

**PUBLIC MINUTES OF
THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS BUSINESS BOARD MEETING HELD ON
30 MARCH 2023
MS Teams**

Present:

Mr W Abbott (External) (Chair)
Ms K Blackbird (External)
Ms J Buckland (Staff)
Mr M Burgess (Principal)
Mr P Carr (External)
Ms L Dance (External)
Mr A Dover (External)
Mr S Harvey (External)
Ms M James (External)
Mr P Lachecki (External)
Dr H Moyes (External)
Ms E Narey (External)
Ms H Ridler (External)

Apologies:

Mr D Humphreys (Staff Governor)
Ms C Rosser-Mayo - HR Director
Mr D Kettleby - Director of Student Employment and Experience, Curriculum Innovation and Students

In Attendance:

Mr A Bates - Chief Financial Officer
Dr K Morris - Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality
Ms J Cosson - Governance Professional and Clerk to the Board of Governors

Attendance: 92.9 %

13/23 Private Business

None.

14/23 Apologies

Were noted as above.

15/23 Declarations of Interest

It was confirmed that the Register of Interests recorded all of the current declarations of interests of those present.

16/23 Confidentiality of Items

As marked (C) for a period of two years. All the marked items were declared confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity.

17/23 Minutes of the Meeting of 9 February 2023

The minutes of the meetings were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

18/23 Matters Arising from the Minutes and Actions Matrix

Members were provided with an Actions Matrix and noted the status update of each item.

19/23 Principal's Update (C)

MB provided an update on College activity since the last meeting.

The update covered:

1. Sector update
2. Recruitment
3. GC Zero
4. Risks, including cyber
5. Grants

Members discussed the staff shortages across the sector along with the issue of pay and the threat of industrial action.

MB provided an update on the College's response to the new statutory duty to do meet local skills needs and the requirement to enter into an Accountability Agreement with DfE by 31 May setting out how the College has identified skills gaps, the changes it is making to the curriculum to meet the skills needs, and the 'SMART' targets to be agreed.

The Accountability Agreement should be informed by the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) which is being developed for Gloucestershire by Business West. The first phase of their work is meeting with employers to identify what they want following which they will move into phase 2 where they will engage with colleges to determine how these needs can be best met. The first phase of their work is also due for completion on 31 May. However, they are scheduled to publish initial findings by 31 March.

Matt Tudge from Business West has been invited to the next strategic Board meeting to go through the findings before the Board approves the College's Accountability Agreement.

In terms of qualification reforms, the government is pushing on with its qualification reform programme. As well as introducing T Levels and reducing the availability of other Level 3 qualifications, the reforms also extend to other levels.

This has the potential to be a significant change programme. The Executive Team intends to spend time on it at an upcoming strategic Board meeting.

Members considered the latest recruitment position.

At the last strategic Board meeting the Executive Team had presented the anticipated demographic changes and the return to pre-COVID GCSE boundaries, demonstrating how critical this is for the College's financial position.

MB provided an update on the implementation of GC Zero, which continues to be overseen via EWG.

Members reviewed the latest KPIs, scorecard and operating plan.

MB reported that each of the elements has been updated to mirror the six strands set out in the College's new Strategic Plan. In addition, the range of KPIs has been reviewed in order to provide a manageable number that are useful and to reflect on how meaningful they are. This work is particularly relevant to student outcomes and the application of the new EIF. The groupings have been changed in line with Ofsted key judgements to provide visibility of progress.

RESOLVED: Members noted the Principal's Update.

20/23 Student Progress Update (C)

KM provided an overview of the quality and performance of the curriculum up to the end of February 2023.

The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was updated after Ofsted to include any key areas of development that were not already identified in the QIP.

The QIP is reviewed at each C&Q with an assessment of progress against actions and the in-year impacts against each area for development.

KM provided an overview of recent sample checks carried out through deep dives completed by external and internal reviewers respectively in PS1 and English and maths.

KM reported that the HE Self-Evaluation Document (SED) had been reviewed and approved by C&Q and the College is confident that it is meeting the required academic standards and quality of experience for learners.

C&Q had also reviewed and approved the College's HE Access and Participation Plan (APP).

KM provided an update on changes to the curriculum including T Level roll out, Level 3 and Level 2 qualification reform, HTQs and HNC/Ds.

RESOLVED: The Student Progress Update was noted.

21/23 HR Update (C)

MB presented the paper on People and Culture.

Members found the report very helpful. They observed the similarities with recruitment difficulties in their own workplaces and noted that employee expectations and behaviours have changed in recent years. The College has also seen these trends in students and employers.

RESOLVED: The HR report was noted.

22/23 Financial Matters (C)

Management Accounts

AB took Members through the Management Accounts to January 2023.

RESOLVED: The Management Accounts were noted.

ESFA Financial Health Grade for 2021/22

MB tabled the outcome of the Gloucestershire College Financial Statements Review 2021 to 2022 and the College Governors Dashboard Report 21.11.2022, which confirmed the College's financial health grade assessed by the ESFA as Outstanding.

RESOLVED: The ESFA financial health grade for 2021/22 was noted.

23/23 Estates Strategy Update (C)

MB presented an update on progress against the Estates Strategy approved last year for the period 2020-2025, and proposals requiring Board support.

MB reported that the College has made good progress against many of the objectives in its strategy including:

1. Further improvements to the Estate condition.
2. Renegotiated leases for Global ATS in Cheltenham and Norton College at Launchpad.
3. Taken on and adapted accommodation to meet curriculum changes.
4. Progressed GC Zero and making significant reductions in carbon footprint.

Against this, running costs continue to increase.

MB reported that the College is making good progress in addressing environmental challenges.

Members were pleased to see pictures of the EPA Centre at Chancel Close in Gloucester.

It was noted that PC and MJ had attended the recent EV training facility launch in Gloucester.

The latest assessment of the Estate by condition category was set out in the paper as well as the priorities for 2023-2024.

It was felt that the College has good resources and its Estate is in better condition than many colleges. Ironically, this makes the College less attractive in terms of certain funding bids. A Member wondered if the College could raise the profile of the Estate more by e.g., entering it for a national award. MB replied that the College was a finalist in the Green Gown awards recently and does highlight its facilities as a selling point at open evenings and when inviting employers to visit.

ACTION: KB to forward details of a potential national award.

RESOLVED: The Board:

1. Noted the Estates Strategy Update.

24/23 Audit and Compliance (C)

Health and Safety Update

MB presented the Health and Safety Monthly Report to February 2023.

Members were pleased to note that, even with the Covid caveats, the direction of travel on incidents appeared to be going in the right direction.

KB continues to meet termly with James Billingham in her role as Health and Safety Link Governor.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the report and the current assessment of the College's Health and Safety arrangements.

Risk Management Update

AB provided an update on changes to the Strategic Risk Register highlighting the risk movements as well as new opportunities for the College.

The threat from Cyber is reviewed at each Audit Committee meeting and SH is Link Governor in this area.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the latest Risk Register changes.

Subcontracting Update

AB presented the latest Subcontracting Update.

AB reported that, as part of the ESFA subcontracting standard (July 2021), ICCA have been engaged to undertake the external assurance required to be submitted by 31 July 2023. They will undertake a review of the subcontracting controls in place for 2022/23 against the new standard and provide the necessary certificate for submission to ESFA. The audit date has been confirmed as 17 April 2023.

RESOLVED: The Subcontracting Update was noted.

25/23 Approval of Policies

Capability Policy

Members reviewed the changes made to the Capability Policy.

RESOLVED: The Capability Policy was approved.

26/23 Committee, Subsidiary Company and Link Governor Reports (C) as indicated in minutes

- **Betaris - 9 March 2023**
- **GFM - 9 March 2023**
- **GPS - 9 March 2023**
- **NCD - 9 March 2023**
- **Audit - 9 March 2023**
- **EWG – 16 March 2023**
- **C&Q – 28 March 2023**
- **Link Governor Report – Cyber**

Members reviewed the reports in the papers.

MJ provided a verbal report on the recent C&Q meeting. The Committee had been impressed that the Ofsted recommendations had been incorporated into the QIP and the action plan was already being implemented. The Committee had reviewed the matrix that has been developed for HNS to ensure they have choice over their activities.

She explained that the SED approved at C&Q will align more to the OfS Conditions of Registration going forward.

Members reviewed a paper prepared by SH as Cyber Link Governor on the desktop exercise carried out by the College in January to test its Cyber Incident Response Plan.

RESOLVED: The reports were noted and endorsed. SH was thanked for his work as Link Governor for Cyber, which provided additional information and assurance to the Board in that area.

27/23 Use of College Seal

RESOLVED: The Board noted and endorsed the use of the Seal as set out in the paper.

28/23 Governance Matters

Regulatory Developments

JC presented a paper which included details of the following matters and the actions to be taken in relation to each of them:

1. Safeguarding
2. Funding/Financial Sustainability/Audit/Risk

3. OfS
4. Ofsted
5. Curriculum
6. Legislation
7. LSIPs
8. Cyber
9. Governance
10. Governor Training and Development

RESOLVED: The Board noted the regulatory developments since the last meeting and the actions taken as a result.

Governor Learning and Development Activity

Members had been provided with the record of Governor Learning and Development activities since the last meeting.

The Chair thanked Members for giving time to the College and to their role.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Governor Learning and Development activities, which enrich the Board's understanding and oversight of the College.

29/23 Any Other Business

The Chair encouraged Members to forward ideas for strategic Board meeting items to JC and to complete the questions in advance sheet prior to Board meetings.

30/23 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Strategy Board Meeting - 25 May 2023, Cinderford campus, 4pm.

The Chair suggested arrangements be explored for car-sharing/using the College's electric vehicles to the next meeting in order to reduce the environmental impact of driving.