

# Brooklands College

Minutes of the Full Governing Body  
co-ordinated remotely via 'Zoom' meeting platform software  
across various domestic locations, commencing 6 pm 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

|          |                     |  |
|----------|---------------------|--|
| Present: | Andrew Baird        | Chair                                    |
|          | Dr Barbara Spittle  | Vice-Chair                               |
|          | Princess Badilla    | Student Governor                         |
|          | Muhammad Bilal      | Student Governor                         |
|          | Dr Andrew Gilchrist | Chair of Audit                           |
|          | Fred Gray           | Chair of Resources                       |
|          | Melanie Harding     |  |
|          | Mary Hughes         | Safeguarding Governor                    |
|          | Hilary Omissi OBE   |  |
|          | Jackie Pearson      | Chair of Curriculum & Performance Review |
|          | Christine Ricketts  | Principal (ex Officio)                   |
|          | Teresa Roberts      | Staff Governor                           |

|                |                     |   |
|----------------|---------------------|---|
| In Attendance: | John Brady          | Director of Estates and Facilities      |
|                | Steve Dowbiggin OBE | CEO                                     |
|                | Sarah Glasspool     | Director of Finance and Human Resources |
|                | Chris Dearnley      | ESFA Observer                           |

|            |                   |                                    |
|------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Apologies: | Andrew Barrett    | Staff Governor                     |
|            | Jonathan Lipscomb | Clerk                              |
|            | Paul Stedman      | Granted temporary leave of absence |

**This was preceded by a Governor training session covering two issues**

- i. **Estate strategy development, relevant legislation and options (led by Nolan Smith, Director of Fusion)**
- ii. **The Governance section of the College's Quality Improvement Plan for 2020-21 Involved a validation of the self-assessment of Governance in 2019-20 and the scoping of the areas for development and KPI's for Governors in 2020-21, led by Jackie Pearson**

## **PART 1**

### **1. Action in the event of an emergency**

Left to individual action

### **2. Welcome and apologies**

**The Chair noted that**

- i. the Clerk had been unwell but was recovering
- ii. The CEO had offered to minute the meeting if that was acceptable to Governors
- iii. Paul Stedman had made it clear that he wished to remain a member of the Governing Body but understood it was appropriate for him to take leave of absence whilst matters relating to the estate's developments were such a high profile (to avoid any future conflict of interest challenge).

- iv. apologies had been received from Andrew Barrett and that this was a shame as his term of office as the Governor elected by the Technical/support staff was completed by this meeting and Governors had wanted to thank him personally for his contribution. (as Andrew had been appointed as an Academic member of staff during his term of office he was not eligible for re-election as the Technical/support staff's Governor).
- v. It was the first meeting for the two new student representatives and how grateful Governors were to them for making themselves available and how pleased all were that they had been able to join the meeting.
- vi. It would be helpful for Governors if each student Governor would say a few words about themselves and the courses they were taking at the start of the next Full Governing Body Meeting.

**Resolved to**

- i. **Chair to write to Andrew Barrett on behalf of the Governing Body thanking him for his engagement and support as a staff governor through a very challenging time for the College.**
- ii. **Request the Clerk initiates a process so that the non-academic staff can identify a candidate for the vacant staff Governor post.**

**3. Declarations of interest**

**Noted that**

Andrew Gilchrist declared that he is a Governor of Croydon College.

There were no other declarations of any interests, additional to those registered with the Clerk that were relevant to matters on the Agenda.

**4. Notification of any other business**

**Noted**

Neither the Clerk or the Chair had been notified of any additional business.

**5. Draft Minutes (part one) of the meeting of the Full Governing Body on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020**

**Received Minutes from the Clerk**

**Noted**

Amendments as follows:

Item 9 viii. Re Enrolments:

Replace 'high yielding' with 'high value'.

Item 11 ii. Re Student complaints:

Add 'On' to the sentence so it now reads 'were centred on such matters as....'

**Resolved**

To accept the amended minutes as an accurate record of the meeting and authorise the Chair to sign them.

**6. Matters arising from the minutes and action points of the FGB meeting of the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020**

**Received paper from the Clerk**

**Noted that**

- i. The College was reviewing the unpublished minutes with a view to making them available on the college's web site at the earliest opportunity but had found that some items were (using the college's guidance) sensitive and needed to be recorded as part 2 items. To facilitate this in an appropriately transparent manner without requiring all the minutes to be reconsidered by the Governing body a protocol had been devised and agreed with the Chairs of committees and this was now being used as the minutes were reviewed. It was hoped to publish all the minutes not posted by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 (but this may prove challenging).
- ii. The action points relating to Covid 19 impact and response and informing Governors of updated achievement figures had been completed.
- iii. All other matters were covered by the reports received and the agenda.

## **7. Principal's Report on Covid 19**

### **The Principal gave a verbal update on the following**

- The College had 17 confirmed cases, 2 involving staff.
- Letter from the Secretary of State re the possibility of Mass testing being made available to colleges.
- Positive meeting initiated by the Local MP Ben Spencer seeking an update on the College's status and emerging issues.

## **8. Clerks Report**

### **Received report FGB 20-21-07 from the Clerk (presented by the CEO in his absence)**

#### **8.1 Governing Body Business Schedule**

Noted

- i. Receipt of Appendix 1 -A schedule of Governing Body and SPA meetings.
- ii. That the rescheduled audit/resources meeting (tentatively planned for 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021) should focus solely on matters relating to the approval of the College accounts and not be used to deal with any other matters.

#### **8.2 Chair's Action**

Noted

- i. Chairs Action had been taken to allow College officers to set aside normal financial regulations to engage:
  - Logixx to progress from providing advice on the IT systems to providing a full support service because:
    - Their current investigations and the scoping work they have undertaken means there would be minimal disruption to the college at a time when establishing a secure and robust IT system is a priority.
    - The quote they have given is competitive and would affect savings on the 19-20 IT expenditure levels.
    - There are concerns about the College's ability to attract a suitable IT manager given the insecurity of the post going forward in a SPA process following the failure of the internal candidate in the selection process.
    - The Chair had insisted that a review/break clause was included in any contract to ensure flexibility/options post the SPA.
  - Bibby's contract to advise the Principal on ILR matters be extended to provide cover and support until the SPA process was progressed.
- ii. That the Chair of resources had been consulted and he confirmed, at the meeting, his support for both actions given the importance of maintaining stability in both these areas at this time.

- iii. That the documentation supporting both requests was available.

**Resolved to confirm and endorse the actions taken by the Chair**

**8.3 Recruitment of Governors**

**Noted**

- i. The Principal had identified a senior academic in a local school who had expressed interest in joining the Governing Body and that this was referred to the planning, remuneration and Governance Committee to follow up.
- ii. The local employer who had expressed an interest in joining the Governing Body had been followed up by officers but had not been subsequently pursued by the interested party.

**8.4 Student Representation on the Governing Body**

**Resolved**

**To confirm the appointment of Princess Badilla and Muhammad Bilal as Student Governors for the rest of the 2020-21 academic year.**

**8.5 College Health and Safety Policy**

**(attached as Appendix 2 to the report)**

**Noted**

- i. The need to include a clear statement on the need for staff to record near misses and for this information to inform risk assessment going forward.
- ii. That Lee Holloway had been appointed as the College's Health and safety officer and was proving to be a positive force who was well respected by staff for his 'can do (but safely)' attitude.

**Resolved to accept the College's Health and Safety Policy on proviso that a cross reference to accident and near miss reporting protocols was included.**

**9 Draft Minutes of the curriculum and performance review meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**Received Draft minutes presented by the Chair of the Committee**

**Noted**

- i. The figures relating to Covid cases (item 7.i.) had been updated by the Principal in her verbal report (item 7 above).
- ii. It was felt the College should identify trends in demand for IT courses and seek to offer and promote areas that schools cannot offer rather than just duplicate provision offered by schools.
- iii. The college's focus on achieving its AEB funding targets and the importance of this both in terms of ensuring the college moved to an operational cash positive status in 2020-21 and in protecting funding allocations in future years (AEB funding based upon previous year's out turn).
- iv. Appreciation of staff efforts to deliver practical sessions and assessments during the lock down and periods where access was restricted due to the pandemic.
- v. That, although the three-year trend showed major improvement in achievement rates, the 2019-20 figures showed a deterioration year on year but that this was largely due to disappointing performance in two areas that was now being addressed as a priority.

- vi. The college was growing its direct provision of apprenticeships even though the pandemic was presenting challenges in both this area and to possibility to provide effective work experience opportunities.
- vii. How effective and responsive the marketing team had been and in particular the success of the 'tic toc video on forensic science and the virtual tours and open days.
- viii. Comments made re the QIP and SAR have been recorded in item 10 (Principal's report) to avoid duplication.

## 10 Principal's Update

Received the report of the Principal and six appendices (paper FGB 20-21-08) presented by the Principal

### 10.1 Grants received by the College

#### Noted

- i. The college had negotiated supplementary grants (details given in appendix 1) totalling:
 

|         |            |
|---------|------------|
| Revenue | £342,845   |
| Capital | £1,142,334 |
- ii. Resources committee would oversee the expenditure on these projects.

### 10.2 College Self-Assessment Report SAR

#### Noted

- i. This had been discussed at length by the CPR Committee and had been subject to a validation process (led by an independent assessor) that Governors and senior staff had participated in.
- ii. That Construction, Apprenticeships and functional skills were placed into intervention That CPR had accepted the grades recommended and that these had been confirmed by a challenging validation process.  
These are:

|                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>      | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>Education for Young People</b> | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>Adults</b>                     | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>Apprenticeships</b>            | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| <b>High Needs</b>                 | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>Behaviours and attitudes</b>   | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>Personal Development</b>       | <b>Good</b>                 |
| <b>Leadership and Management</b>  | <b>Good</b>                 |

**Resolved to accept the College's SAR report**

### 10.3 College Quality Improvement Plan

#### Noted

- i. that special action was being taken to ensure Construction improved its performance (as there had been disappointing improvement in 2019-20).

**Resolved to accept the QIP and request regular updates on the achievement of the KPI's identified with in it.**

#### **10.4 Update on Current arrangements for IT and MIS**

**Noted**

- i. Good progress being made to optimise the IT services and improve security.
- ii. Investment being made in upskilling directors on how to optimise curriculum planning recording and delivery to ensure the college's activities are fully recognised by the funding methodology.

#### **10.5 Middle Leadership Development programme**

**Noted**

- i. The need to upskill the middle managers to enable them to better lead their teams through the current challenging times by empowering staff was identified and a programme has been developed which the staff concerned have helped design to address this need.
- ii. That one Governor present declared that they had worked with those commissioned to deliver the programme and that they had every confidence in them and fully supported the initiative.

#### **10.6 Over View of Key Specific Objectives for 2020-21**

**Noted**

That the key specific objectives adopted are to:

- i. **Ensure that we meet the adult allocation of £1,112,314.**  
To date the College has earned £203,349. (The new adult curriculum was launched in late November 2020 and since launch the page has received 5,467 page views on the page, 679 have clicked on the link – 12% 48 have completed the form – 8%.
- ii. **Promote and achieve in year starts of 16 -19 year olds.**  
The College will be promoting in year starts on study programmes with a September guarantee for progression to a study programme or apprenticeship programme.
- iii. **Launch of Traineeship programmes** (with a target of £250, 000).
- iv. **Strengthen our partnerships with key local stakeholders.**  
Such as the Borough councils by:
  - Being responsive to recovery as an impact of the pandemic.
  - Launching and implementation of:
    - a. The Youth Hubs on each campus.
    - b. Adult courses in Retrain and Upskill.

#### **10.7 Other matters reported verbally**

**Noted**

- i. A virtual meeting had been held with the Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng, MP for Spelthorne and Minister in the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy which had gone well.
- ii. He had expressed a wish to visit the College once that was possible.

### **11 Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

## Noted that

- i. There had been a misunderstanding over the circulation of the minutes that had delayed matters and as a result the Chair decided to go through the minutes in detail, page by page.
- ii. Priority was being given to providing equipment to students working remotely who would otherwise not be able to access learning.
- iii. The college was planning a phased return to on site learning and was rolling this out giving priority to those learners who were finding remote learning challenging or were proving difficult to engage.
- iv. The staff Governor commented that there had been a significant improvement in the reliability and quality of the IT support since Logixx were engaged to advise the college.
- v. The College's caterers had terminated their contract with the minimum notice and that the College's catering staff had 'stepped up' and were offering a service and using the opportunity to provide hands on experience for students.
- vi. Good progress was being made with the Ashford Hair and Beauty salon and suggestions were welcome on who should be approached to officially open the facility once it is commissioned.
- vii. plans were in place to refurbish the Locke King building and following a competitive process one was clearly the most competitive and would be appointed once their tender had been reviewed in detail by Fusion.
- viii. Good progress is being made in resolving all the issues (except the funds at risk) which had delayed the closing of the 2018-19 accounts.
- ix. The College's balance sheet had been adversely affected by the revaluation of the Local Government pension scheme liability (which had been significantly increased to compensate for current low interest rates).
- x. The College was in default of its covenants with Barclays Bank in respect of its loan with them but the Bank's officers were being helpful and supportive and were being kept fully apprised of developments.
- xi. The draft statutory accounts for 2019-20 had been reviewed and discussed by the committee.
- xii. That amendments had been made to the Treasury Management Policy and that the revised document was recommended to the Full Governing Body for adoption.
- xiii. That the committee had authorised an increase of £80k in the capital budget.

## Resolved to

- i. **Adopt the Treasury Management Policy.**
- ii. **Accept all actions detailed in the minutes.**

## 12 Report of the Director of Finance and HR (report FGB 20-21-09)

### 12.1 Update on the College's Financial Position

## Noted

- i. Receipt of the Management accounts for the end of November 2020 and a detailed discussion covering the following:
  - That the income and expenditure showed variations to budget that were explained in detail.
  - That, overall the college's net position is £292k worse than expected (mostly due to reduction of expected income for special needs provision that has become apparent post the agreement of the budget.
  - Good performance in many areas and improved financial control over expenditure.
  - The continuing need to increase income from adult education provision and full cost activities.
  - That the cash flow situation was being carefully monitored.
- ii. **12.2 Report on HR (attached as appendix A to the report)**

## **Noted**

- i. The results were encouraging (particularly given the challenges facing the College).
- ii. That 22 new staff had been recruited.
- iii. Details of some staff benefits.

## **13. Draft minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

### **Received draft minutes presented by the Chair of the Committee**

## **Noted**

- i. The committee had agreed that further time would be made available to ensure that the Internal Audit report on the ILR can be reviewed to reflect additional information not made available to them to support the draft report.
- ii. The Internal Audit report on the ILR and the subsequent annual internal auditor's report needs to be considered by the audit committee before they are presented to the joint audit/resources committee planned for the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (tbc).
- iii. That all matters, other than the treatment of any funds at risk, arising from the 18/19 accounts had now been resolved and once that matter was finalised the 2018-19 accounts could be approved.
- iv. The late submission of the 2018-19 accounts did not put the college in default of its funding conditions as the ESFA had, monthly, granted an extension in the date the submission was required by (due to the exceptional circumstances).
- v. That the college was focused on ensuring that the 2019-20 accounts would be approved by Governors by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 deadline but recognised that the final submission of these would require resolution of issues relating to the funds at risk of being reclaimed and that the College would need to apply for an extension to the date for the submission of these accounts as well.

## **14. CEO's Report**

### **Received report FGB 20-21-10 presented by the CEO**

## **Noted**

The report covered:

- i. Update on the College's estates (including evolving thinking on the options for the Weybridge campus).
- ii. Overview of College financial position.

## **15. Draft Minutes of the Planning, Remuneration and Governance Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

## **Noted.**

- i. That the Chair of the Committee had not been able to attend so the Chair of Governors had chaired the meeting and therefore presented these minutes.
- ii. Governors welcomed the new header sheet for Governing Body papers and felt it had been an improvement.
- iii. that the Chair of Governors would arrange meetings with each independent Governor and the Clerk would update the Skills register in the new year.

## **16. Date of the Next Full Governing Body Meeting**



**Confirmed as Wednesday 31 March (starting at 18.00 hours) but to be preceded by a Governor training session at 17.00 hours that will include an induction to the 'my concern' site by Tracey Mc Kenzie at 17.30.**

**Andrew Baird**

**Chair of Governors**

**Minutes prepared by the CEO in the Clerk's absence.**