



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2019

Report: Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10 October 2019
Author: Clerk
Action: Approve
Status: Open

Present: John McCabe (Chair)
Judith Doyle (Principal / CEO)
Darren Heathcote
Martin Jesper
Nick Hurn
Andy Lorimer
Chris Macklin
Kirsty Paterson
Claire-Jane Rewcastle
Sarah Stewart

In attendance: John Gray
Nadine Hudspeth
Mark Thompson
Ivan Jepson
Chris Toon
Emma Moody (Clerk)
Suzanne Clark (Minutes)

2090 Chair's welcome, apologies, conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, his first full Board meeting since being appointed as Chairman of Gateshead College.

The Chair congratulated the previous Chair on the success achieved at Gateshead College during his leadership and acknowledged his appreciation for the support he gave during the transition period. The Chair added that he was hugely impressed following his induction to the College and very appreciative of the kindness and support shown by the governors he'd had the opportunity to meet with and the College's Executive Team. The Chair took the opportunity to introduce himself to all members present and gave an overview of his background outlining his passion for the region.

Apologies were received from Martin Gannon, David Mitchell and John Holt.

No governor declared any conflict of interest at this stage but governors were reminded that if a conflict arose during the meeting, they should declare it as soon as they became aware of it.

The Chair advised that due to an impending visit from the Children's Minister, Michelle Donelan, he and the Principal would need to leave the meeting for a short period of time to welcome her to the College.

The Principal advised that Richard Bathgate will soon be leaving the College and a new teaching staff governor will need to be appointed.

2091 Minutes of the last meeting dated 4 July 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

2092 Matters arising

THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

2093 Strategic Update

The Principal / CEO gave a verbal update.

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The verbal update was noted.

2094 Customer Feedback Report 2018/19

The report was presented by the Director of Student Experience.

A member commented that she had found the report to be very interesting. The member asked if there was any specific reason why approximately a third of complaints were not resolved within the expected timescales of 10 days. Was there anything specific or are timescales too short. The Director of Student Experience responded that there are a number of reasons why it takes longer to resolve a complaint including the absence of learners or that a detailed investigation is required but acknowledged that timescales could be viewed as being too short.

Following a further question from a member, the Director of Student Experience advised that the two complaints that were not closed during 2018/19 were related to learner progression. Discussions are currently ongoing with parents about learners who were unable to progress for very specific reasons. The Board was assured that these complaints will be resolved soon.

The Director of Student Experience reported that the complaints in relation to a 'disability issue' had been closed. It was confirmed that the complaints were not so much about the disability and more around the learners' progression. Members were assured that the Director of Student Experience had looked in detail at the reasons for this as it is a College priority to promote inclusion. The learners were not academically ready to progress.

A member asked whether there was any training for governors in relation to this. It was confirmed that there is safeguarding training for governors which the Director of Student Experience is planning to deliver. The Director of Student Experience reminded all members that there is a statutory requirements for governors to undertake regular safeguarding training. The Director of Student Experience advised that there is an internal online training package for Consumer Protection training and this can be shared with governors. The Clerk added that to satisfy Ofsted requirements it is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that students have the ability to raise complaints. The Principal suggested this is also very important in informing the College's five star customer service delivery.

A member commented that overall the report shows a small number of learners giving feedback when both the complaints and compliments are considered and asked how more general feedback is collated. The Director of Student Experience responded that staff work with students, both individually and as groups, and there is a learner voice action plan which deals with a broader range of feedback. The College's student representative

gave an overview of some of the mechanisms used to collect feedback including student focus groups. The Board was assured that this feedback is shared with managers and followed up as appropriate. The Principal added that this work is part of a wider engagement strategy where there are lots of touch points where learners can give feedback. The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Quality highlighted that there are three online surveys completed across the year and that the results of these surveys are reported to the Teaching & Learning Committee. The Chair commented that at the Business Committee held the previous day there was a discussion held around KPIs. The Chair felt that it would be good for this work to be included within the standard KPIs. The Chair suggested that wall space in the governors' room (1-304) could be used for visual updates. The Chair would very much appreciate this oversight.

The report was noted.

2095 Confidential Financial Update and Overview 2019/20 – for elected members only (not staff or student governors)

The reports were presented by the Principal / CEO and the Clerk.

2096 Governor Appraisals

The Clerk gave a verbal update.

The Clerk advised all governors that as part of the board effectiveness process, governor appraisals are carried out and announced that the process will be starting soon. It is intended that dates will be planned from January 2020. The Clerk stressed that the process is about ensuring that the College gets the best out of its governors and also, that governors are supported and feel well equipped to fulfil their role.

The verbal report was noted.

2097 Any other business

The Principal and Clerk advised that it had been intended to include a safeguarding training session for governors during the meeting but due to a full agenda this was not possible. The Clerk added that it was very important to maximise participation and asked governors whether they would prefer a standalone session or for this to be added to the agenda for the Board meeting in December. There was agreement that members would prefer a standalone session and the Director of Student Experience would look to arrange for this to take place during November. A member asked whether there was any opportunity to undertake this online. The Director of Student Experience advised that the College has access to ETF (Education & Training Foundation) modules and that these are very useful as they are focused on roles with one package specific to governors. There is also an in-house online package which staff undertake on an annual basis. It was suggested that members attend the face-to-face session in the first instance and that online training be undertaken following this. The Clerk advised that David Mitchell has a specialism in relation to safeguarding and represents the Board on the College's safeguarding steering group.

2098 Chair's review of business

The Chair had nothing further to add to what had already been discussed during the meeting.

2099 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 12 December 2019 at 4.00pm followed by dinner in Enfields.

Staff, student governors and the Executive Team (with the exception of Darren Heathcote who is a member of the Audit Committee) left the meeting at 13.35 and it was agreed that elected members would reconvene at 14.00 to discuss the confidential reports (2095).