

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 5.00PM - Via Google Meet**

PRESENT:

Mr P Croke
Mr D J Finch
Dr B Calvert
Ms T D'Souza
Dr J Graystone
Mr M Gregory
Mrs A Hoy
Mr K Halabuda - Staff Governor
Mr R W Landon
Mrs K Lewis
Mr T Lewis - Student Governor
Ms A Morgan
Mr S Pirotte - Principal
Mrs S Pryce
Cllr Dr C Smith

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr J Baldwin (JB) Assistant Principal Learner Journey
Mrs N Eyre (NE) - Clerk
Mr A Gibbs (AG) - Vice-Principal
Mrs S Morgan (SM) - Director of People
Miss N Talmer - Student Engagement Lead (in attendance to support incoming Student Governor)

The meeting commenced at 5.05pm

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were noted from Mrs S Davies (Staff Governor), Mr H Llewellyn, Mrs J Longville and Ms V Buckley (Deputy Principal).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at the start of the meeting.

Dr J Graystone made a declaration in Agenda item 8 - 'College Budget 2020/21' due to his membership on the Welsh Pay Review Body and his question in relation to the College making a pay award in 2020/21.

3. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2020

The Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 2 July 2020 were **CONFIRMED** as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. NOTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY AWAY DAY HELD ON 13 JULY 2020 - **CONFIDENTIAL**

The **CONFIDENTIAL** Notes of the Governing Body Away Day meeting held on 13 July 2020 were **CONFIRMED** as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Action Tracker

Action 1 (Publication of Minutes online) - this was discussed under the Agenda item 6 - Governance Matters.

Action 2 (Presentation - number of learners with no other support for Mental Health/ Well-being than at College) - this action is not due until October 2020.

Action 3 (Governor training) - the Clerk had circulated an email to the relevant Members asking them to complete the online training.

The Clerk asked if Members had received the "Infection Prevention and Control for Everyone" training that had been sent via email as there had been a query from the Member. It was fed back that not all Members had received this and therefore it was agreed that this would be re-circulated (**ACTION - NE**).

The Clerk also reminded Members about the need to complete the Declaration of Interest forms as soon as practicable.

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 prior to the next Audit Committee meeting.

The Members **NOTED** the actions.

6. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Extension of Vice-Chair's Term of Office

The Search & Governance Committee recommended in its meeting held on 13 July 2020 to extend Mr D J Finch's term of office as Vice-Chair to October 2021 (from May 2021). The reason for the extension is so that the Vice-Chair will be in office at the time of the opening of the STEAM Academy and this will recognise the significant contribution that he has made

to the College since being appointed as a Co-opted Member initially and then as a full Governing Body Member in October 2012.

The Governing Body APPROVED this recommendation and therefore the Vice-Chair's term of office will end in October 2021.

Succession Planning for Chair and Vice-Chair roles from October 2021

It was discussed that the Chair had invited expressions of interest for both roles at the Away Day held on 13 July 2020. Only one expression of interest for the role of Chair had been received.

The Members requested that further information on the roles is provided in order for them to understand the expectations of the roles and the time commitment involved. It was also suggested that interested persons should provide a statement to the Governing Body outlining their reasons for wanting to be considered for the role.

It was agreed that the Clerk and Chair are to meet to formalise the procedure and to draw up a circular providing the information requested (**ACTION - PC/NE**).

Appointment of Member onto the Penybont Sixth Form College Joint Committee

Expressions of interest had been invited from Members for the vacancy that will arise in October following the expiration of Mr M Gregory's term of office. Mrs S Davies (Staff Governor) was the only Member to express an interest and the Governing Body APPROVED her appointment onto the Joint Committee for a one-year term.

The Governing Body also APPROVED the re-appointment of Mr Paul Croke, Mr Simon Pirotte and Dr J Graystone for a further year.

Publication of Minutes online

The Search & Governance Committee in its meeting held on 13 July 2020 recommended that the Minutes of the Governing Body meetings should be published online for the 2020-21 academic year onwards. This will also ensure that the College is compliant with the requirements of the Information Commissioner's Office. It was noted that any confidential or commercially sensitive information will be redacted from the Minutes.

The Governing Body APPROVED this recommendation and therefore bilingual Minutes of Governing Body meetings will be published online when approved by the Governing Body.

Mr Tomas Lewis, incoming Student Governor, was formally welcomed to the meeting as well as Ms Nicole Talmer, Student Engagement Lead, who is supporting the Student Governor role.

7. PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

The Principal provided the following information and stated that a fuller update will be given in the October meeting:

- Enrolment has taken place completely online for the first time.

- There is more uncertainty this year around learner numbers; a clearer number should be known by mid-September.
- There are concerns around HE learner numbers but this is a sector-wide issue. One of the Members who works in the HE sector suggested considering different start dates e.g. January and accelerated routes. The Principal agreed that this is something that should be considered further and that he'll discuss this with the Member outside of the meeting (**ACTION - SP**).
- There are approximately 250 learners in the "Delayed" category who are still unable to complete their qualification and the majority of these are connected to a placement e.g. childcare. The College is working closely with these learners to ensure that they are not disadvantaged.
- The latest health guidance has devolved decision making on face coverings to colleges and local authorities. The FE sector in Wales has jointly agreed that all staff and learners are required to wear a face covering in indoor communal areas.
- The coming months are going to be challenging when there are typically more common cold symptoms and how these should be addressed.
- The issues around transport have largely been resolved.
- There is a significant amount of work going into appeals for grades awarded. There is the possibility that there may be a rise in the number of complaints as this is currently the only recourse. To date, 35 learners have expressed an interest in an appeal, five of which have been formal appeals but these learners have not had their grades changed. The central team dealing with this have managed the situation excellently.
- Meeting all of the IT needs has been challenging, even with the significant investment made.
- A person-centred approach is being used for staff returning to work on-site as there is a wide range of feelings amongst the staff body about physically returning to work.

The Chair invited questions from the Members:

- A question was asked about whether some prospective learners hadn't received their expected grades and therefore could not be accepted onto their first choice course. It was explained that 2019/20 GCSE results in Wales are the best that they have ever been and therefore it is anticipated that some learners will return to school to study who might otherwise have chosen to attend the College. The challenge for the College is incoming learners as learners who are progressing internally are already known. Cyfleoedd (Careers Hub at Bridgend College) have been very busy providing advice and support. There is an expectation that there will be movement between levels. The key message is that there is a place available for all learners at the College and they need to be on the right course at the right level.
- Another Member thanked the Senior Leadership Team for all of the actions that they've taken throughout the pandemic and that he fully supported them. The Member raised three questions:
 1. Will all staff be offered the flu vaccination this year?
 2. How will the £23million of Welsh Government funding be allocated across the FE sector?

3. Is there a commonality in approach across the Penybont Sixth Form College, Engage and Work-Based Learning?

The Principal confirmed that a stock of flu vaccinations had been secured for staff to be vaccinated. The second question was addressed under Agenda item 8 (College Budget 2020/21). It was explained that the third question regarding a common approach across the different areas of the organisation is more difficult to answer as there are differences between adult learners, part-time learners, the Penybont Sixth Form College comes under local authority guidance etc. However, the College is following published guidance and best practices. It was also noted that the situation is still very volatile and constantly changing.

- A Member suggested that groups of learners are asked for feedback about their experience and if there are any operational changes that they'd like implemented. The Principal explained that learner voice meetings were held before the end of term and a final exit survey was also conducted before the end of term; there were some very positive messages received back from this. There are plans in place for early October for another round of meetings as learners start formally on 14 September and this will give them an opportunity to settle in first. Staff were asked to complete a survey before the summer to gather feedback and another survey will be sent out in the coming weeks. The SLT has tried to anticipate scenarios but it is not possible to forward plan everything. Staff are being encouraged to have a dialogue with their line managers to address any issues or concerns.

The Chair thanked the Principal for the update and commented that the College is very learner-centred in its approach.

8. COLLEGE BUDGET FOR 2020/21 - CONFIDENTIAL

This minute is redacted

9. COMMITTEE MINUTES:

9.1 SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 13 JULY 2020 (UNCONFIRMED)

The Members **RECEIVED** the Minutes.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was questioned whether meetings will continue to be held remotely. The Principal stated that the College's stance is that the staff should still continue to work from home where possible. A hybrid approach where some Members attend in person whilst others attend remotely was suggested as some Members stated that this would be easier for them. It was agreed that the Principal, Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk will discuss this and report back to the Governing Body.

It was confirmed that the meeting on 15 October 2020 will be held on Google Meet.

DEBRIEF

- The paper on the budget was excellent and very clear to follow.
- The update from the Principal was also excellent and informed the Members of the current situation at the College.
- The staff and learners at the College should be complimented for the way they have conducted themselves through the pandemic.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 6.37pm.