

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2020 AT 4.30PM - Via Google Meet**

PRESENT:

Mr P Croke (Chair)
Mr D J Finch
Ms T D'Souza
Mrs S Davies - Staff Governor (joined at 5.35pm)
Dr J Graystone
Mr M Gregory
Mr K Halabuda - Staff Governor
Mr R W Landon
Mrs K Lewis
Mr T Lewis - Student Governor
Mr H Llewellyn
Mrs J Longville
Ms A Morgan
Ms S Parkhouse - Student Governor
Mr S Pirotte - Principal
Mrs S Pryce
Cllr Dr C Smith (left the meeting at 5.40pm)

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr J Baldwin (JB) Assistant Principal Learner Journey
Ms V Buckley (VB) - Deputy Principal
Mrs N Eyre (NE) - Clerk
Mr J Forse - Student Engagement Lead (to support Student Governors)
Mr A Gibbs (AG) - Vice-Principal
Mrs S Morgan (SM) - Director of People

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm

The presentation on the Heat Academy was given after the welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He gave a special thanks to Mrs A Hoy who had retired earlier that week after serving a four year term and also to Mr M Gregory and Mr R W Landon who are both due to retire next week. Mr M Gregory initially served as a local authority representative and more recently as an independent member of the Governing Body. Mr R W Landon had initially served as a co-opted member prior to being made a full Governing Body member in 2012. Mr R W Landon has been the Chair of the Resource Planning Committee (RPC) for the past five years.

The Vice-Principal added that he wished to thank Mrs A Hoy and Mr M Gregroy also for their contributions, but wanted to give an extra thank you to Mr R W Landon for the help and advice he has given on a personal level as the Chair of RPC.

Apologies for absence were noted from Dr B Calvert.

Mrs S Davies had informed the Clerk that she would join the meeting late due to her teaching commitment.

The Chair formally welcomed the student governors and Mr J Forse, Student Engagement Lead, who was mentoring them at this meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Dr C Smith declared a prejudiciary interest in agenda item 9 - "Partnerships and Collaborative Working" due to his position as the Cabinet member for Education at Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and left the meeting before this agenda item was discussed. No other declarations were made.

PRESENTATION - HEAT ACADEMY (Deputy Principal)

The Deputy Principal gave a presentation on the Heat Academy project that the College is working in partnership with BCBC on the decarbonisation of heat. The Deputy Principal explained the background to the global project and how eleven local authorities in the UK have been selected for this smart systems heat project; Bridgend is the only local authority in Wales to have been selected. Other cities involved in the project include Toronto, New York, Malaga, Stockholm and Rotterdam.

The project will involve community education, product design/manufacture/roll out, upskilling of the workforce and the creation of jobs that have not yet even been thought of. Projects in the other local authorities that are at a much more advanced stage have shown that they are much more effective when they work in partnership with an educational partner. The hope is that Bridgend College will become a Centre of Excellence but there is a significant amount of work to be done to get to this stage.

The purpose of the presentation was to inform the members of the importance of this project and the potential it has for the College. However, it is still very much in its infancy.

A member thanked the Deputy Principal for the presentation and underlined the prestige of the project with it being truly global. The Deputy Principal commented that it is a massive opportunity for the College and it is exciting to be involved in, especially to have the College's name under the umbrella with all of the other names.

Another member asked whether it will have any implications for the STEAM Academy and the Deputy Principal commented that if the project is as big as the one in Stoke, it would need its own purpose built building.

The members NOTED the presentation.

3. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2020

The Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 3 September 2020 were **CONFIRMED** as an accurate record of the meeting.

The members agreed that the section highlighted in yellow should be withheld from publication on the College's website due its commercial sensitivities.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Action Tracker

Action 1 (Publication of Minutes online) - COMPLETED. All Governing Body minutes of meetings from September 2020 will be published on the College's website.

Action 2 (Presentation - number of learners with no other support for Mental Health/ Well-being than at College) - this action will be covered in the annual Safeguarding Report that will be presented at the Governing Body meeting being held on 10 December 2020.

Action 3 (Governor training) - the Clerk will contact the members who have outstanding training to complete.

Action 4 ("Differences Made" section to be added to the Governing Body Activity Report) - this will be included in the 2020/21 Activity Report.

Action 5 (Consideration of adding Penybont Sixth Form College as a separate risk on the Risk Register) - the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will consider this in December prior to the next Audit Committee meeting in February 2021.

The Members **NOTED** the actions.

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

The Principal informed the Governing Body of the following:

- To date, three staff, 11 learners and 2 Penybont Sixth Form Colleges learners have tested positive for COVID-19. The impact of this has been minimal due to the way the curriculum has been managed. The College would like to increase face-to-face teaching, however, this means that the size of the bubbles get bigger and this has associated risks.
- Learners at Level 3 and above are working well online but there are limits to the level of engagement possible online with lower level learners as they have enrolled to do "hands-on" courses. However, there are some exceptions to this and in the coming weeks, each course is going to be RAG-rated and strategies implemented to improve engagement.
- The Track & Trace system response rates have slowed.

- Relations with the trade unions are still very strong on the College's approach to the pandemic.
- The second staff wellbeing survey is live. The results from the first one were very positive as reported at the previous meeting.
- Funding has been like a "rollercoaster" which has made budgeting and forecasting very difficult.
- The Principal has met with Ian Dickson, Lead Estyn Inspector. Estyn currently doesn't have an inspection schedule drawn up.

The Principal then discussed the pay award as the Minister's announcement on the teachers' pay award had been made the previous day. The Principal explained that it is a differentiated pay award and the lowest pay scale has been abolished which means new teachers will receive an 8%+ pay increase with teachers on other scales receiving differing amounts. The issue of approximately half of the staff at an FE college being on business support contracts was highlighted so there is uncertainty what this announcement will mean for the FE sector. However, all colleges in Wales have budgeted for a 0% pay award.

A number of the achievements that were in the Principal's report were highlighted:

- The nursery being placed among the top 20 of recommended day nurseries by daynurseries.co.uk; these are based on customer reviews.
- The Cyber First Gold Award for the Cyber College - one of only five colleges/schools.
- The College has been shortlisted for three TES FE Awards (awards ceremony being held online the day after the meeting):
 - Specialist Provider of the Year
 - FE Leader of the Year
 - Apprenticeship Programme of the Year
- The College has been assessed at the Leader stage for the work on inclusivity, as part of the Disability Confidence Scheme.
- Achievement of the Quality Standard for Carer Support from the Carers Foundation.
- Ruth Rowe, Entrepreneurship Officer, has received a Fellowship from the Enterprise Educators UK; the only Fellow from a Welsh institution or FE college.

The Principal stressed that as well as all of the effort tackling COVID-19, the SLT is still horizon-scanning and planning for the future.

The Vice-Chair requested that another letter is sent to all staff thanking them for their efforts during this pandemic (**ACTION** - PC/SP).

The members were invited to provide feedback/ask questions:

A member stated that the removal of the lowest teachers' pay grade will have big implications on costs for schools and colleges.

The staff and student governors were invited to provide their feedback on their experience during the pandemic. One of the student governors commented that the College had been "*absolutely phenomenal in dealing with the management of COVID and wellbeing of students*" and one of the staff governors also fed back very positively about his experience.

The Governing Body NOTED the update.

6. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

2019/20 Review - Governing Body Self-Assessment, Skills Analysis and Attendance for 2019/20

The Clerk fed back that the Governing Body Self-Assessment results were really positive and that there's some areas to focus on which are detailed in the Search & Governance (S&G) Committee minutes from the meeting held on 1 October 2020. There was also a year-on-year improvement in attendance and when benchmarked against other Welsh FE colleges, the figures were similar or better. The Clerk also drew attention to the Skills Analysis and the areas for focus for the S&G Committee.

Items recommended for approval

1. Process for appointing Chair and Vice Chair - the Clerk drew the members' attention to the proposed process that had been recommended by the S&G Committee. The Clerk made the members aware of the changes necessary to the process due to the pandemic.
The Governing Body APPROVED the process and the Clerk requested that all nominations are received by 12pm on 12 November.
2. Online meeting protocol - the Governing Body APPROVED the protocol.
3. Committee structures - the Clerk informed the Governing Body that there are three vacancies on RPC, one on Curriculum & Quality and two on Audit. These vacancies will be filled when new Governing Body appointments are made.
The Clerk also advised the members that Ms T D'Souza had been asked to join the Remuneration Committee and she has accepted this appointment.
The members were also made aware that when Mr P Croke, Mr D J Finch and Mrs K Lewis retire in October 2021, there will be three vacancies on the S&G, Selection and Remuneration committees and therefore, succession planning for this will be considered by the S&G in its next meeting.
4. Audit Committee's Terms of Reference - the Governing Body APPROVED the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference as recommended by the S&G Committee.
5. Approval of the Code of Conduct - the Governing Body APPROVED the Code of Conduct as recommended by the S&G Committee.
6. Approval of cover sheets - the Governing Body APPROVED the continuation of the agenda item cover sheets in the current form as recommended by the S&G Committee.
7. Continuation of bilingual agendas and minutes - the Governing Body APPROVED the continuation of bilingual agendas and minutes as this is best practice. Also, the Governing Body APPROVED that only the Governing Body minutes are published on College's website. The committees' minutes are covered within these minutes and

therefore do not need to be on the website. A member requested that a tracker is included to check the number of hits and also to have separate links for the Welsh and English versions.

Items for noting:

- The two new student governors had been introduced to the Governing Body earlier in the meeting.
- The Chair and Principal have delegated authority from the S&G Committee to approach suitable people about the possibility of joining the Governing Body.

The members NOTED the information.

7. DISCIPLINARY POLICY - APPROVAL

The Director of People explained that this policy, based on the ACAS Code of Practice, has been through the College's internal approval process as well as being consulted on with trade unions and by the RPC.

The Governing Body was given the opportunity to discuss the policy.

The policy was APPROVED by the members.

8. MIM (MUTUAL INVESTMENT MODEL) 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS WELSH EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP – STRATEGIC PARTNERING AGREEMENT

The Vice-Principal explained that all public sector bodies have been requested by the Welsh Government (WG) to sign up to this agreement. This will allow the College to access this private initiative funding model and procurement framework in addition to the traditional capital investment schemes.

The Vice-Principal stressed that there is no commitment by signing up to the agreement and there are no plans to use the MIM for any capital projects currently. The College's preferred option remains the capital investment schemes such as the WG's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

The Governing Body was referred to the recommendations in paragraph 2 of the paper where the approvals needed were listed. The Vice-Principal invited feedback from the members prior to asking for any approvals.

Some members fed back their scepticism around private/public partnerships and how these have historically resulted in much higher costs for public bodies. Also it is unclear as to what the advantages of these partnerships are but the Principal commented that by signing up to the MIM, it keeps the College's option open for the future.

Another member stated that the agreement was very convoluted and questioned whether the College could agree to it "in principle" without fully entering into it or whether the decision could be delayed. The Vice-Principal suggested that legal advice could be sought if

the members wanted it and that there would be no implications for not signing the agreement. However, the College would be in the minority by not doing it.

The Chair asked if the members wished to sign up to the recommendations as listed in paragraph 2:

- (a) Approve the execution, delivery and performance of the Strategic Partnering Agreement with the Welsh Education Partnership Co in September 2020 to facilitate the delivery of a range of infrastructure services and the delivery of education and community facilities;*
- (b) Approve the Strategic Partnering Agreement at Appendix 1 of this report and summarised in Appendix 2 this report so as to give effect to recommendation (a), subject to recommendation (c) below;*
- (c) Give delegated authority to the Principal and Chief Executive on the taking of independent legal and any other professional advice as necessary:
 - (i) To approve the final terms of the Strategic Partnering Agreement, including any amendments to the Strategic Partnering Agreement approved here as may be necessary, for reasons including but not limited to finalising any outstanding areas; and*
 - (ii) To approve any further deeds and documents which are ancillary to the Strategic Partnering Agreement approved here**
- (d) Approve the appointment of the Vice Principal for Resources as 'Participant Representative' to sit on the Strategic Partnering Board (SPB);*
- (e) Note that in agreeing to the Strategic Partnering, it is not being asked to decide to proceed with any Pathfinder Project, and that nothing within the Strategic Partnering Agreement commits the College to make any such commitment. Any decision to proceed with a Project will be reported back to the Governing Body in future report(s) for decision.*

The Vice-Principal once again stressed that there was no commitment by signing the agreement which is outlined in paragraph (e).

The Governing Body gave the approvals and delegated authority as requested by paragraph (a) to (e) above.

The order of the agenda items was altered to allow for Mrs S Davies to be present for the discussion on the agenda item "9. Partnerships and Collaborative Working".

10. CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

The Vice-Principal presented the executive summaries of the two latest progress reports for the STEAM Academy and the Landbased Centre and car park. The full progress reports are discussed by the RPC.

The Vice-Principal provided the following update:

STEAM Academy project

- There has been no further slippage in the time lost; this still stands at 13 working days. The contracted completion dates were discussed:
 - 22 June 2021 - STEAM Academy
 - 13 September 2021 - Landbased Centre
 - 12 October 2020 - Car park. The work on the car park is complete but the contractors are using this whilst on site.
- The contingency is £367k and the project managers have advised that this is a “healthy” contingency for this stage of the project. There are investment plans in place for this contingency if it is not needed to complete the project.
- There are still some risks around the VAT rate that will be charged on the Landbased Centre. There are also some concerns around the appropriateness of some of the engineering equipment being transferred from Cowbridge Road due to its age/state. Any contingency that remains will be used mainly to invest in engineering equipment.
- The KPIs remain in line with what was reported at the previous meeting.

5.35pm - Mrs S Davies joined the meeting.

Town Centre

- The College is still exploring options with South Wales Police and Aldi; some valuations have been commissioned.

Land at the Pencoed campus

- This is still going through the LDP consultation process; it is still a preferred site.
- The earlier discussions with South Wales Police about them acquiring an area of land have drawn to a close as this might complicate the inclusion of land on the LDP.

Members were invited to ask questions. A member queried about the project management for the STEAM Academy and the Vice-Principal commented that the project manager, who has a background in quantity surveying, has been very impressive.

The Chair thanked the Vice-Principal for the update and commented that he felt reassured by the information provided.

9. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE WORKING - CONFIDENTIAL

Cllr Dr C Smith left the meeting and didn't rejoin the meeting after this agenda item.

This minute is redacted.

11. UPDATE ON 2019/20 DRAFT ACCOUNTS INCLUDING KPIS - CONFIDENTIAL

This minute is redacted.

12. CORPORATE KPIS

The Vice-Principal explained that these KPIS do not move a lot during the year and overall it is a very positive picture.

The Governing Body NOTED the update.

13. COMMITTEE MINUTES:

13.1 RESOURCE PLANNING COMMITTEE - 1 OCTOBER 2020 (UNCONFIRMED)

The Members **RECEIVED** the Minutes.

The Chair of RPC was invited to give feedback to the Governing Body as this was his last meeting due to his retirement later in the month. The Chair of RPC thanked the Vice-Principal for the way he presented the papers and reports. They are consistently clear, understandable and of a very high standard. He added that he has no concerns and that everything appears to be fine.

13.2 SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 1 OCTOBER 2020 (UNCONFIRMED)

The Members **RECEIVED** the Minutes.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair drew attention to the letters of support that he and the Principal had received from the Minister for Education thanking them for the way the College had reopened since the lockdown. A copy of these had been made available earlier that day to all members in the Shared drive.

DEBRIEF

As there was a Reserved Business meeting following this meeting, a debrief wasn't held. However, many positive comments had been made throughout the meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 6.47pm.