

Brooklands College

Date: 15th October 2019

Brooklands College responds to publication of Further Education Commissioner (FEC) intervention report

The Further Education Commissioner (FEC) has today (15 October 2019) published its intervention summary report for Brooklands College.

The report is part of a process intended to support the College in securing further education provision for the communities that it serves.

In responding to its findings, Andrew Baird, Brooklands College Chair of Governors, said:

“The report makes a number of important recommendations and the College is addressing these as a matter of urgency. *(Note: please see below for details)*

“The report rightly recognises the hard work of staff and their pride in its successes, including the results of the latest Ofsted inspection.

“The inspection team also highlighted how the students it interviewed were very positive about the supportive and helpful staff who are ‘always willing to help them’, the skills they are gaining at college and the friendly atmosphere here.”

The College is acting on the report recommendations. Specifically:

- A National Leader of Governance – Andrew Baird - has been appointed as Chair of Governors, in order to support the senior team and governing body through the challenging period ahead
- Governors expect to appoint an interim CEO/Principal by the end of October. Given the challenges faced by the College at this time, governors are keen to recruit an individual with the high-level change management skills and experience in working in a similar context.
- Governors have taken expert advice and are considering a range of options in order to respond to the possible outcomes of the Education and Skills Funding Agency’s ongoing investigation into sub-contracting apprenticeship provision.
- Rapid action was taken by governors and the senior team to improve financial performance in 2018/2019, with a significant restructure of the management team, in order to reflect the reduction in income and learner numbers.
- Financial management and scrutiny have been improved by extending financial planning to 2021/22 and including student number information in the management accounts.

- The College has met its recruitment targets for 2019/20 and has improved student attendance rates through earlier, more effective interventions.

The report also records that:

- The College has taken appropriate action to reduce costs.
- 'Every effort is being made' by the College to minimise the impact of the subsequent restructuring on staff.
- Since the FEC's initial diagnostic visit in January 2019, the College has made good progress in cost reduction.
- Student outcomes are above national and sector average in many areas.
- Governors and leaders have been effective in driving through change since the January 2019 diagnostic assessment.
- Regular, rigorous, curriculum performance management meetings, using appropriate key performance indicators, are helping to develop a focus on student performance indicators.
- Governors and leaders are dealing with multiple, difficult and high-risk challenges.
- The interim principal and interim CEO understand the college and its challenges well.

The report also notes that the Weybridge campus requires major investment and re-sizing to meet future needs and that high maintenance and running costs add further financial pressure and risk.

"The College is grateful for the support of the EM3 LEP in funding some refurbishment on the Weybridge campus and new build on the Ashford campus," added Mr Baird.

End

Editor's Notes:

- **Issued By:** BROOKLANDS COLLEGE, Heath Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8TT www.brooklands.ac.uk
- **About Brooklands College:** Brooklands College is a Further Education college based on two campuses, one in Weybridge and the other in Ashford. We provide vocational courses, higher education and professional qualifications.
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