

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 4.30PM
HYBRID MEETING - BRIDGEND BOARDROOM AND VIA GOOGLE MEET**

PRESENT:

Mr Jeff Greenidge - Chair
Ms Emma Adamson
Ms Trish D'Souza
Mrs Judith Evans
Dr John Graystone
Mr Hayden Llewellyn
Mrs Julia Longville
Mr Joshua O'Sullivan-Woodward - Student Governor - *joined at 5.30pm*
Mr Simon Pirotte - Principal
Mrs Satwant Pryce

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Joe Baldwin - Assistant Principal, Learner Journey
Ms Viv Buckley - Deputy Principal
Mrs Nicola Eyre - Clerk
Mr Andrew Gibbs - Vice-Principal
Mr Jon Nottingham, Active Wellbeing Lead (supporting the student governors)

The meeting opened at 4.30pm.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first hybrid-style meeting since the relaxing of restrictions at the end of January.

Apologies for absence were noted from Mrs Sara Davies (staff governor), Miss Esmie Guild (student governor), Mr Konrad Halabuda (staff governor), Ms Alwena Morgan and Mrs Joanne Oak. An apology was received from Mrs Dawn Lewis-Whelan after the meeting.

The members wished for their condolences to be recorded for Mrs Sara Davies and Mr Joe Baldwin who had both recently lost their mothers.

It was noted that this would have been Mrs Sara Davies' last meeting. Mrs Davies' term of office expires in March 2022 and she has chosen not to re-stand due to the clashes with her teaching commitments and the timings of Governing Body and committee meetings.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 9 December 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Action Tracker

There were six actions on the action tracker - three green and three amber.

The Clerk provided updates for each of the actions.

PRESENTATION: Gemma Carr-Evans, Head of Curriculum for Partnerships

Mrs Carr-Evans gave a presentation to the Governing Body on the partnership work taking place at the College. The aim of partnership working is the “coming together to achieve a common purpose” with the focus being on the learner.

Mrs Carr-Evans explained that there are four areas of provision:

1. Junior Apprenticeships (14-16 year olds)
 - Pupils accepted from nine comprehensive schools in Bridgend;
 - 2021/22 is the fifth year of the programme with 50 apprentices enrolled;
 - Courses are run in Hair & Beauty or Construction and the apprentices also study for their GCSEs in Numeracy, Maths and English.
2. Twilight courses
 - There are 10 AS and A2 courses offered;
 - 217 learners are enrolled from 12 different schools;
 - Taught at the STEAM Academy.
3. Penybont Sixth Form College and Collaboration
 - 2021/22 is the sixth year;
 - 159 learners enrolled across Year 12 and Year 13;
 - The College works in collaboration on some subjects with the schools.
4. Inspire2Learn, Elected Home Educated and Heronsbridge
 - January starts are offered for to young people at risk of becoming NEET

Overall there are 516 learners registered under partnership working and the outcomes are something that the College is very proud of. The results for the twilight courses, junior apprenticeships and the Penybont Sixth Form College were displayed.

It was noted that of the 41 junior apprentices who completed in 2020/21, 36 had progressed onto FE courses at the College, three had enrolled on an apprenticeship and two had secured employment.

In addition to the above, the College is offering transition and support packages to schools (both inside and outside of the BCBC area). It was noted that there has been a shift-change in schools who are now openly welcoming the College in to talk to their pupils.

Mrs Carr-Evans gave details of the various partnership network groups that the College sits on and concluded with the vision for partnerships:

- to grow the junior apprenticeship provision with the aim of launching a junior college;
- to grow the A Level offer to allow a blended package of vocational subjects and A Levels;
- to continue to develop opportunities with stakeholders, schools and external partners; and
- to support elected home educated, risk of being NEET learners and alternative pathways for learners.

A member commented that the work is inspiring and questioned what is the future plan for the Penybont Sixth Form College. It was explained that there is a clear exit plan to when the partnership ends in 2024. It was acknowledged that this isn't easy as the project has had a very positive impact for the learners.

Another member said that the sustained successes speak for themselves and questioned how to ensure this continues into the future. Mrs Carr-Evans stressed the importance of working with schools and speaking with the learners to ensure they are enrolled on the right pathways. Critical to this is getting the learners to visit the College with their teachers to experience College life. Another member asked why schools had changed their attitudes as previously the College had found it very difficult to gain entry into schools. The Deputy Principal commented that it is now recognised that the College can help schools and that this is in the best interests of the learners. The junior apprenticeship programme has helped establish trust between the College and schools. However, it was also acknowledged that external circumstances have an impact on this and that there are lessons to be learnt from this.

A member questioned whether there are any concerns around the sustainability of attainment statistics following the use of centre assessed grades and centre determined grades in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Mrs Carr-Evans said that there is a general feeling that learners are unprepared to sit exams this summer and that there is a high level of anxiety and wellbeing concerns which are a direct result of Covid. The staff members are also very anxious about the upcoming exam season, however, there is more certainty this year as it has been confirmed that exams are taking place. It was noted that it will be a lot harder to predict the outcomes on results day this year.

The Chair thanked Mrs Carr-Evans for her presentation and she left the meeting at 5.00pm.

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

The Principal gave the following update:

- Covid - The situation is improving and the reported number of cases in the College was very low during the week prior to the meeting. It is likely that face coverings will still need to be worn after half term.
- Project with Weston College - it was noted that this project had been withdrawn but that there may be opportunities in the future for collaborative working.
- Welsh Language - there is an action plan in place to ensure full compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.
- Workload project - an independent facilitator, Sharron Lusher, was engaged to undertake the research for this project and to compile the report. There are over 40 action points for consideration and it has been a beneficial piece of work.
- Estyn - the College has received communication that inspections will resume after half term. It is anticipated that Bridgend College could be one of the first College inspected under the new pilot scheme which sees changes to the inspection framework and the removal of formal gradings.

The Deputy Principal explained that any inspection will need to be an agile process as there needs to be recognition that it will be a pilot inspection during a pandemic. Performance data for the previous two years isn't available and therefore it will not be possible to make any comparisons over time or to other colleges. In addition, the new approach will see skills viewed as a holistic programme rather than in isolation. Prior to any inspection, Governing Body members will be asked to complete a pre-inspection questionnaire. The Clerk was asked to circulate a copy of this to the members (**ACTION - NE**).

A discussion took place about the inspection report having recommendations and not grades and the impacts this might have.

It was also commented that resilience levels are currently low as well as lower than normal retention levels but this is consistent across the sector. This will need to be factored into any inspection that takes place.

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) - the College is undertaking lots of work in this area and will be a topic for the Away Day.

The Principal invited questions from the members.

A member said that she felt reassured that the College sees the potential of an inspection as a positive opportunity and how the College could shape the way that FE colleges in Wales are inspected in the future. The member added that any pilot inspection would be a collaborative process with both parties learning from each other. One benefit of the gradings being abolished is that the inspection report has to be read in detail to understand the findings.

A discussion took place about how governors could prepare for an inspection and the Clerk was requested to recirculate the 2020/21 Clerk's Report to the members (**ACTION - NE**).

The Governing Body noted the update.

6. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Mrs Judith Evans left the meeting.

One nomination for the role of Vice-Chair was received from Mrs Judith Evans.

The Governing Body unanimously approved the appointment of Mrs Judith Evans as Vice-Chair for a period of three years.

Mrs Judith Evans rejoined the meeting.

The Chair congratulated Mrs Evans on her appointment and Mrs Evans thanked the members for putting their trust in her.

7. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Items recommended for approval

- Committee structures - the Governing Body approved the proposed committee structures.
- Curriculum & Quality Terms of Reference - it was requested that the responsibilities set out in Article 3(4) for the committee are included in the Terms of Reference (**ACTION - NE**). Subject to this one amendment, the Governing Body approved the Terms of Reference.
- Standing Orders - it was requested that the suggested amendment in 5.6 is removed and the original wording used.
The Governing Body approved the new wording and limit of £100 for gifts and hospitality.
A member who works in HE queried whether the College requires senior leaders to complete training on the Criminal Finances Act as this is a mandatory requirement in HE. (**ACTION - AG/NE** - this is to be looked into after the meeting).
Subject to the amendment in 5.6, the Governing Body approved the Standing Orders.
- Instrument & Articles of Government - the Governing Body approved the amended Instrument & Articles of Government.
- Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference - the Governing Body approved the two additional amendments to the Terms of Reference that were proposed by the Search & Governance (S&G) Committee.

Items for noting

- Recruitment of Governing Body members - the Governing Body noted that the S&G Committee had delegated authority to the Principal to discuss potential membership with suitable local business representatives.
- Staff governor elections - the Governing Body ratified the approval of Marion's appointment that had been given via email and noted that the election for the non-teaching staff governor position was due to go live in the week after the meeting.
- College policies - there were no policies approved at committee level.
- Governing Body Away Day - the Governing Body noted the date of 25 March.

- Clwb Coffi launch - the Clerk informed the members that they will receive an invitation for the launch of the new Clwb Coffi coffee shop on 8 March.

5.30pm - Mr Joshua O'Sullivan-Woodward (student governor) joined the meeting.

8. CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE - **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

Item redacted

9. FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Vice Principal presented the list of additional WG funding streams for 2021/22 which totalled £XXm [redacted] and explained that this is a mix of capital funding and other funding to support the College during the pandemic. This funding was in line with the other colleges in the Welsh FE sector.

A member offered to meet with the Vice-Principal outside of the meeting to discuss civic and community engagement as part of the additional funding had been received for this purpose (**ACTION - AG**).

The bridging table showing the original budget deficit of (£xxk) [redacted] and the significant movements to the November forecast of (£xxk) [redacted] was presented along with the 2022/23 FE funding allocations.

The members noted that the College's 2022/23 funding allocation was up xxx% [redacted] on the current year; the average uplift for the Welsh FE sector is 1.28% and three colleges have received a cut in their funding allocations. A member questioned the methodology behind the allocations and how transparent the decision making process is. The Vice-Principal explained that it is a complex calculation based on a number of factors that have been determined previously. All Finance Directors receive a copy of the spreadsheet calculating the allocations.

The Governing Body noted the update.

10. CORPORATE KPIs

There had been no movement in the KPIs since the December 2021 meeting.

A discussion took place about the static nature of the KPIs and whether they are still fit for purpose. It was questioned whether there are alternative ways of assessing performance as the College's strategic intent had become broader and how this could be measured. It was also discussed that it could be timely to review the 2020-25 Strategic Plan as it was written pre-pandemic (**ACTION - NE/SP**).

It was agreed that this will be discussed at a future meeting.

11. COLLEGE COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

The Governing Body noted that there were not any trends in the complaints and thanked the Senior Leadership Team for their transparency in providing the report (period covered January 2021-January 2022).

A member that works in HE commented that similar incidents were received at her university.

It was also noted that the one complaint that was shown as ongoing in the report has since been resolved.

12. COLLEGE MINUTES

12.1 SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 27 JANUARY 2022

The members **RECEIVED** the minutes.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

DEBRIEF

- The Chair commented that he enjoyed Mrs Carr-Evans' presentation and said that it was excellent to gather an understanding of the breadth of provision at the College.
- The Chair also said that he felt encouraged by the College perceiving any potential Estyn inspection as an opportunity.
- The blended approach with some members in the room and some online worked very well. One of the members that had joined remotely said that she felt fully engaged and that the quality of the sound and visuals was excellent.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 6.20pm.