

MINUTES

BOLTON COLLEGE BOARD

Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 20 April 2021 – (PART A)

Time: 5.00pm

Venue: Via Zoom Conference Call

Members present:

Dr Andrew Roberts (Chair)

Mr Andrew Fawcett (Vice Chair)

Dr Chris Ball

Ms Rebecca Davison

Mr Fardean Farooq

Mrs Kate Flood

Mr Dave Haslam

Professor George Holmes DL

Dr Sue Lomax

Mr Josue Losasa

Ms Stephanie Nixon

Mr Tony Unsworth

Dr Gill Waugh

Mr Bill Webster (Principal)

It was RESOLVED that the appointment of Baroness Sayeeda Warsi as a Member of the Board be ratified.

1.3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Gulnaz Brennan, Dr Adrian Brooks and Baroness Sayeeda Warsi.

1.4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted particularly in relation to the University of Bolton reciprocal governance arrangements and also paid positions.

1.5 REQUEST FOR AN ITEM TO BE UNSTARRED

Members were reminded that starred items on the Agenda would be taken as read rather than being presented. However, Members could ask questions of the report author, or ask for any item to be unstarred for full discussion.

There were no requests for items to be unstarred for discussion.

1.6* MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Minutes of the Meeting held 9 February 2021 – confidential and general publication

The minutes of the meeting held 9 February 2021 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record and authorised for

Governor Question:

- Were there any issues with Zoom 'ghosting', where students logged into a teaching session to receive an attendance mark but then turned off the camera? Staff had received training on how to address issues around student non-engagement. The problem appeared to be worse in the lower levels of learning and development.
- What marketing was underway to promote apprenticeships and available grants to employers?

The College's marketing of this was well underway and included direct

on-site and to date the facility had tested over 2000 people (all of whom had tested negative). In line with Government recommendations, from 12 April the College had scaled back the AST to make this available only for those students who were unable to self-test at home.

- Home testing (LFT) was being encouraged, with testing kits being issued to staff and students. It was noted that the ESFA had indicated it would be monitoring the statistics on LFT. Over the Easter period, only 2 positive cases had been reported and there were no positive cases in the College at the current time.
- Face to face teaching had resumed, with the exception of English and Maths.
- A key priority would be around 'catch-up' and assessments, and clarity was awaited from the awarding bodies with regard to assessments. Staff were making every effort to ensure that all students could complete in-year. GCSE exams would be teacher-assessed; however, there were several cohorts of English and Maths students who had fallen behind and work was underway to identify and provide additional support to those students. As well as providing extra support to assist with grades, extra support would also aid progression to more advanced level courses.

HR/Staffing

- The College had dealt with 207 positive COVID-19 cases since August 2020 (142 learners and 65 members of staff).

Safeguarding

- A full safeguarding service had continued to be provided during periods of lockdown, with students being supported in terms of their wellbeing, mental health and digital accessibility.

Adult Education Budget – GMCA Devolved Adult Funding

- The allocation letter for 2021/22 had been received and it appeared that the budget would be close to the current year's allocation with no clawback or significant reductions. Further detailed guidance was yet to be provided.

T Level Update

- The College's bid for additional capital funding for the construction of additional buildings had been rejected and the College had submitted a further bid, the outcome of which was awaited. The College had successfully applied to become a partner Centre for Professional & Teaching Excellence for the Education Training Foundation (ETF) and would work with partner colleges to develop CPD content for the T Levels in Health & Education. The College had also been successful in its application to lead a four College Teacher Resource Improvement Project (TRIP) for the T Level in Health.

Governor Question:

- What was driving the decision to keep the majority of English and Maths teaching online?
The decision was based on the fact that cohorts were streamed and mixed for English and Maths, and to avoid mixing learning 'bubbles' the safest option was to keep this online. It was worth noting that online learning, in some cases, had produced better results than face to face teaching.
- Could previous GCSE exam papers be provided to students to assist with English and Maths?
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2.2 FINANCIAL UPDATE INCLUDING LOAN COVENANTS

The Executive Director of Finance presented the Financial Update and highlighted the following key points:-

- The College had received formal confirmation that there would be no clawback of funding for Adults in-year, despite there being a fall in recruitment. Indications were that Adult Education Funding devolved from GMCA would receive the original core funding, with scope for growth, and that certain Level 3 elements would be fully funded. However, further details were awaited.
- The in-year financial forecast was an operating surplus of £421k. The year-end cash position was strong at £2.68m and the College was forecast to pass the banking covenants as at 31 July 2021.
- Pay costs were slowing down with several vacancies being carried. The Executive Team continued to scrutinise each request for staffing on an individual basis.
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It was RESOLVED that the Report on Achievement Rates 2019/20 & Performance Targets 2020/21 be noted.

2.4 COLLEGE KPI DASHBOARD

The Executive Director of Finance presented the College KPI Dashboard, which detailed the key sustainability indicators and a range of other indicators, selected based on the areas to be monitored by the ESFA.

The financial benchmarks mirrored LEO2 and these would be amended to incorporate the FE Commissioner's recommended benchmarks for the next KPI report.

It was RESOLVED that the College KPI Dashboard be noted.

2.5* STARRED ITEMS:-

(i) 2020/21 FUNDING ALLOCATION

Members had received and reviewed the report on the 2020/21 Funding Allocation.

The College had an increase in net baseline funding of £416,984 in respect of ESFA 16-19 funding, in anticipation of growth in learner numbers.

It was RESOLVED that the 2020/21 Funding Allocation be noted.

(ii) STANDARDS & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members had received and reviewed Standards & Performance Committee Terms of Reference.

It was RESOLVED that the Standards & Performance Committee Terms of Reference be approved and recommended to the University Board of Governors for approval at its meeting to be held 11 May 2021.

(iii) COMMONALITY OF INTERESTS POLICY

Members had received and reviewed the Commonality of Interests Policy, which required annual review. The Policy had been reviewed by the University.

It was RESOLVED that the HE Self

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) At the Governor Training session prior to the meeting, Members had agreed to support the Rainbow Flag Award. The Award was a national quality assurance framework for schools and colleges which focused on a whole organisation approach to LGBT+ inclusion.

It was RESOLVED that the College support the Rainbow Flag Award initiative.

4.1 MEETING EVALUATION

The Chair asked Members if they were content that all Members had been given the opportunity to contribute and ask questions during the meeting. Members confirmr.0683 Tc -0.003