2023) In developing the skills academies, challenge from governors was to really focus in on what the college wants to be known for and how this aligns to the growth strategy. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.	CEO
4	**KPI Report** CEO presented this item and outlined the options included within the report circulated in advance of the meeting. He explained that the intention is that a lot of the KPIs would be subject to more in depth analysis and scrutiny at subcommittee level. Governors were invited to outline what is important to them in terms of reporting and key matters highlighted were: • The KPIs which are RAG rated as red and then what actions are being taken to mitigate and address	

	• Format is not necessarily the issue • If a heat map type approach is utilised then there should be narrative provided by exception • The visual approach is helpful • Governors will need the explanation regarding why aspects are red and what needs to be done to get to green and by when • The rectification steps • What do we need to do • What are the numbers we are tracking month to month and to avoid a once a year assessment. An example given was the number of 16-18 internal progression applicants • Need to see early warning indicators • What supporting data do we have e.g. continued engagement rather than just what we are doing e.g. sending out emails. Have students come in to taster days etc. • Governors are very reliant on the data and therefore it needs to be provided on a timely basis and easily accessible In terms of the conversion rate in the prior academic year, one governor asked whether the college knows why it was lower than envisaged. Staff explained that this was in the main because a high number of applicants chose to stay at schools. It was explained that the college has to work very hard to encourage them to make a change from their school environment. Governors asked how continued engagement is measured and whether or not there are some interim indicators to consider. Board all felt that it was appropriate that, where there are metrics that can be monitored and measured then analysis should be at committee level and for them to then escalate whatever aspects they feel need to be brought to the board's attention. Challenge from the board was that their key concern now is delivery of the strategies and action plans in place. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.	
5	**Property Strategy** (Stuart Markham and Luke Ridgwell from Fusion joined the meeting at 7.10pm) Governors were happy to take the strategy as read and move straight to questions which were: • There are quite a lot of changes proposed including building works – have safeguarding arrangements been considered. Staff provided assurance that they have and that the team are now moving in to master planning which will include sequencing. This will include various aspects, including mothballing and disposal where various parts of the estate can be fenced off. • What consideration has been given to noise levels. Staff advised that some will be inevitable but provided	

	assurance that the team will work with contractors to minimise. It was confirmed that some lessons have been learnt from earlier projects and that the ability to manage noise has been selected as part of the criteria for contractors. • Who will manage the projects – will it be the college or Fusion. Executive Director advised that the intention is to go out to tender for the support services needed. He indicated that there may be a number of aspects that the estates manager will project manage from a college perspective. Challenge from governors was a concern that this was too large and/or complicated to be given to someone in a 'step-up' role. Their view was that an experienced project manager needs to be in place. • What is the position regarding Edmonton Green campus. Staff confirmed that the intention is still to vacate and all options are being considered. This is a relatively straight forward exercise, with a search for an alternative rental property underway. • What is need from governors in terms of the planned disposals. Staff advised that there is nothing at this time and that it is part of the next steps. Intention is to establish a steering group to oversee this. At Wood Street there are two pieces of surplus land and Colindale is very much considered an opportunity site. In general discussion, board all agreed that they were happy to support the disposal plans but were not supportive of the college becoming a landlord. Challenge from the board was to dispose of what is not needed i.e. Tudor Hall. Question and challenge from the board was whether or not the team have factored in educational growth and the colleges vision for this. Staff confirmed that it is and also factored in is exam usage. Staff confirmed that growth, curriculum and estates strategies are now all intertwined and that there is a need to move forward at pace. Governors asked how confident the team are in terms of making the changes i.e. if the Southgate campus can't be improved then will that mean that students cannot be attracted. • It was acknowledged that there may need to be further analysis regarding exam usage. Executive Director explained that the property strategy sets the framework and then the team would move to master planning which would involve a number of distinct workstreams. Options regarding Tudor Hall could be an early piece of work. Governors asked what the 'pathway' is to selling Tudor Hall. Staff advised that steps would include: • Engaging a land agent to firm up valuations • Creating a marketing pack • Taking to market • Pre-application advice One governor asked what the cost of delivering the estates strategy is. Executive Director confirmed that there were some funds included within the 2022/23 budget but that further	

	expenditure will need to be incorporated in future years. Challenge from the board was whether or not the strategy proposed is feasible/affordable. Governors were happy to support the disposal of space that is not used but challenged in terms of making sure that the strategy aligns with where it is believed there will be growth. Question and challenge from the board was in terms of next steps i.e. the phasing and what will governors see next. It was explained that this will include: • Now moving to create a business case. This will include costs, ability to capitalise etc. • Track one is all of the smaller projects, examples given were T Levels, green technologies etc. • Assurance was given that the master plan will not contradict the smaller projects • A master plan will be finalised by the summer Challenge from the board was that they need much more clarity regarding the decisions needed from them in terms of what and when, so that there are no surprises. Board were happy to support the proposal to move to next steps but indicated that a priority for them was assurance regarding project management arrangements. Board then discussed establishing a steering group and it was agreed that Mark Sweeny and Thomas Streater would join this group. AGREED to: a) In principle approve the property strategy as presented, b) Support property strategy implementation, c) Require assurance regarding project management arrangements d) Approve the establishment of a property strategy steering group (Staff from Fusion left the meeting at 7.35pm)	
6	**Curriculum Strategy** The Principal presented this item and governors asked what the next steps are. Principal indicated that it is: a) Full roll out, and then b) Curriculum areas will be required to produce individual action plans. He explained that a lot of the implementation will be reviewed by QTSE Committee. What is provided today is the roadmap and QTSE will seek assurance in relation to this. Question from one governor was in relation to which external stakeholders will be consulted with. Principal indicated that the intention is to create a different version which goes out publicly. Staff are currently working up a plan for a stakeholder and ambassador event in the summer term. Challenge from governors was that they want to see strategy KPIs so that it is clear where	

	there are interdependencies and also what are the 'blockers and barriers'. In relation to Southgate campus, one governor asked whether there is a plan to look to address the gender imbalance. Staff advised that some course provision will help in relation to this and examples given were Science, HE and Business. Staff provided assurance that all options are being considered in detail and it was explained that zoning at the campus currently doesn't allow for better sight of the gender balance. One member of the board asked what the cost of implementing the strategy is. Principal indicated that, much is to do with people and time rather than things and that there are bids that the college continues to apply for to support. He indicated that, the most significant challenge is capacity of the current workforce. In some areas added capacity has been provided and specific examples given were apprenticeship provision, T Levels etc. College may need to look at more people resource alongside capital and revenue investment which is built in to the 5-year financial strategy. One member of the board asked what the college will not do. Principal indicated that T Levels will influence what is and isn't offered and that this, alongside defunding will have an impact. He confirmed that there were no significant exit areas planned within this strategy. In relation to HE, one governor asked what the college aspirations are. Principal indicated that the plan is to create a hub for higher level learning in North London. This will be a mix of level 4, level 5 and HTQs offered in partnership. He indicated that HE institutions currently seem to have an appetite to be involved in the college's plans. In terms of future reporting, challenge from the board was that they need to be more explicit in terms of opportunities versus balancing the books, so that there is clarity regarding the interdependencies and the risks. One governor asked what the level of 'buy in' is from employers in relation to T Levels. Principal indicated that the high-level narrative is 'a lot of buy in' as larger employers have been involved in developing them, however below this there is a gap. Having to provide 300+ hours placement is a significant challenge. Staff are reasonably confident in terms of the plans for 2023/24, however it will be hard work. Board were given assurance that the college is well supported by an industry placement team. Challenge from one governor was to pick up some of the student conversion lessons learned and apply to employers. It was confirmed that delivery and development plans will be scrutinised by QTSE. AGREED: to approve the curriculum strategy as presented.	

7	**Report from the Committees** 1) <u>QTSE</u> Board were happy to note the content of the committee chairs summary note and the detailed minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2023. Governors attention was drawn to the content of the deep dive report on electrical. Key matters highlighted by the committee chair were: • There are a programme of deep dives in place, • Detail in the meeting minutes show the level of scrutiny and analysis, • Electrical instillation is an area of concern, • Committee intends to move forward on a thematic basis and avoid report after report on the agenda, • Key aim for the committee is to ensure that there is an assurance framework in place. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided. 2) <u>Finance</u> Governors were happy to note the content of the chair's summary note and detailed minutes of the meetings held on 19th January and 8th March. Key matters highlighted by the Chair included: • Period 6 management accounts show a decline but the college is largely on track, • Multiply project has gone well, • Financial health score needs to continue to be monitored, • HE is a concern, • Financial strategy is now in place but governors need to know the implementation detail. Question from one governor was in terms of where areas are costing the organisation and/or not profitable, what are the plans. An example given was ACL. Staff explained that the college does not have a 'one size fits all approach' and that in some areas it is a matter of tolerating lower contributions where it is the right thing to do. Aim is to have complete transparency on this to ensure a collaborative college approach. Challenge from the board was that they again are seeing competing tensions that are evident and there is a need to provide metrics in relation to this. Board agreed that, delaying getting to a breakeven budget seemed to be acceptable and understandable but on the basis that there is much more granular analysis provided on the options to be considered. Executive Director confirmed that there are now strategy bridges in place for the periods: 1 year, 2-3 year and 5 years and the plan is to build on each year.	

	Committees attention was specifically drawn to the report provided on ONS reclassification implications and the governors expenses policy which was provided for approval. AGREED to: a) Note the content of the update provided b) Approve the governor expenses policy as presented. 3) <u>Audit and Risk</u> Governors were happy to note the content of the committee chairs summary note and also minutes of the meeting held on 2nd March 2023. Committee chair indicated that a pattern had been recognised regarding audit recommendations made i.e. a number of basic issues regarding process and housekeeping matters. Staff have provided confirmation that a root cause analysis will be completed but, other than this, the committee are broadly content with the reports they are receiving. In relation to cyber security, one member of the board asked whether the focus is on the recovery likely to be required rather than the mitigation. Staff confirmed that there is a plan in place around this which includes: • A number of opportunities for information sharing with other organisations, with another planned in June 2023, • Revised recovery plan being developed, • Staff are working on the sequencing/priority of the recovery likely to be required, • Redefining our actions 'when it happens' Challenge from the board was that the risk register should track all of the actions that are being taken so that the board can be assured. Challenge from the board was for staff to identify the important business services and particularly those critical for recovery. Staff confirmed that there is a plan in relation to this and that this will be included within a standalone document. Challenge from governors was to not forget about data breach/security and any reporting actions, fines etc. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided. 4) <u>People committee</u> Chair provided a verbal update following the first meeting earlier in the week and key matters highlighted were: • Committee is intending to meet once per term, • Terms of reference were considered with the aspiration being to 'bring it up a level' as current version is too detailed and wide ranging, • Good early start for this committee. AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.	

8	**Governance** The Director of Governance presented the detailed report and a number of aspects were considered: 1) Ratification of written resolution in relation to T Level capital bids submitted Governors were reminded that a request for written resolution was circulated via email on 1st February 2023. This was followed by a Q&A session which took place on 2nd February 2023. Sufficient positive responses/approvals were received and therefore the bid was submitted and the board was therefore formally asked to ratify the written resolution. AGREED: to formally ratify the written resolution agreed on 2nd February 2023. 2) Committee membership Board were advised that a HR specialist has been identified to support the newly introduced People committee. Rebecca Willis was interviewed by the Chair and CEO and their recommendation is that the board approve her appointment as a committee co-optee. AGREED: to approve the appointment of Rebecca Willis as a People committee co-optee from 1st March 2023 to 16th March 2027. Board were asked to approve the appointment of the new student Governor, Daniel Yilmaz, to the QTSE committee. AGREED: to appoint Daniel Yilmaz as a QTSE Committee member. Board were advised that Thomas Streater has not yet been assigned to a committee. The plan is for him to observe each of the committee meetings in the next cycle so that he can get a better understanding of where he may add best value. In these circumstances, board were asked to delegate authority to the chair to eventually approve his committee appointment. This was agreed. 3) Board membership 2023 Governors were reminded that membership is currently: • 12 independent/external governors • 2 staff governors • CEO • 1 student governor (with a second vacancy) Given a change to a more traditional committee structure the board were asked to consider increasing membership. It was agreed that membership would be increased to 'up to 20' so as to provide for 15 independent members, however it was agreed that this would only be actioned if it was felt it was needed.	

	AGREED: to approve board membership 'up to 20' with 15 of these being independent/external. 4) <u>Governor recruitment – Safeguarding Lead Governor</u> Director of Governance advised that to date the board has been unable to identify someone to take on this role. She explained that the DfE funds recruitment support for colleges who have struggled themselves to recruit to key skills/experience. This requires an application process that the board has to approve. AGREED: to approve the submission of an application for DfE funded recruitment consultant support. 5) <u>Meeting papers</u> Director of Governance advised that, to improve security and ensure data protection, the college is establishing a dedicated governor area on sharepoint and that, going forward, all committee/board papers will be uploaded to the shared area. This will remove the need to send reports to personal email addresses.	
9	**AOB** As a matter of additional business, the Executive Director asked for board approval to look to partners to support local learners via subcontracting arrangements. She confirmed that this supports the strategic plan around growth. She provided assurance that it will all be local provision and will follow full due diligence. She confirmed that the college has lots of experience in this area and therefore any risk will be mitigated. One governor asked what confidence level there is in terms of identifying subcontracting partners. Staff expressed the view that there will be some interest via tender. AGREED: to approve the proposal to tender for subcontracting services as identified.	
10	**Confidential items** It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded on a separate basis. (Staff and students left the meeting at 8.15pm) Meeting closed at 8.30pm.	
11	**Date and time of next meeting** These were noted.	