

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING  
HELD ON 30 MARCH 2023 AT 4.30PM  
BRIDGEND BOARDROOM AND VIA GOOGLE MEET**

**PRESENT:**

Jeff Greenidge - Chair  
Judith Evans - Vice-Chair  
Emma Adamson  
Trish D'Souza  
Lisa Dobbs - Staff Governor  
Marion Evans - Staff Governor  
Hayden Llewellyn - *left at 6.00pm*  
Joanne Oak  
Simon Pirotte - Principal  
Satwant Pryce - *left at 6.50pm*  
Stephne Puddy

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Joe Baldwin - Vice Principal (Learner Journey, Systems and Inclusive Practice)  
Viv Buckley - Deputy Principal  
Nicola Eyre - Clerk  
Andrew Gibbs - Vice-Principal (Resources)

For the presentation only:

Rhian Edwards (Deputy Director - Further Education and Apprenticeship Division - Welsh Government)  
Geoff Hicks (Head of Post-16 Funding - Welsh Government)

The meeting opened at 4.30pm

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

The Chair formally welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Claire Marshall, Helen Verity, Dawn Lewis-Whelan and Dan Biddle.

Ruby Llewelyn (Student Governor) and Joshua O'Sullivan Woodward (Student Governor) did not attend the meeting.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

The presentation was held later in the meeting.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2023**

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 16 February 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

#### **4.1 Action Tracker**

There were seven actions on the Action Tracker - three green, two amber, one blue and one on hold. The Governing Body noted the actions and the Retention and Additional Learner Support report.

### **5. PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE**

The Governing Body noted the contents of the Principal's Report and the ongoing EDI work.

### **6. TEACHING & LEARNING UPDATE - DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE**

Due to time constraints, it was agreed that the Deputy Principal's presentation would be delayed until the May meeting.

A brief update was given:

- The College's learners won 28 medals in the recent Wales Skills Competition which placed the College second in the league table in Wales. It was noted that many of these awards were in key skill areas and that the Gold medal for Robotics was won by an all-female team at the College which was very pleasing and exciting. Suzanne Packer, Fellow of Bridgend College, jointly presented the awards with the Principal.
- A 'Visible Learning with Professor John Hattie' staff professional learning day was held in the week before this meeting. Professor John Hattie is a world renowned education researcher and award-winning author. This event challenged some of the current thinking around teaching and learning at the College and this will be explored further at curriculum meetings. It was noted that this event was open to external organisations.
- Overall learner retention is X% up on the same time last year.
- Successful Completion Rates are currently at XX% and it is predicted that XX% can be achieved by the end of the year. It was noted that the College has put in a number of learner retention strategies this year as a number of learners left after the Easter holidays last year before completing their qualifications.

A member who also works in the education sector said that this Spring term feels very different to the previous year's Spring term. The member commented that learners are becoming more resilient and are starting to have a sense of belief and belonging once again.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal and added that both the quantitative and qualitative data is looking promising.

The Governing Body noted the update.

## **7. GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

The Governing Body APPROVED/RATIFIED the following:

- The Governing Body approved the appointment of Trish D’Souza for a second four-year term of office allowing for a sabbatical to be taken during the 2024/25 academic year.
- The Governing Body ratified the appointment of Marion Evans onto the Curriculum & Quality Committee having previously approved this electronically. Marion has transferred from the Resource Planning Committee.
- The Governing Body ratified the appointment of Emma Adamson onto the Remuneration Committee having previously approved this electronically.
- The Governing Body approved the committee structure presented.
- The Governing Body approved the Resource Planning and Selection Committees’ amended Terms of Reference.
- The Governing Body approved the amended Responsibilities of the Chair document.

The Governing Body NOTED the following:

- The SLT is working on formalising the College Fellowship programme.
- The Recognition of Prior Learning and Exemption Policy was approved by the Curriculum & Quality Committee. No further approval was required.

## **PRESENTATION - POLICY AND BUDGETARY CONTEXT ACROSS THE WELSH FE SECTOR**

Rhian Edwards (Deputy Director for Further Education and Apprenticeships, Welsh Government) and Geoff Hicks (Head of Post 16 Funding, Welsh Government) gave a presentation on:

- The policy context for FE and apprenticeships in Wales;
- The challenges that FE and apprenticeships face ;
- Ministerial priorities;
- Budgetary pressures; and
- How the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) will impact FE and apprenticeships.

A copy of the presentation was made available to the members in the Shared drive for future reference.

A discussion took place about the role of FE and apprenticeships and how these are going to help bridge the skills gaps in order for people to fulfil their potential and contribute to a well-functioning economy.

It was questioned whether funding will be ring-fenced for FE and HE when the handover to CTER takes place in April 2024. It was confirmed that the Minister is still considering this and therefore no firm answer could be given.

A member sought assurances that there wouldn't be any added bureaucracy or delays from the handover to CTER. Rhian Edwards commented that these couldn't be given due to the huge programme for change taking place. A discussion took place about CTER inheriting some of the decisions made by WG in its first couple of years due to the lead time for decision-making.

A further question was asked of how institutions can engage with the duty to fund proper facilities for FE for adults, one of the top six innovations of CTER detailed in the presentation. It was explained that a consultation process will begin in November/December of this year.

The issue of funding residential provision was raised and whether the introduction of CTER will impact this. It was explained that there will need to be some triangulation and that the WG needs to compile a 'menu' of educational provision that falls in scope to provide clarity to the sector.

The Principal thanked Rhian Edwards and Geoff Hicks and made the following comments:

- There is clear alignment between what the sector and WG is aiming to achieve;
- The WG provided excellent support for the sector during the pandemic;
- The expectations of staff for pay awards is now challenging [The presentation showed that indicative WG budgets for FE for 2023/24 was a £XXm increase but the impact of the recent pay awards requires £XXm of funding when consolidated].
- There is the potential of a new government being in power in Westminster after the next general election and their political agenda may be more closely aligned with the WG's agenda.
- CTER's budget of £800m will be the second largest budget in Wales. It should be possible to achieve some efficiencies through the creation of the Commission.
- There will be lots of opportunities for change which is exciting for the sector.
- At this stage, there are more questions than answers.

A member followed on by asking whether there is the appetite for real change and cited the example of the current tertiary education set-up in Bridgend. Rhian Edwards stated that expectations need to be managed in the short-term and that it will take time for change to take place. She stressed that CTER will need to be innovative otherwise it won't achieve its ambition. The importance of FE colleges being anchor institutions in the economy was also highlighted.

The Chair thanked Rhian Edwards and Geoff Hicks and they left the meeting at 5.45pm.

## **10. RISK REGISTER**

The Vice-Principal (Resources) introduced the Risk Register by saying that it had been reviewed by the SLT on 14 February and recommended for approval by the Audit Committee on 2 March.

The Register showed that there were two new risks proposed to be added:

- Risk 13 - Failure to create and sustain an inclusive culture where diversity is celebrated and all staff and students feel that they belong; and
- Risk 14 - Failure to meet WBL contract which has a detrimental impact on the Bridgend College budget.

An introductory section had been added to the front of the Risk Register to capture the risks in the external environment in which the College is operating which the Audit Committee recommended for approval.

The risks in the Risk Register that had changes to their residual risk were explained to the members. Details of these were included in the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 2 March 2023 that all members had received a copy of.

The Governing Body approved the amended Risk Register.

## **9. CAMPUS DEVELOPMENTS**

**Town Centre Campus - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

*6.50pm - Satwant Pryce left the meeting*

## **11. UTILITIES CONTRACTS**

The Governing Body retrospectively approved the utilities contracts for the supply of gas and electricity.

## **8. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS INCLUDING FINANCIAL KPIs**

The Vice-Principal (Resources) explained that the February Forecast is showing an **EXXX XXXX** for 2022/23 compared with the November Forecast of **XXXX** which has been achieved mainly as a result of additional WG funding and savings from not replacing staff when they have left.

It was noted that the failure to secure planning permission for the town centre campus would have a material impact on the year-end financial position. It was also noted that the projected year-end cash balance is **EXXX equating to XX** cash days.

The details for the Management Accounts were included in the minutes of the Resource Planning Committee meeting held on 16 March that all members had received a copy of.

The Governing Body approved the Management Accounts, February Forecast and KPIs.

## **12. CORPORATE KPIs AND KPI TRACKER**

The Vice-Principal (Resources) presented the two KPIs that had changed since the February meeting:

- KPI 5 (Achieve a minimum of 2% turnover as operational surplus) - this had turned green as a result of increased WG funding.
- KPI 7 (Sustain staffing costs of no greater than 65% of income) - this remained red but had improved from **XX% to XX%**.

The Deputy Principal presented the KPI Tracker which showed a positive picture but she expressed her disappointment with the 'Recruitment Average Lead Time' measure showing **XX** days as big improvements had been made in this area. It was noted that this was above the target lead time due to there being vacancies in the Construction department that are difficult to fill.

The Governing Body noted the Corporate KPIs and KPI Tracker.

### **13. COMMITTEE MINUTES**

#### **13.1 Search & Governance Committee - 13 February 2023**

The Governing Body RECEIVED the unconfirmed minutes.

#### **13.2 Audit - 2 March 2023**

The Governing Body RECEIVED the unconfirmed minutes.

#### **13.3 Curriculum & Quality - 9 March 2023**

The Governing Body RECEIVED the unconfirmed minutes.

#### **13.4 Resource Planning - 16 March 2023**

The Governing Body RECEIVED the unconfirmed minutes.

### **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

### **VALUES CHECKER**

The Chair concluded the meeting by saying that the papers were very clear and transparent and that a high level of challenge had taken place at the meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 6.57pm.