

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING
HELD ON 30 JUNE 2022 AT 4.30PM VIA GOOGLE MEET ONLY**

PRESENT:

Jeff Greenidge - Chair
Trish D'Souza
Judith Evans
Marion Evans - Staff Governor
John Graystone
Esmie Guild (Student Governor) - *joined at 4.40pm*
Hayden Llewellyn - *joined at 5.00pm*
Alwena Morgan
Joanne Oak
Simon Pirotte - Principal

IN ATTENDANCE

Viv Buckley - Deputy Principal
Nicola Eyre - Clerk
Andrew Gibbs - Vice-Principal (Resources)
Karen Lamprey - Head of Curriculum for Services to People and Skills

The meeting opened at 4.30pm with a presentation from Karen Lamprey on her curriculum areas.

Karen Lamprey, Head of Curriculum for Services to People and Skills, presented the enrolments and successful completion rates (SCR) for the Services to People and Skills curriculum areas. The members were informed that despite the number of learners enrolled on full-time Skills programme being low, all full-time FE learners (approximately 2,000 in total) have to undertake a core skills learning programme alongside their main qualification.

The 'Learning Programme Promise' was presented which showed the learner at the centre and all of the promises in place between the College and the learner.

Karen Lamprey explained that the challenges this year have been the lack of learners' resilience, the skills/knowledge gap and general apathy. Therefore, the two curriculum areas have focussed on raising aspirations which has been made possible with the extra Welsh Government (WG) COVID funding.

The example of success of the pop-up barber shop in the STEAM Academy was highlighted as there had been behavioural problems in the traditional hairdressing salon on the Bridgend campus. When the provision was moved to the STEAM Academy and guest barbers invited in to help mentor the learners, there was a vast turnaround in behaviour, motivation and outcomes with the added benefit that many learners had a free haircut. The members were informed that there are now plans to extend this to the other Services to People

courses as there is a model that works. It was noted that there are also plans to have a pop-up shop in Bridgend town centre.

The successes of the Level 1 'Step Up' hub on the Bridgend campus were relayed to the members. The SCR for 2021-22 is 87% which has been achieved by having bespoke learner support available. A new role of the Personal and Development Professional Coach starting in September was explained to the members as well as the need to have a similar hub on the Pencoed campus.

The Chair thanked Karen Lamprey for her presentation and she left the meeting at 5.00pm.

Individual learners' stories were told to the members, the most notable of these was Jackson Yeow, a Level 1 Hospitality learner, who passed away just after completing his course this year. Karen Lamprey wanted to impress on the members that his parents couldn't thank the College enough for the positive impact that attending the College had had on him.

The links with industry partners and the plans for higher level courses were presented.

The Chair thanked Karen Lamprey for her presentation and asked that the condolences of the Governing Body are passed on to Jackson's family.

A member said that he thought the presentation was really encouraging and particularly liked the family learning initiative as both parties benefit from this. The member asked whether the College is running courses for refugees and Karen Lamprey confirmed that the College is working with BCBC on this and that there are exciting plans in place.

Another member questioned whether many learners are progressing on to higher level courses and it was confirmed that the majority are.

5.00pm - Karen Lamprey left the meeting.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair formally welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Emma Adamson, Lisa Dobbs (Staff Governor), Dawn Lewis-Whelan, Julia Longville, Satwant Pryce and Joe Baldwin (Vice-Principal (Learner Journey, Systems and Inclusive Practice)). Joshua O'Sullivan-Woodward (Student Governor) didn't attend the meeting.

The Chair thanked Esmie Guild for her year serving as a Student Governor and wished her the best of luck for the future. It was noted that Joshua O'Sullivan-Woodward would be returning as a Student Governor for a second year as he was successful in the recent Student Governor election process.

A special thank you was given to John Graystone as this was his last Governing Body meeting due to his second term of office ending in October 2022. John thanked the Chair for his kind words and said that he's really enjoyed his time serving as a governor at Bridgend College.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Trish D'Souza declared an interest in items 7 (Big Bocs Bwyd) and 12 (Campus Development Update) as Capital Law had advised the College on these.

3. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2022

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 23 May 2022 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Action Tracker

There were seven actions on the Action Tracker - one blue, two amber, three green and one without an agreed timeframe.

The Clerk provided updates for each of the actions and the Governing Body noted that some of the actions will be discussed at the Away Day planned for 23 September.

5. PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

The Principal informed the Governing Body that there had been a significant increase in the number of positive Covid cases reported in the last week.

The success of the Deputy Principal winning the 'Outstanding Educator' Award in the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP) Awards of Excellence was celebrated by the Governing Body.

The members noted the update.

6. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

There were no items for approval.

The following items were presented for noting:

- Gretchen Betts had resigned as a co-opted member of the Resource Planning Committee in mid-June.
- The members were asked if they are aware of any people in their networks who may be interested in being considered for membership of the Governing Body.
- The Governing Body Away Day has been confirmed for Friday 23 September.

- The IT Security Policy was approved by the Resource Planning Committee on 16 June (no further approval needed).

A discussion was held about the skills/knowledge areas that the Governing Body is looking to appoint into and the recruitment process. It was clarified that local business/employer representation needs to be strengthened and the approach in recent years has been to ask people in the SLT and Governing Body members' networks. It was agreed that this should continue as it has been very successful.

The members noted the update.

7. BIG BOCS BWYD

Trish D'Souza declared an interest in this and took no part in the discussion.

The Deputy Principal presented the recommendation made by the Resource Planning Committee to set up a charity to enable a Big Bocs Bwyd "pay what you can afford" shop to be opened in the College. Details of the scheme were included in the Resource Planning Committee (RPC) minutes that had been included with the meeting papers and the Deputy Principal briefly ran through these for the members that don't sit on the RPC.

The Chair had sent in questions prior to the meeting and the Deputy Principal addressed each of these:

1. Will this compete with the College's other catering services? No - the products on sale are more typical of the items that you'd purchase in a supermarket to take home and make something with.
2. Could the learners run it as a student enterprise? Yes - there are excellent curriculum opportunities. There are currently plans for the Level 1 Step Up hub learners to be a part of this scheme.
3. What would the relationship between the charity and Governing Body be? The Deputy Principal explained that it can be whatever the Governing Body wants it to be. It was noted that there needs to be three trustees.

The Governing Body approved the recommendation to set up a charity for a Big Bocs Bwyd scheme and delegated the authority to the Principal to determine the trustees.

A member commented that he's a member of the Bevan Foundation and that this may encourage other colleges to introduce the scheme which would be very beneficial. This was echoed by other members who said that the initiative is fantastic and that it will have other, wider benefits.

8. RISK REGISTER

The Vice-Principal presented the Risk Register that had been recommended for approval by the SLT and Audit Committee. The recommendations were:

- Remove Risk 10 on partnership working as the College is aiming to have more targeted relationships that are supported by additional funding and grant income.
- Remove Risk 11 on Business Continuity Planning as this risk is pandemic-related and it is felt that it is no longer relevant. However, this risk can be reinstated at any time.
- Review Risk 13 in line with the findings of the internal audit report in this area. The newly appointed Head of Digital Innovation and IT Services will lead this review.

A member questioned whether the risks were formally being closed or whether they are being de-escalated. The Vice-Principal (Resources) confirmed that they will still be considered operationally but are to be removed from the high level corporate risks.

The Principal stated that the Risk Register is a live document that is regularly reviewed by the SLT so that key risks are continuously monitored.

The members approved the changes to the Risk Register.

9. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLANS FOR 2022-23

The Vice-Principal (Resources) explained that the Internal Audit Plan for 2022-23 would normally be presented at the same time as the External Audit Plan, however, the planning meeting had only taken place earlier that week between TIAA, the Principal and Vice-Principal (Resources). Therefore the plan will be presented at the first Governing Body meeting of 2022-23.

The Vice-Principal (Resources) presented the External Audit Plan that had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee. The members' attention was brought to the scope, timeline, PwC's audit approach, materiality levels and fees. It was noted that the fees are slightly less due to The People Business Wales being wound up this year and there being no audit costs in relation to this company.

A member questioned why there is significantly more detail around guidance this year. The Vice-Principal believed that it is due to more cases being brought against audit firms and therefore they are clearly setting out responsibilities.

The members were reminded that the external audit terms are determined by PwC as they have to be satisfied to sign off the audit opinion.

It was questioned whether PwC has an FE Centre of Excellence as page 5 states that they have a Centre of Excellence for the higher education sector in the UK. The Vice-Principal (Resources) said that the big audit firms are no longer tendering for audit services in the FE sector. It is thought that this is mainly due to the changes in regulations in England.

The members approved the External Audit Plan for 2022-23.

The order of the agenda was revised as agenda item 10 would lead into the discussion on agenda item 11.

11. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS, QUARTERLY UPDATE AND FINANCIAL KPIS

The Vice-Principal (Resources) presented the bridging table that showed the original deficit budget of xxx [redacted] and how this has improved to a surplus of xxx [redacted] in the May Forecast. It was noted that the primary reason for this has been the additional WG Covid funding to support learners during the pandemic.

The members noted that the year-end cash balance is projected to be xxx [redacted] (xx [redacted] cash days), however, some of the planned capital works may extend beyond the 2021-22 academic year and this could result in a higher year-end balance.

The members' attention was brought to the capital investment projects and the additional WG funding of xxx [redacted] to develop digital and net zero carbon projects.

The Vice-Principal explained to the members that the colour coding for the KPIS is to be reviewed following a discussion at RPC as the system currently followed can be misleading.

A member of RPC explained to the Governing Body that work needs to be performed for RPC and Governing Body members to understand the underlying cost base in order for informed decisions to be made.

Another member commented that the College has done an incredible job turning a deficit budget into a surplus situation in such challenging circumstances. The Chair added that the College must be congratulated for this.

The members noted the update.

10. COLLEGE BUDGET TO 2022-23

The Vice-Principal (Resources) explained that the budget was presented to RPC a fortnight ago but since then, further costs have been incorporated which has led to a deterioration in the original deficit position of xxx to xxx [redacted]:

- xxx [redacted] - inclusion of a 1% pay award;
- xxx [redacted]- the loss of both Personal Learning Account funding; and
- xxx [redacted]- the loss of transition funding for Summer 2022 enrolment activities.

It was noted that anything above a 1% pay award would need to be funded by the WG otherwise it will affect the financial performance of the sector.

The Vice-Principal added that the assumptions within the budget are that:

- xxx [redacted] of WG funding received to support the College during the pandemic will not be receivable in 2022-23.
- Additional WG funding for progression and transition activities will be receivable. These total xxx [redacted].
- The recurrent grant income will increase by xxx [redacted] which will cover the balance of the 2021-22 pay award.
- Xxx [redacted] has been included for inflationary pressures (calculated as x% [redacted] of non-pay expenditure).

- xxx [redacted] has been included to cover incremental pay increases and pension movements.

The Vice-Principal (Resources) explained that the Finance Team is undertaking a programme of work to understand the costs that have been supported by the extra WG Covid funding in order for the SLT to identify savings to reduce the deficit budget amount. It was noted that the SLT has a commitment to reduce the deficit budget as much as possible but doesn't want to consider any immediate plans to cut costs until there is more certainty on WG funding in 2022-23.

The table of financial performance from 2019-20 was presented which showed that if either a three year or four year snapshot is taken, the College will still have an overall surplus position even with the setting of a xxx [redacted] deficit budget for 2022-23.

The impact on the 2022-23 cash was also discussed. The forecast year end position at 31 July 2023 is xxx [redacted] (xx [redacted] cash days) which includes a loss of xxx in operational activities and capital expenditure of xxx [redacted] (xxx [redacted] for design costs for the new town centre campus and xxx [redacted] of occasional project work). It is anticipated that the degeneration in the cash balance will not be a problem for one year, however, if it does become obvious that the SLT needs to make changes to the cost base during 2022-23, the Governing Body will be immediately informed.

A member asked for assurances about the WG covering the difference between the 1% pay award budgeted for by colleges and any pay award agreed over this percentage given that there have been large pay claims made in the public sector. It was noted that the pay award for colleges is usually determined by the teachers' pay award as there is a commitment for pay parity. It is believed that the WG has set aside some funding but not enough to cover the 12% currently being claimed by trade unions.

Another member stated that if the deficit budget is approved, he would like a reassurance that deficit budgets wouldn't be presented in the following years. The member also queried the prudence of xxx [redacted] for inflationary pressures. The Vice-Principal (Resources) replied saying that it is very difficult to accurately forecast the rising costs and already these are starting to be seen e.g. food in the refectory. The figure has been calculated based on the limited information available but it is possible that the budgeted amount could be exceeded. The members noted that there is protection against increased utilities costs until March 2023.

The Vice-Principal (Resources) stated that the theme at the recent RPC meeting was that continual deficit budgets could not be approved and that work would need to be done to reduce the figure. It was noted that it would be hard to make in-year changes, instead a recovery plan would need to be drawn up for the following year. The Principal added that there isn't a recovery plan currently as the College doesn't know if it needs to recover due to the uncertainty around WG funding for 2022-23. The College has built up a strong financial resilience and therefore doesn't have to take very short term financial decisions.

The Governing Body **RESOLVED** to approve the following two recommendations:

1. A budget showing a xxx [redacted] deficit with a commitment made by the SLT to endeavour to reduce this wherever possible. Updates will continue to be provided at each future RPC and Governing Body meetings.

2. In order to cover the xxx [redacted] increase in design fees to secure planning approval for the town centre project and to hold an emergency amount of xxx [redacted] as a contingency, the Governing Body is asked to approve a xxx [redacted] capital budget for the 2022-23 financial year.

12. CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Trish D'Souza declared an interest in this item as Capital Law provided advice on the town centre project.

The Vice-Principal informed the members of the following:

- There is no further update on the town centre campus since the last meeting.
- The purchase of the farmland in Brynna is due to complete in mid-July.

A list of estates projects was presented that was discussed in detail by the RPC.

The members were updated on the progress made on rectifying the problems with the sinkholes outside the Sony Theatre and the investigations that the insurance company will perform to ensure the safety of the whole campus. The Principal informed the members that there have been complaints received from external organisations who hire the Sony Theatre for events as the College is unable to give a timeframe of when it will reopen.

The members noted the update.

13. CORPORATE KPIS

The Vice-Principal (Resources) reported that the only KPI to change since the last meeting is KPI 5 (Achieve a minimum of 2% turnover as an operational surplus); this had improved from xxx to xxx [redacted].

A member questioned whether a new set of KPIs will be used for next year as the 2% of turnover as an operational surplus will not be achievable with a deficit budget. Also, the member asked how the reduction in carbon emissions is being monitored. The Vice-Principal (Resources) explained that there is a Carbon Task Group led by Chris Long (Head of Health, Safety and Sustainability) who is measuring targets such as energy consumption and waste. It was noted that the medium term goal has already been exceeded; the decommissioning of inefficient buildings and the opening of the STEAM Academy helped achieve this. The move to the new town centre campus will also reduce the College's carbon emissions significantly further.

It was agreed that the KPIs in the 2020-25 Strategic Plan need to be revisited.

The members noted the update.

14. COMMITTEE MINUTES

14.1 AUDIT - 9 JUNE 2022

The Governing Body RECEIVED the unconfirmed minutes.

14.2 RESOURCE PLANNING - 16 JUNE 2022

The Governing Body RECEIVED the unconfirmed minutes.

14.3 CURRICULUM & QUALITY - 21 JUNE 2022

It was noted that these minutes are to follow as they were not available at the time of the meeting

15. NOMINATIONS FOR HONORARY FELLOWS

The Principal informed the members that he had invited Daniel Biddle, the most seriously injured survivor of the 7/7 terror attacks in 2005, to become a Fellow in the October 2022 HE graduation ceremonies and that he had accepted the invitation.

The members noted that Daniel had delivered a keynote speech about resilience in the College's professional learning day held the previous week. The staff governor said that the speech was a fantastic way to open the day and that the learners would benefit from listening to Daniel speak.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

DEBRIEF

The Chair commented that he particularly liked the presentations at the start of the meetings as they give the context on which discussions are based.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 6.26pm.