



Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Held on 15 December 2020 at 6.15pm via Zoom/in Oak 122

Present

Gideon Schulman (Chair) (GS)
 Terry Butland (Vice Chair) (TB)
 Sarbdip Noonan (Principal) (SN)
 Sundeep Bhandari (SB)
 Rishi Bhandari (RiB)
 Jan Doust (JD)
 Jean Lammiman (JL)
 Viresh Paul (VP)
 Simon Radford (SR)
 Carlton Downie (CD)
 Ramin Hashemian (RH)

In Attendance

Bob Pattni (DP Finance and Planning) (BP)
 Nicola Conibear (VP Curriculum and Quality) (NC)
 Naomi Shoffman (Director of Governance)(NS)
 Caros Ibrahim (item 1 only)

1. Chair's Opening Remarks and report of any Chairs Action taken since the last meeting:

- i. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed everyone was able to hear each other.
- ii. The Chair welcomed RH the new academic staff governor to his first meeting.
- iii. The Chair then thanked NC who was retiring at the end of December and wished her all the best for the future and on behalf of the Board presented her with a gift
- iv. GS reported that further to the appointment of two student governors in October one of the nominees had withdrawn her nomination which left a vacancy for one student governor. Caros Ibrahim who is a year 2 student studying level 3 engineering has since been nominated for appointment to the Board and membership of the Curriculum and Quality Committee. The Board duly ratified his appointment and Caros joined the meeting briefly to introduce himself to the Board.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Rohit Bhatia, Amiah Hutton –Ebanks and Azita Obayidi for absence.

3. Declaration of Interests

JL declared an interest as she has the portfolio for adult learning.

4. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020

These were accepted as a true record

5. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising.

6. Principal's Report

SN said she would take her report as being read. The report is 11 pages long, as SN wanted it to cover all the essential issues of a national significance, as well as key College issues. The following topics are covered in the report, with full details found in individual reports:

- 'Colleges for the future' Report;
- Self-assessment Report 2019/20;
- student recruitment and funding issues - the increase in FE funding will not cover the increase in 16-19 students and loss of other income;
- Students' achievement results;
- Teaching and learning - online review;
- Communication and engaging stakeholders in the work of the College;
- Association of Colleges (AOC) – FE summit; and
- The comprehensive spending review 2020/21.

SN continued that she hoped the report reflects the College's achievement and shares the highlights of the year and shows that the pandemic has brought out the best in the community. Gifting time, volunteering, health and well-being is at the heart of everything we do. Despite the pandemic its business as usual.

The sector is still awaiting publication of the FE white paper; the education secretary recently gave a speech proposing that FE and HE should be thought of as part of the same currency; the proposals are for a wholesale rebalancing of technical and academic provision will be out sometime in this academic year.

The report also demonstrates that the College is doing well in all 3 performance indicators – academic performance, recruitment and financial position which are all outstanding, so staff are doing a brilliant job. In terms of the SAR which will be considered later in the meeting the Overall judgement has been graded as outstanding. The grade however has not been endorsed by Ofsted and the College is unlikely to get an inspection in the near future; some visits will be made but not a full inspection. SN reiterated her thanks to the staff for all their hard work and then highlighted the following:

- The College has received an increase in ESFA and GLA funding. As a result of lagged funding this will be reflected in next year's ESFA contract. 25% of the delivery is through partnerships and subcontractors which is a large proportion. The table on page 3 of the report shows the values.
- Student achievement overall at 90% has increased and means that for the first time 16-18 are above NBM; 19+ have always been above NBM.
- Higher grades and GCSE maths and English have all increased above NBM however this is still an area for improvement for the College.
- The College has carried out an online review, which is like a mini inspection, as we wanted to know the areas for improvement, where things are working well and the resources needed to improve further. The review shows that the College is providing good TLA across the board in all areas. We know what staff need to focus on and will ensure appropriate CPD is put in place to support them to achieve that. Ofsted and JISC have done a lot of work around this and believe there should be a sector wise approach as there are many shared issues mainly around digital poverty, technical problems and students needing more support. Going forward it is unlikely that any College will go back to 100% face to face teaching. The full report will be uploaded to the portal for Governors to read.
- There has been a lot of communication with stakeholders around buildings and additional funding and, as per the BCP, investment in IT. The meetings with the Dfe around additional funding to update the building have been positive
- The Whistleblowing incident has been closed by the ESFA

- The College plans to re-establish its relationship with both the University of West London and Roehampton University; the College is also at the embryonic stage of developing higher education courses with the University of Lancashire
- The College has diversified further into curriculum areas.
- The student and staff Awards ceremony are due to take place online later in the week.

SN concluded her report saying that this has been a very challenging and intense first term but also it has been business as usual.

GS thanked SN for her report and said he was very proud of how well the College has done and on behalf of the Board congratulated all staff. SN agreed that all staff have worked extremely hard and done well.

GS asked about the Government's announcement around mass Covid 19 testing and SN said that currently nothing was happening on that front but the College will continue to support all such initiatives.

TB congratulated the College on a tremendous achievement across all fronts. He reminded the Board that the independent moderator of the SAR had concurred with the judgements. He reported that the C&Q Committee had a robust debate around the SAR and had made some changes to which are all included in the version submitted to this Board meeting

JL congratulated the College on how well it's been turned around and conveyed her congratulations to all the staff. SN said she would convey the Board's thanks at the staff awards.

SB asked BP if he had any concerns. BP responded that it has been a tremendous year, but there is a lot of risk and challenge in terms of capacity to manage and develop staff in times of growth, and monitoring of the subcontractors.

SR asked where does the College go from here and SN responded that there is still a lot of stretch within all areas and room for improvement

NOTED

THE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

7.i The College Self-Assessment Report 2019/ 2020

NC spoke to the SAR report which she would take as being read. She went through the 4 headline judgements that contribute to the overall grade of outstanding. The quality of education is the most weighted judgement with three strands to it.

NC then went through the rationale for each of the judgements. In respect of Leadership and Management if everything else is outstanding then this is judged to be the same. The judgements are justified by the improvement in success rates for 16-18 and adult learning which is consistently high and has been for several years.

NC then talked about the Sub grades and the journey the College has been on since its grade 4 inspection in 2015. NC cautioned that not everything is perfect but management have identified the particular areas that need to be worked on.

SB asked what is happening with engineering. NC explained that issues arose due to the need for better management capacity and resources. The College has now recruited and there is a robust team in place including strong female staff and the disciplinary issues have been dealt with very quickly.

TB reported that as advised earlier the C&Q Committee went through the SAR thoroughly; he asked about the value added data which had not yet been recorded. NC said there were some errors in the data so this will not be included in the SAR to be uploaded on the Ofsted website

ii. Strategic Operational Plan 2020/21

NC spoke to the report advising that this the second year that this combined document has produced. At the top are the key areas for improvement which are then cross referenced. Some areas have a more detailed action plan sitting beneath it.

SB observed that there were a few reds which did not have any commentary. NC responded that many of the actions are amber or red because the College has not yet been able to do anything about it and were hoping to start in January, so this may need to be reviewed. SB suggested it would be helpful to contextualise this.

RH asked if there were plans for any courses in other industries/sectors such as media. NC responded that the curriculum plan is designed to meet the local needs and government agenda which is changing rapidly.

NC continued that at the moment the College is supporting the government's kick-start initiative as part of the West London consortium and is also acting as gateway organisation with local employers to find opportunities that need filling; other courses on offer are digital upskilling and also distance learning for adults who wish to upskill. NC acknowledged that the action plan doesn't say enough so could expand a bit more on this. CD asked who leads the kick-start scheme and NC explained how it works. This provision will not fall within our success rates –as the outcomes will not be qualifications and achievement rates but will be in terms of destinations.

APPROVED

THE COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT GRADES FOR 2019/ 2020

NOTED

PROGRESS MADE TO DATE ON THE STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020/21

8. i. Draft minutes & verbal summary of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting on 24 November 2020

TB reported that the Committee had considered a raft of reports and highlighted the following:

- The annual TLA report showed very good high levels of students satisfaction
- The CPD report is well linked to the College's strategic objectives
- The Induction Survey demonstrated a pleasing outcome.
- Annual Complaints Reports - having seen this for many years, the Committee noted the number of complaints is reducing each year and are now half of what they were in previous years.

ii. Behaviour Policy

The Committee had considered the revised Behaviour policy and recommended it for approval

iii. Safeguarding Policy

The Committee had considered the revised Safeguarding Policy and recommended it for approval. JL commented that she had sight of the revised policy before it went to Committee and was very happy with it. She also said that she had been impressed with the partnerships the College has with police and other agencies.

APPROVED

THE COLLEGE'S BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

NOTED**REPORT OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE****9. i. Draft minutes & verbal summary of the Audit Committee meeting on 24 November 2020**

SB reported that the majority of the items considered at the meeting follow as substantive items. All reports considered by the Committee were good and where appropriate recommended to the Board for approval.

ii. Annual Internal Audit Report for the Year Ended 31 July 2020

On a 4-point scale, the IAS have issued the following opinion which equates to the second assurance level:

'The organisation has an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control. However, our work has identified further improvements to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control to ensure that it remains adequate and effective.'

The report shows a positive outcome and that the internal control systems and processes are well managed. The Audit Committee had asked that a message be sent to staff with congratulations on all the outcomes.

iii. Annual Report of the Audit and Assurance Committee 2019/2020

SB advised that the Committee were happy to recommend the report to the Board for approval subject to changing the wording to 'advisory', where relevant, in the IA reports table.

iv. Risk Register review – November 2020

BP presented the Risk Register. Many of the risks have moved from green to amber as this paper reports on risks in the new academic year. The College is making good progress against the identified risks and has been assured through the positive outcomes of recent internal audit reviews that the College has made progress in terms of compliance and risk mitigation. However, when considering COVID-19 risks, there are areas to be RAG rated as AMBER for the November 2020 review. The College has also indicated the Risk Target for all risks and opportunities is GREEN. In summary The College is managing, controlling and mitigating against all know risks well in this uncertain climate. In order for the learners to succeed the quality of education must be exactly the same whether it's delivered online or face to face. To this end the College is carrying out online mini reviews. There is a lot of good work going on but we need to put in place more infrastructure to support online learning.

v. Further Education Emerging Issues

This report is presented for information.

RECOMMENDATION**APPROVED****ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE 2019/2020****NOTED**

- **ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2020**
- **REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**
- **RISK REGISTER REVIEW – NOVEMBER 2020**
- **FURTHER EDUCATION EMERGING ISSUES**

10. I. Draft minutes & verbal summary of the Resources Committee meeting on 1 December 2020

VP reported that the Resources Committee had:

- Discussed the revaluation of the Pension fund in the actuarial report which has resulted in a reduction of the College's net reserves and agreed to recommend that SR be appointed to the Harrow Pension Fund Committee.
- Reviewed the financial statements (to be considered in Part 2) and congratulated SN, BP and all staff in maintaining the excellent results of the College
- Considered the updated Subcontracting policy and had agreed that some of the contractual arrangements need to be firmed up
- Received an update on the T Level bid
- Looked at property matters and agreed to recommend to the Board that the architects should carry out a full review and come up with a budget for a property strategy.

BP advised said that a ball park figure for the cost of the review is £50k –and if this proposal is approved the College will go out to tender on this; he explained that in light of the meetings the College has had with the DfE it is clear they need to understand the vision for the College and we want to have everything in place by 2024. The exec team will bring more on this to the Resources Committee virtually before the next meeting as we need an inspiring plan. This will be treated as a capital investment unless we don't build in which case the cost will then be a P&L item. JL said she was nervous about agreeing to a figure without any caveats. It was therefore suggested that it could be agreed in principle and then brought back to the Board.

SB asked whether we can ask for a building block by block quote. BP said that we need to see a full review before anything can move forward

The Board agreed to go out to tender for more quotes and BP will bring this back to the Board for final approval. It can be done this via email but if the Board can't agree then it will convene a meeting.

VP advised that the Resources committee had asked that BP bring a draft paper on this with timeline and options involved.to the next meeting.

The remainder of the matters discussed and recommendations made to the Board follow as substantive items

ii. Verbal Report of use of College Seal

The Board was advised that the College Seal had been applied on 1st December 2020 to the agreement between the GLA and the College for the provision of emergency recovery support funding of £200k. The agreement was signed by SN as Accounting Officer and witnessed by NS.

iii. Management Accounts for the Period ended 31 October 2020

BP summarised the October Management Accounts saying the College is in an excellent financial position showing a surplus of £17k and that we are on target to achieve the Forecast Year Surplus of £106k surplus to 31 July 2021.

iv. Monitoring Report

BP presented the Monitoring report which shows that the majority of financial KPI's are on target. There is some concern in terms of L3 loan recruitment which will be impacted through the government's introduction of free courses for L3 adults. VP said that he had at the committee meeting sought clarification on why the "likely case" and the "best case" were the same. Technically, he believed the likely case was £106 and the best case would be higher if the College were to receive additional funds. For this month's report he was happy to accept the likely and best case scenario figure in the report; BP said it is "likely" to remain at £106k.

v. Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy has been updated in light of new requirements. This policy must be approved by the Board and then signed by Chair and Principal.

vi. Redundancy Policy

The Policy has been reviewed as a matter of good practice and some minor changes about communication to stakeholders were agreed by the Resources Committee.

RATIFIED

- i. THE APPOINTMENT OF SIMON RADFORD TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE HARROW COUNCIL PENSION FUND COMMITTEE.**
- ii. USE OF THE COLLEGE SEAL**

APPROVED

- i. COLLEGE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**
- ii. COLLEGE REDUNDANCY POLICY**

NOTED

- i. REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**
- ii. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS UP TO 31 OCTOBER 2020**
- iii. MONITORING REPORT**

11. Governance**i. Chair's Report of the Governance Committee meeting 13 October 2020**

The Chair reported that the Governance Committee had:

- Noted that Colin Fox, co-opted member on the Resources Committee, has tendered his resignation and attended his last Resources Committee meeting on 1 December. This leaves an immediate vacancy on the Resources Committee for one member. TB advised of his intention to step down as Vice Chair and continue as an ordinary governor for a year. VP also plans to step down at the end of the academic year, which will leave vacancies for both members and Chairs of the Resources Committee and Curriculum and Quality Committee. This will mean a considerable gap in the membership if not filled swiftly to ensure a timely handover, so efforts to recruit are in place now. GS is working closely with NS on this.
- Considered and agreed to recommend to the Board that Simon Radford is appointed to the membership of the Audit Committee.
- Considered and agreed to recommend to the Board that Jan Doust be appointed Vice Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee.

The remainder of the matters discussed and recommendations made to the Board follow as substantive items.

ii. Governance action plan 2020-21 (GAP) progress report and CPD plan

The Board noted the progress made with the GAP since the last meeting and that the majority of the rag ratings were green.

iii. Draft Governors CPD plan for 2020-21

The CPD plan was produced following the outcome of the skills analysis summary and self-assessment exercise carried out in September 2020. This plan should be considered along with the GAP and is a working document and as such there are gaps where suitable training and development (T&D) events/activities have yet to be identified. Whilst the Board is asked to take ownership of this plan, the Director of Governance will be responsible for identifying suitable T&D events and following up with the relevant Governors requiring the training. All events will be open to all Governors if they believe it will be of benefit to their professional development

GS reported that the Committee had asked that BP ensure there is a budget for this plan and that after some discussion had agreed that the following should be included in the plan:

- Mentoring for new Governors – this is being done but is not explicit in the plan
- Add in Ofsted training
- Arrange briefing/ Senior staff presentations/ training sessions before each Board meeting if no Committee meetings are being held

iv. Governor links activity and visits reports for the autumn term

These were received.

v. Proposed revised allocation of link areas

NS advised that as the Chair interacts regularly with College staff and students as part of his role his link area, CHE, has been re-allocated

vi. The Meeting Evaluation, Learning and Reflection form

At the strategy day it was agreed that the Board should aim to be a reflective and learning Board and it was agreed to add a standing item at the end of agenda for members to spend some time evaluating the meeting and to feedback on any learning and reflection. It has since been agreed that although it is useful to receive and minute feedback given at the end of each meeting it would be more useful for development purposes to capture any learnings etc. by way of written evidence. Therefore it is proposed to send out an evaluation form with each meeting pack for members to complete within 7 days of the meeting to give them time to reflect on the meetings and any learning outcomes. The Committee agreed the form would be a useful evidential and development tool and that members should be encouraged to complete and return it within a couple of days (rather than a week) of the meeting whilst it is still fresh in their minds.

**RECOMMENDATION
APPROVED**

- **THE APPOINTMENT OF SIMON RADFORD TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE.**
- **THE APPOINTMENT OF JAN DOUST AS VICE CHAIR OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE.**
- **DRAFT GOVERNORS CPD PLAN FOR 2020-21**
- **PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION OF LINK AREAS**
- **MEETING EVALUATION, LEARNING AND REFLECTION FORM**

RATIFIED

THE APPOINTMENT OF CAROS IBRAHIM AS A STUDENT GOVERNOR FOR A PERIOD OF 1 YEAR UNTIL 31 JULY 2021 AND TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE.

NOTED

- **REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**
- **PROGRESS MADE WITH THE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN (GAP) 2020-21**
- **GOVERNOR LINKS ACTIVITY AND VISITS REPORTS FOR THE AUTUMN TERM**

12.Link Governors not yet reported to the Governance Committee (if any)

None

13. Any Other Business

NC thanked everyone for the kind gift and in the support afforded her by all the governors and in particular TB and JL. TB responded that he had enjoyed working with her and will miss her and she will be a great loss to the College. JL said NC is would be welcomed back anytime and thanked her for all the work and effort she has put in over the years.

14. Meeting Review and Evaluation

VP reiterated that participants must go speak via the chair to improve the management of virtual meetings and also the importance of information being provided in a timely manner

15. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 23rd March 2021

Meeting ended at 8.30pm

Signed

Chair

Date

Action Points

Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Completed
7	ii.Strategic Operational Plan 2020/21 SB observed that there were a few reds which did not have any commentary. NC responded that many of the actions are amber or red because the College has not yet been able to do anything about it and were hoping to start in January, so this may need to be reviewed. SB suggested it would be helpful to contextualise this.	JS	Feb 2021	On March Agenda
10.i	Report of the Resources Committee The Board agreed to go out to tender for the full property review and BP will bring this back to the Board for final approval. It can be done this via email but if the Board can't agree then it will convene a meeting.	BP	Jan 2021	Update provided at March Board Strategy day
11.iii	Draft Governors CPD plan for 2020-21 the following to be included in the plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring for new Governors – this is being done but is not explicit in the plan • Add in Ofsted training • Arrange briefing/ Senior staff presentations/ training sessions before each Board meeting if no Committee meetings are being held. 	NS	Jan 2021	Completed