



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Meeting Board of Governors

Date 4 October 2018

Time 15.00 – 16.45

Venue Backstage Centre, Purfleet

Present **Governors**

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| Althea Efunshile | Chair |
| Bryan Raven | Vice Chair |
| Sue Dare | Interim Principal (P/CEO) |
| Alex Fowles | |
| Jamie Jefferson | From 3.45pm |
| Catherine Large | |

In attendance

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Felix Adenaike | Interim Vice Principal Finance (VP:F) |
| Melissa Drayson | Head of Governance (HoG) |

Apologies Kim Bromley-Derry
Marcus Davey
Claire Paul
Fern Potter
Elaine Kelt (Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality)

Quorum (4) The meeting was quorate throughout

The meeting was preceded by an informal ‘Meet the Students’ session, attended by Althea Efunshile, Bryan Raven, Catherine Large and Alex Fowles.

Sections deemed confidential on the grounds of commercial or personally sensitivity have been redacted.

Item **Lead**

1. Preliminary Business

The Chair welcomed governors and staff to the first Board meeting of the new academic year. Sue Dare was particularly welcomed as Interim Principal/CEO. Sue had met most governors individually. Governors reflected that, with the new student cohort and new staff in place, the College felt a vibrant and positive place. The evening’s graduation ceremony promised to be a very positive event, in which all students were involved in the production.

1.1 Apologies for absence
Apologies were accepted as listed above

1.2 Declarations of interest
There were no new declarations of interest.

1.3 Urgent items of other business
There was one item of other business relating to bank signatories

2. Minutes of the meeting on 12 July 2018

2.1 Approval of Minutes
The Minutes, including confidential minutes, of 12 July 2018, were approved as an accurate record.

2.2 Matters arising and outstanding actions
Supporting paper by the Clerk

Progress on all previous actions was noted and updates provided as appropriate.

It was **AGREED** that:

Potential membership of the Federation of Creative Industries would be explored and reported back by December **VPCQ**

Actions relating to capital improvements would be removed from the list. **Clerk**

2.3 Chair's Action since previous meeting

There had been none.

2.4 Written Resolutions since the previous meeting

The following had been approved by written resolution since the previous meeting and were ratified by the Board:

19 July: The salary for the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality

14 August: The appointment of Sue Dare as Interim Principal, including length of initial contract, salary and benefits.

3. Principal and Chief Executive Report
Supporting paper by the Interim Principal

Governors welcomed the new style Principal and CEO report and found the incorporation of KPIs plus narrative against these to be very helpful.

Key highlights

- New L3 and L4 students had made a strong start. Two visits had taken place already and the new course leader had started that day

Other experienced staff had been recruited in the key areas of pastoral care and safeguarding, and marketing.

1. Key risks:

The main current risk was student recruitment (also section 3 of report):

- 16-18 recruitment had not quite been completed, but it would be challenging to attract significant numbers of additional students. Retention was now critical. Any impact on income would be felt in 2019-20
- Apprenticeship recruitment had a late start due to delays in funding confirmation and staff recruitment. Reprofiled figures had been sent to DfE and ESFA. There was confidence that, despite the slow start, due to delay in recruiting Business Development Manager and Marketing lead, targets would be reached
- 19+ FE learners were below target, but this was largely due to the current adult learner loan funding allocation being used up. An increased allocation had been requested from the DfE.

2. Quality

Governors noted and endorsed the revised targets for attendance, main qualification (retention, pass rate, achievement rate), English and Maths (retention, pass rate, achievement rate), work experience and positive destinations. A significant amount of work was being done to improve upon the 2017-18 out-turns, with a particular focus on attendance and retention. The new course leader should bring a rigorous and structured approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

Governors reflected on the 'first impressions' feedback provided in the Meet the Students session. The Principal confirmed that the observations had been astute and fair, and raised some important issues which had already been followed up. Themes would also be revisited in the next Governor/Meet the Students session in the Spring. It was noted that a student survey was being run over October Half Term. Initial results would be reported to the Standards Committee on 2 November, with a full follow-up report to December Board.

Apprenticeship out-turns were being finalised but were indicated as good, indicating a sound basis. Finalised out-turns would be reported at Standards Committee.

Governors asked for an indication of the level of confidence that the measures being taken would improve quality. It was anticipated that the learner experience would be improved very quickly. The impact on KPIs would be longer term; strong attendance generally had a positive knock on effect on retention and achievement.

4. Finance

An overview of the September 2018 financial position was provided. The current income variance was due to recruitment factors as discussed previously. The Backstage Centre income profile had been discussed in depth by the BSC Board.

The delayed start to apprenticeship recruitment had been offset in part by reduced apprenticeships expenditure. Later than planned staff recruitment had also resulted in a positive variance on the pay budget. Further non-pay cost savings were also being secured.

Governors discussed future cashflow in depth, and checked that the January to March dip would be mitigated if the measures [redacted] were successful. Discussions were ongoing with CCSkills and it was noted that they had undertaken to discuss this at their next meeting.

5. HR

The KPIs were noted. Governors suggested that the organisation chart should be circulated externally so that employers were able to identify key contacts within the college.

Measures were being taken to ensure that all staff and visitors to the student areas, including governors, had an up to date DBS certificate.

6. Property

Work was underway to move to the new contract with the IT provider, which would result in significant savings. Governors were assured that this would also ensure strong data security. The college was also moving away from reliance on one provider for all parts of the IT framework, including in the development of the College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This would help to spread IT risk.

7. Backstage Centre

The income profile was broadly on track with some firm orders over future months. Some bookings would not, however, be confirmed until closer to the date. Governors on the Backstage Centre Board reported greater levels of confidence in commercial income generation. Governors asked about progress in linking the College's curriculum needs to the use of Backstage Centre facilities. This was being developed. Basic technical induction for staff and students needed to be completed before full access to facilities could be implemented. Governors pressed for students to be able to access as much work and practical experience as possible.

8. Key Risk Register

It was noted that the report included the highest level risks, and all had been covered in Board discussions. The full register would continue to be discussed at Audit Committee as standing item.

[redacted]

AGREED:

- | | | |
|------|--|------|
| i. | Student survey results to be reported to November Standards Committee | VPCQ |
| ii. | That an updated Staff Organisation Chart would be distributed following the meeting | HoG |
| iii. | That governors be asked to provide proof of recent DBS clearance | HoG |
| iv. | Redacted | |
| v. | Redacted | |

4. Committee reports

4.1. Employer Steering Group on 26 July 2018

Supporting paper: Minutes of ESG presented by Jamie Jefferson

It was reported that the meeting had represented a reboot of the ESG. Attendance had been reassuring, especially from long-standing supporters, although better attendance by apprenticeship employers needed to be encouraged. There had been useful feedback about the experience of working with the College and a clear steer about future expectations. Governors expressed the view that feedback on the new college structure and service over the following months would be critical.

A draft of the apprenticeship information sheet requested by ESG was tabled. The Board agreed that this should be tested with a small group of employers prior to finalisation.

4.2 Backstage Centre Board on 12 September 2018

Supporting paper: Minutes of TBC Board

The minutes were noted. All key points had been discussed as part of the Principal's report.

4.3 Finance Scrutiny Committee

Supporting paper: Minutes of FSG on 19 September 2018

The minutes were noted. All key points had been discussed as part of the Principal's report. Recommendations were considered, and it was:

RESOLVED:

- i) That the updated Financial Regulations be approved**
- ii) That the Tuition Fees Policy 2018-19 be approved.**

5. Update on External Audit

Oral report by VP Finance

An initial review of had taken place in the summer, and the final onsite review taken place the previous week. There were a few loose ends to tie up prior to formal feedback. Governors reminded management of the importance of securing early agreement of the wording around going concern and to ensure arrangements were in place for signing off the final version by the Board on 19 December. [Redacted]

6. Policy

6.1 Policy Review schedule and scheme of delegation

Supporting paper by the Clerk

A proposed review schedule and scheme of delegation had been produced to allow non-statutory policies to be approved by the Executive. It was agreed that the Quality Assurance framework should be reviewed by the Standards Committee rather than SLT. Subject to this change, it was:

RESOLVED: That Policy Review Schedule and Scheme of Delegation be approved.

HoG

6.2 Safeguarding Policy update

Supporting paper by the Pastoral and Welfare Lead

It was confirmed that the Policy covered Prevent, and that if a Governor had a safeguarding concern, they should report it to the Pastoral and Welfare Lead. The addition of the flowchart was welcomed.

It was agreed that the named designated safeguarding governor should be added. The Chair and Head of Governance would discuss this position and feedback.

RESOLVED: that, subject to the addition of the named Safeguarding Governor, the policy be approved and published.

**Chair/
HoG**

7. Apprenticeships Plan

Supporting paper presented by the Principal

Governors asked whether the College was now better placed to respond to employer enquiries. It was confirmed that the new team would provide the capacity and expertise to do this.

Key highlights of the Plan were outlined

- Targets were ambitious but achievable
- Recruitment to the new standards would be optimised
- A flexible delivery model which could be adapted to employer needs
- A creative approach to providing apprenticeships in SMEs, in the absence of non-Levy funding. This could either involve Levy transfer or subcontracting.

It was reported that a new provider was being sought for the Rigging Apprenticeships. This would be followed up outside the meeting.

**P/CEO
& BR**

It was noted that the new BDM had developed a growing list of employers. Any employer recommendations by governors should now go to the BDM.

The Board reflected on the need to revisit the Business Plan to ensure that it mirrored the current position and ambitions of the College, especially in respect of growth in apprenticeships.

RESOLVED: that the Principal and VPCQ be authorised to investigate subcontracting opportunities.

AGREED: that the Business Plan, and Hub and Spoke model be reviewed at the February 19 Away Day.

8. Governance

Supporting papers by the Head of Governance

8.1 Governance action plan update

The updated action plan was noted. Governors would shortly be receiving a request to participate in the Board Self-Assessment. This would include one to one meetings with the Chair.

8.2 Schedule of Board and Committee Business 2018-19

The schedule was noted. Governors commented that this was important for good governance.

8.3 Governor recruitment

The HoG reported that the Chair and governors had interviewed several prospective candidates with a finance background for governor and co-opted audit committee member positions. One recommendation was made.

RESOLVED: that Samanta Padolino be approved as a Co-opted Audit Committee member.

9. Urgent Business notified in advance

RESOLVED: that the Interim Principal be added as a signatory on the Backstage Centre and National College bank accounts.

10.. Dates and venues of future meetings

19 Dec 18 @ 16.30 at Westminster Central Hall. Meal afterwards.
7 Feb 19 Away Day @ The Roundhouse.

Signed (Chair):

Dated: 19 December 2018

