

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

OPEN (PART A) MINUTES)

Meeting	Board of Governors	
Date	11 April 2019	
Time	15.00 – 17.25	
Venue	The Backstage Centre, Purfleet	
Present	Governors	
	Althea Efunshile	Chair
	Bryan Raven	Vice Chair
	Sue Dare	Interim Principal (P/CEO)
	Marcus Davey	
	Alex Fowles	
	Jamie Jefferson	(by phone)
	Ros Parker	
	Claire Paul	(by phone)
	Fern Potter	
	In attendance	
	Felix Adenaike	Interim Vice Principal Finance (VP:F)
	Elaine Kelt	Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality (VPCQ)
	Melissa Drayson	Head of Governance (HoG)
Apologies	Catherine Large	
Quorum (4)	The meeting was quorate throughout	

Some sections have been redacted from the published minutes due to commercial or personal sensitivity

Item	Lead
1. Preliminary Business	
1.1 Apologies for absence	
Apologies were received from Catherine Large	
1.2 Declarations of interest	
Sue Dare repeated her interest that she was a Governor of South Bank Colleges and Trustee of High House Production Park.	

1.3 Urgent items of other business

There were no items of urgent other business

2. Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting on 7 February 2019

2.1 Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of 7 February 2019 were approved as an accurate record, and the confidential sections confirmed.

2.2 Matters arising and outstanding actions

Supporting paper by the Clerk

It was noted that all matters arising were completed or due for update on the agenda.

3. Principal and CEO report

Supporting paper by the Principal and CEO

Headlines from the report were discussed.

The joint Palmers College event the previous week had been a major success, following which students had recognised the contribution that their National College training had made. There was scope for this to become an annual event, and a model that could be rolled out to other colleges.

1.Student numbers

Apprenticeships: Governors noted the update on recruitment since the February meeting and discussed the potential for growth within the industry.

Management reported that there had been a recent upturn in engagement and sign-ups, with more unsolicited approaches and referrals from a range of employers, including theatres, Councils and national bodies. There were now 30 confirmed apprenticeship prospects. It was believed that the networks that had been built up, individually and through the Employer Steering Group, were now bearing fruit. The membership of the ESG would be expanded accordingly.

Governors asked whether levels of staffing were adequate to support growing numbers of apprentices. It was confirmed that a 'distributed' approach was now in place, with all staff and assessors sharing responsibility for developing new business.

Several governors agreed that their organisations would be willing to run apprenticeship events.

FE Classroom based learners: Offers had been made for new starts in Sept 19, and ten students would be progressing to a second year. A further two interview days had been booked. The Principal reminded the Board how the lagged funding methodology worked.

2. Quality

Further Education

KPI targets were currently exceeded. One learner had left due to lack of engagement. Attendance was above 90%, with individual action plans in place for two learners who were at risk.

Governors asked about English and Maths attendance. It was confirmed that this was 100%. The Board asked that E&M maths attendance should be separated out in future reports and the impact on overall attendance reflected in the narrative.

Apprenticeships

Retention currently stood at 87%. Timely achievement was at national average, with a number of longer-standing apprentices approaching completion.

The pastoral lead and assessor team would be focussing on developing career progression guidance for apprentices.

Governors asked how the current position compared with the Mock Ofsted. It was confirmed that Apprenticeships continued to be 'good', and that actions to improve background processes further had been taken. FE was a significantly improving picture.

3. Safeguarding

Measures were being put in place to ensure that safeguarding procedures for learners in the workplace were as robust as they were within the Backstage Centre. The new Safeguarding Link Governor was working with the VPCQ to develop a clear cycle of triangulation and robust reporting. There were no issues of concern to report.

4. Finance

The Board noted that the Finance Committee had reviewed the management accounts and cashflow in detail at its recent meeting.

The cashflow position was strong and there would be scope, within the remaining months of the current year to decrease costs further.

The March finance report would include a cashflow extended into 2019-20.

5. Backstage Centre

The most recent income forecast was discussed. There had been some recently changes in bookings but losses of income had been mitigated by new bookings, or late cancellation charges and the position remained healthy for the rest of the financial year. A report on 2019-20 bookings would be brought to the next meeting, but these were believed to be steady.

AGREED:

- (i) That English and Maths attendance would be reported separately in future KPI reports**

VPCQ

- (ii) That governors would be provided with an update on measures to support apprentices with career progression
- (iii) That a report would be brought to governors on Health and Safety Risk Assessments associated with work placement

4. Committee reports and recommendations

4.1 Backstage Centre Board of 6 March 2019

Supporting paper: Minutes of Meeting

In addition to detailed scrutiny of income and expenditure, Directors had considered the development of a planned maintenance programme, and measures being taken by the Royal Opera House to retender for new maintenance contractors. Proposals on both would be brought back to the next Backstage Centre Board meeting

4.2 Standards Committee – 15 March 2019

Supporting paper: Minutes of Meeting

The Standards Committee had scrutinised progress against the Quality Improvement Plan, and Quality KPIs in depth. It was noted that a set of Equality and Diversity objectives were being developed which would be brought back to the Board for approval.

4.3 Audit Committee – 20 March 2019

Supporting paper: Minutes of Meeting

The Committee had considered the audit recommendations tracker and was satisfied timely action had been taken on all recommendations. The Tracker and Committee minutes had been sent to the ESFA.

There had also been a detailed discussion on risk reporting and the format of the risk register. Agreed actions would be implemented and brought back to the June Audit Committee meeting.

4.4 Finance Committee – 20 March 2019

Supporting paper: Minutes of Meeting

As well as its detailed scrutiny of the management accounts, the Committee had considered a draft financial forecast for 2019-20.

5. Student Feedback

A 'meet the students' session had been held that afternoon, attended by the three governors, two L3 course reps and one apprentice.

- Feedback was positive overall. Both Level 3 students mentioned that there had been noticeable improvements to their course since September, due to the increase in practical work opportunities and new teaching staff.
- The course reps reported that feedback from other students had also improved.

- A particular strength was the level of one-to-one individualised learning, which was considered unique in further education. Students were encouraged to reflect on their learning and identify their progress.
- Students also felt that the course was giving a good grounding for career progression and had opened up new opportunities.
- There was a perception that more teachers were needed, due to the course leader splitting time between L3 and L4 groups.
- A request had been made for student lockers. In response to this, students were being given access to lockable cupboards.
- The apprentice interviewed had given equally positive feedback, particularly about the variety of tasks that she was undertaking and opportunity to develop key skills.

The latest Student Survey feedback was tabled, completed by the majority of students. The outcomes supported the positive feedback provided to governors.

Governors noted and commended the positive shift in feedback since the previous Meet the Student session in October, and that this could be linked directly to improvements in teaching. Management was asked how the request for extra teaching was being addressed. In addition to the course leader, students were supported by a learning support assistant, a GCSE and Functional Skills tutor and a Technical Tutor.

It was confirmed that the next student survey would be undertaken in late May and would include extra questions around progression. A report on this would be brought to the June standards committee.

6/7 Part B confidential discussions

A separate minute was taken of these items.

8. Urgent Business notified in advance

There was none.

9. Dates and venues of future meetings

30 May @ 14.00 Strategy Session and Board meeting. Venue TBC
 18 July @ 15.00. Backstage Centre. Meet the Students/ Board Meeting.

Signed (Chair):

Dated: 30 May 2019