

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING  
HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2021 AT 4.30PM  
(Hybrid meeting - STEAM Academy Conference Room and via Google Meet)**

**PRESENT:**

Mr Paul Croke (Chair)  
Mr D John Finch  
Ms Emma Adamson  
Ms Trish D'Souza  
Mrs Judith Evans  
Dr John Graystone  
Mr Jeff Greenidge  
Miss Esmie Guild - Student Governor  
Mr Konrad Halabuda - Staff Governor  
Mrs Kathy Lewis  
Mr Hayden Llewellyn  
Ms Alwena Morgan  
Mrs Joanne Oak  
Mr Joshua O'Sullivan-Woodward - Student Governor  
Mr Simon Pirotte - Principal  
Mrs Satwant Pryce  
Cllr Dr Charles Smith

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Denise Brookes-Cooze - Head of Work-Based Learning - presentations only  
Mrs Rachel Edmonds-Naish - Head of Curriculum for STEAM (Observer)  
Mrs Nicola Eyre (NE) - Clerk  
Mr Andrew Gibbs (AG) - Vice-Principal  
Mrs Sam Morgan - Director of People  
Mr Jon Nottingham - Active Wellbeing Lead  
Mr Matt Williams - Executive Director of Work-Based Learning and Engage Training

The meeting opened at 4.40pm.

The Principal opened the meeting by paying a special tribute to the three retiring members at their last Governing Body meeting - Mr Paul Croke (Chair), Mr D John Finch (Vice-Chair) and Mrs Kathy Lewis. The Principal thanked these members for their tireless work and commented on how the new STEAM Academy is testament to their significant efforts and contributions. The Principal added that these three members have been instrumental in driving the College forward and for helping set the people-centred values and culture that underpin the mission and ethos of the College.

The Chair, on behalf of himself and the two members thanked the Principal, staff, students and the Senior Leadership Team as well as the Governing Body members and Clerk for a "remarkable" few years. The Chair commented that the achievement of the Beacon Award

for leadership and governance is evidence of everyone's hard work and how the College is continuing to go from strength to strength.

The Chair welcomed the two new student governors to the meeting - Miss Esmie Guild (L3 Public Services) and Mr Joshua O'Sullivan-Woodward (HND in Countryside Management) and all members and staff were introduced.

The Chair asked the members to ratify Ms Emma Adamson's appointment onto the Governing Body, Audit and Curriculum & Quality Committees that had been approved electronically following the Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 30 September. The Governing Body ratified this appointment and the Chair welcomed Ms Adamson to the meeting. Ms Adamson thanked the Governing Body and said that it's a pleasure to be part of the Governing Body.

Finally, the Chair raised the issue of the vacancy for the role of Chair upon his retirement on 23 October following the withdrawal of [redacted] from the role of Chair-Elect during the previous week. As the Vice-Chair is retiring on the same day as the Chair, the governance rules state that the Vice-Chair takes on the role of Acting Chair. Therefore, Mr Jeff Greenidge will become the Acting Chair on 24 October. The process for appointing a new Chair was discussed under agenda item 6 - Governance Matters.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) and Belonging - setting the scene for 2021/22**

The Principal gave a presentation on equality, diversity, inclusion and a sense of belonging and what this means at Bridgend College. He explained that he has given this a lot of thought and reflected on it both personally and with staff and students. The College's Pride Progress Flag crossing at the entrance to the STEAM Academy is a statement of intent about the College's commitment to equality and diversity and the Principal stressed the importance of living and breathing these values and behaviour.

Statistics were presented about the gender make up of Welsh Councils/Cabinets and the Chairs and Principals of Welsh colleges and how these are still very male-dominated. The fact that the first statue of a named Welsh woman was only unveiled a fortnight earlier was highlighted and it was questioned why it has taken until 2021 for this to happen. Quotes and illustrations were displayed to demonstrate varying views in this arena.

The Principal concluded by saying that silence equals acceptance and that the College needs to be courageous. However, there is the potential for backlash when any action is taken in this field.

The Principal invited the governors' views on this and received the following feedback:

- The staff governor said that he feels very proud to work at the College and that the presentation was amazing.
- It was questioned how the Governing Body can best support the College as the EDI arena is complex and it was agreed that the Governing Body will review how it can best support the College's commitment at an away day.
- The sector needs to outline its commitment to EDI.

- Change is highly emotive.
- EDI needs to be embedded in systems in order for it to be sustainable.

The Principal concluded that the pandemic has given both him and the College the opportunity to reflect on what is important and what can the College do in order for people to connect and belong.

It was agreed that this should be discussed further at an away day style meeting as the Governing Body has the responsibility of overseeing the strategic mission of the College.

**ACTION - SP/NE**

### **Work-Based Learning (WBL) Update**

Mrs Denise Brookes-Cooze (Head of WBL) gave a presentation on the work and successes of the WBL team. The following highlights were given:

- The apprenticeship contract has grown from [redacted] in 2014/15 to [redacted] in 2021/22.
- There has been a 25% growth in the contract value from 2020/21 to 2021/22.
- The College is performing above the national comparators for quality.
- The College was the smallest provider in the B-WBL Consortium by contract value in 2013/14 to the largest provider now; there are 9 providers in total.
- 85% of the WBL provision is apprenticeships - there are 1,200 apprentices working with 250 employers in several sectors. Originally the provision was just in engineering and construction but this has expanded considerably. A slide was presented of the numerous employers that the College works with.
- The other areas of work are in commercial activity, ESF funded projects and employer engagement.
- The College was short-listed for the TES (Times Education Supplement) Award for Apprenticeship Programme of the Year in 2019/20 and apprentices have been nominated and won many apprenticeship awards.
- There are challenges facing the WBL team, the biggest of these being COVID. Also, the College has taken on displaced learners and staff from the organisations that were unsuccessful in the recent tender bid and is managing this transition.
- The WBL strategy and next steps were presented and it was explained that the WBL team is ambitious to continually develop, improve and grow the provision.

A member asked what has led to the success over the past few years. The Head of WBL explained that herself and the Executive Director for WBL work well together as a team and are very passionate and driven to achieve a top quality offering whilst trying to grow the provision. There is mutual trust and commitment between the College and employers which has meant that the collaboration and partnership working is excelling. Also, the B-WBL Consortium rewards performance and this has contributed to the growth.

Another member questioned about the impact of taking on displaced learners and staff and how this has worked. It was explained that the Welsh Government (WG) matches the displaced learners to the most suitable WBL provider and it is now the College's obligation to ensure that they complete their qualifications. With regards to the TUPE'ing of staff, on the whole this has worked well but there have been some issues.

It was questioned whether the increase in apprenticeships has impacted on HE and it was concluded that it must have had an impact.

Another member commented that the provision is very impressive and the inclusive apprenticeships shows that thought is being given to all areas of activity within WBL. The importance of knowing the vision for WBL and being responsive to employers' needs by analysing data was stressed.

The presentation concluded with the Executive Director explaining that curriculum innovation meetings are held to try to identify the areas where employers need people. The difficulty of planning this against a backdrop of labour market shortage was raised and the role of Cyfleoedd (the College's careers hub) was highlighted whereby they provide careers support to learners and have links with industry and the outside world.

*5.50pm - Mrs Denise Brookes-Cooze left the meeting*

## **1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The following apologies were noted - Mrs Sara Davies (Staff Governor), Mrs Dawn Lewis-Whelan and Mrs Julia Longville.

Ms Viv Buckley (Deputy Principal), Mr Joe Baldwin (Assistant Principal - Learner Journey) and Mrs Liz Evans (Director of Curriculum & Quality) had been invited to the meeting but had submitted apologies due to work pressures.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made at the start of the meeting.

Ms Trish D'Souza declared an interest in the item included in Any Other Business due to her employment at Capital Law.

## **3. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2021**

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 1 July 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **4. MATTERS ARISING**

### **4.1 Action Tracker**

There were five actions on the action tracker - one green, three amber and one blue. The blue action was discussed as part of agenda item 9 - Campus Development Updates.

### **4.2 Completed actions for 2020/21**

The Governing Body noted these and commented how these show the follow up work undertaken as a result of the meetings.

## **5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (INCLUDING COVID-19 UPDATE)**

The Principal gave the following update:

- There is a quiet optimism about COVID with low numbers of positive cases.
- The enrolment for full-time FE learners is under target but this is consistent with the sector which is seeing a decline in the number of vocational learners for 2021/22.
- The College is taking workplace wellbeing very seriously. An independent facilitator, Mrs Sharron Lusher, is holding focus groups with staff to discuss any issues. This is in response to the findings in the EWC National Education Workplace Survey.
- [Redacted]
- It is envisaged that an Estyn inspection might take place in the 2022 calendar year and this would be a pilot inspection under the new regime.
- Ms Viv Buckley (Deputy Principal) and Mrs Rachel Edmonds-Naish (Head of Curriculum for STEM) were both shortlisted in the Chwarae Teg's Womenspire Awards.
- The College has been awarded the prestigious Princess Royal Training Award for our Person-Centred Leadership programme, led by Mrs Sam Morgan (Director of People).
- The summer school was a huge undertaking and proved to be very successful.

A member asked whether Estyn has changed their focus due to the pandemic. The Principal explained that previously Estyn focused on published data for FE colleges whereas now, judgements and conclusions will be based on what is seen at an inspection as the data is not available like it was previously.

It was questioned whether the WG would be open to a discussion on enrolments and the Principal commented that the College is planning for a January intake as schools are finding that some Year 12 learners are not coping with the demands of A Levels.

The issue of lowering the delivery target and the impact this has on funding was discussed. It was stressed that the sector is lobbying the WG against doing this as the cost base is remaining static; it is the loss of 1-2 learners in a class that is leading to the under-delivery.

Another member commented that he's pleased that the College is responding to the results of the EWC National Education Workplace Survey and questioned about the willingness of staff and learners to attend on-site. The Principal said that the vast majority of staff and learners are delighted to be back but there are a small number who are still nervous to attend in person. The College is supporting these people and there are no significant issues. The STEAM Academy has had a really positive impact on staff and learners.

[Redacted]

The Governing Body noted the update.

*6.10-6.15pm - a comfort break was held*

## **6. GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

### **Items recommended for approval**

- Committee membership for 2021/22 - the Clerk explained that the structure of the committees will be determined after the new Chair is appointed.
- Penybont Sixth Form College Joint Committee - the members approved the disbandment of this committee due to the winding down of the partnership.
- The Remuneration Committee's amended Terms of Reference were approved by the Governing Body. The Clerk explained that the Curriculum & Quality Terms of Reference will be considered further by the Search & Governance Committee.
- The process for ending membership for non-compliance with the Code of Conduct was approved by the Governing Body for inclusion within the Code of Conduct for 2022/23 onwards.
- Appointment process for new Chair - the Clerk explained that she would circulate a proposed appointment process via email for approval. If approved, the nomination process would run prior to the December Governing Body meeting so that a Chair could be appointed at the December meeting.
- The Resource Planning Committee (RPC) reviewed and recommended the College's 2021 EDI Report (based on data for the 2019/20 academic year) for approval subject to some minor amendments. The Clerk said that she'll circulate the link to this report and asked members to approve it electronically. The Governing Body agreed to proceed in this way.

### **Items for noting**

- Governing Body Activity Report and Clerk's Report for 2020/21 - the Clerk explained that there is further work to be done on this report and it will be presented at the December Governing Body meeting.
- Policies approved at committee level - the Clerk reported that there have been no policies approved at committee level.
- Reportable events to the WG - the Clerk had included in her report details of the events that are reportable to the WG as defined in the FE Audit Code of Practice. The Clerk informed the members that she will contact the WG to report the change of Chair of the Governing Body after Mr Paul Croke's retirement.
- The College Honorary Fellows being awarded at the HE graduation ceremonies on 16 October are Suzanne Packer, Professor Uzo Iwobi OBE and Professor Helen Langton.

The members noted the information.

## **7. MIM 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PARTNERING AGREEMENT (SPA)**

The Vice-Principal reminded the Governing Body that it had agreed to enter into this SPA on 15 October 2020 and informed the members that a Deed of Adherence now needs to be signed.

A member queried whether the College was looking to do any work under this agreement currently and the Vice-Principal explained that by entering into this SPA, it gives the College options but it is not bound in any way. There are no plans to use this SPA at the moment.

The Governing Body approved the signing of the Deed of Adherence that had been included in the papers and delegated authority to Mr Simon Pirotte in his role as Principal and Chief Executive to sign the Deed. Mr Andrew Gibbs in his role as Vice-Principal (Resources) was nominated as the Joining Participant's Representative.

As an addition to the discussion, Cllr Dr C Smith informed the Governing Body that Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) is aiming to acquire the Police Station site in March 2022 and for the demolition to take place over the summer months.

## **8. UPDATE ON 2020/21 DRAFT ACCOUNTS INCLUDING KPIS**

[Redacted]

The Governing Body noted the update.

## **9. CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

### STEAM Academy and Landbased Centre

The Vice-Chair requested that the fact that the STEAM Academy project was completed on time and on budget whilst incorporating the Landbased Centre building should be recognised. It was agreed that the Chair should send a thank you to everyone involved in the project, including the developers. **ACTION - PC**

The Chair of RPC commented that it is extremely rare that projects of this size and nature are completed on time and to budget and that it is a remarkable achievement.

### Town Centre Campus

The Vice-Principal explained that on the morning of 21 October, the STEAM Academy building is being officially opened by Mr Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language, and in the afternoon of the same day, the College is holding the tender interviews with architects for the town centre campus. The Governing Body noted that Mrs Satwant Pryce in her role as Chair of RPC is attending these interviews as previously agreed.

The Vice-Principal presented the timeline for the build which showed the earliest possible handover date of April/May 2025.

Members were reminded that the biggest risk to the project is the acquisition of the site and that there isn't another alternative site available. BCBC are purchasing the site as they can access the WG funding.

A member asked why there has already been a six month slippage in the planned acquisition as usually delays indicate that a project may not proceed. It was suggested that Ms Janine Nightingale, Corporate Director for Communities at BCBC, is invited to attend a Governing Body meeting to provide an update. **ACTION - SP/AG.**

The Vice-Principal reminded the members that the [redacted] that has been allocated for the design stage will only be spent piecemeal as the project progresses and hence the whole amount is not under threat if the project doesn't advance.

*6.50pm - Mr Hayden Llewellyn left the meeting*

The Governing Body agreed to delegate authority to Mr Simon Pirotte in his role as Principal and Chief Executive to appoint a multi-disciplinary team on 29 October 2021 in line with the timeframe presented.

Further discussions about a communication strategy and community benefit were held. The Vice-Principal added that he hoped that there would be a concept idea after the interviews being held the following week. The student governors' opinions were sought and they both thought a town centre campus was an excellent idea, especially with the transport links. One of the student governors commented that the opening of the STEAM Academy has been really exciting for the learners.

#### Land at Pencoed

There were no developments on this to report other than the College being contacted by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council about a section of this land being included in the plans for a new highway. The College is taking advice on this as it could compromise the inclusion of the land in the LDP.

It was agreed that a project closure report for the STEAM Academy and Landbased Centre is drawn up so that there is a corporate memory of this. **ACTION - AG** This was discussed and agreed at the RPC meeting held the previous week.

The Governing Body noted the updates.

## **10. CORPORATE KPIS**

There were two red KPIS:

- KPI 1 - Achieve a minimum of 90% successful completion for all learning pathways - this is based on the 2019/20 results until the outcomes for 2020/21 are confirmed.
- KPI 5 - Achieve a minimum of 2% turnover as operational surplus - a deficit budget of [redacted] has been set for 2021/22. The Vice-Principal reported that it is hopeful that this will be improved upon.

The Governing Body discussed whether targets should be set for equality, diversity and inclusion and it was agreed that these can be problematic. Instead a mapping of progress should be undertaken. The Governing Body agreed to discuss this further in an away day as agreed at the start of the meeting.

The Governing Body noted the update.



## 11. COMMITTEE MINUTES:

### 11.1 RESOURCE PLANNING COMMITTEE - 10 JUNE 2021 (CONFIRMED)

The members **RECEIVED** the minutes.

### 11.2 SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

These minutes were not available when the papers were published and will therefore be included on the December 2021 agenda.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)

### Building owned by The People Business Wales Ltd (PBW) business

The Vice-Principal explained that the College wishes to transfer the building held on a long leasehold by the PBW to the College in order for the company to be wound up.

Ms Trish D'Souza declared an interest as, although not involved in the advice, Capital Law have been advising the College and she is an employee of Capital Law.

The Governing Body approved the transfer of the long leasehold of the building to the College.

**RESOLUTION:** We, being the Governing Body of Bridgend College **RESOLVE** pursuant to the articles of government of Bridgend College that Paul Croke is authorised to authorised to execute the transfer of 12 and 14 Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4HD between (1) The People Business Wales Ltd and (2) Bridgend College with the intention that any document executed under this authority will have the same effect as if the seal of Bridgend College had been applied.

### Departing members

The Vice-Principal, on behalf of himself and the Deputy Principal, thanked the Chair for his leadership and Mr D John Finch and Mrs Kathy Lewis for all of their support both at the Governing Body and on the Audit Committee.

### **DEBRIEF**

- The hybrid style meeting worked well.
- The members on the screen couldn't see the Principal's slides when he was presenting. The Clerk will share these with the members.
- It was a "fantastic" meeting that was efficiently run.
- Ms Emma Adamson thanked the Governing Body for the warm welcome.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 7.05pm.