

PROSPECTS COLLEGE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

17 MAY 2018

MINUTES

Present: David Sherlock (Chair) External Governor
Judith Abbott Chief Executive
Prof Rao Bhamidimarri External Governor
Sue Dare External Governor
Jamie Dean Student Member
Bala Mahendran External Governor
Peter McKee External Governor
Theo Steel External Governor
Cath Weissand Staff Member

In attendance: Robin Jones Clerk to the Board of Governors
Ros Parker Principal
Josh Burrage Data Analyst (item 654)

654 BOARD DEVELOPMENT SESSION – DATA

The Data Analyst provided a presentation on the format of the College Data now available to assist in planning and tracking performance against targets.

A number of issues were highlighted during a wide-ranging discussion including:

- Whilst the presentation focussed on high level performance data it was explained that it was possible to filter down throughout the College organisation
- The importance of reviewing such factors as enrolment, attendance and retention by Study Programmes and Apprenticeships and by Faculty/Area as well as age and other equality considerations
- The opportunities to develop the system further having regard to, for example, ESFA contract values
- The annual cycle of events including when achievement data became available – the end of year data would be known by October although the national comparators were not published until the Spring
- The arrangements for the refresh of the data on a daily basis which was invaluable to staff in terms of having an accurate picture of the student data

The Board agreed following discussion:

- 1 to welcome the introduction of the data reports in the format presented to the Board
- 2 to look forward to receiving updates at forthcoming meetings of the Board
- 3 to thank Josh Burrage and all others involved in the development and introduction of the new data reporting arrangements

655 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Board noted that apologies for absence had been submitted by Stephen Metcalfe and Rachel Richards given other commitments.

The Board noted that the meeting was quorate and could proceed.

656 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Members present confirmed that there were no declarations of interest relative to the issues set out in the published agenda.

657 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON 27 APRIL 2018

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 27 April 2018 were agreed to be a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

658 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON 27 APRIL 2018

The Board agreed that the items arising from the minutes of the last meeting requiring attention were addressed in the published agenda with the exception of the one relating to the GTA Committees – see the following item.

659 GTA COMMITTEES

The Board recalled that at the meeting on 22 March 2018 the proposed new GTA model was approved for PROCAT (item 612).

A Member observed that it was important that PROCAT continued to maintain employer contact particularly in terms of developing the course offer.

The Principal outlined the important contribution that had been made by the Chief Executive of the British Institute of Kitchen, Bedroom & Bathroom Installation (BiKBBI) in terms of engaging with a range of employers and supporting the College.

The Board agreed:

- 1 to welcome the continued role of employers in the life of the College
- 2 to support the Executive in building on such relationships as with the BiKBBI
- 3 to thank the Chief Executive of the BiKBBI for his contribution to date and the hope that this would continue
- 4 to place on record the view that, when considering the final presentations by the possible merger partners, particular attention would be given to their approach to engaging with employers and how they saw this continuing for PROCAT

660 FE COMMISSIONER

The Board received an update on the Structure & Prospects Appraisal process including:

- the outcomes from the second SPA Group which had taken place on 10 May 2018 (the notes of the meeting were presented to the Board as a Part B confidential item on the grounds of the sensitivity of the SPA process)

- Expressions of Interest had been submitted by 4 institutions and these had been reviewed by the SPA Group on 10 May 2018
- the shortlisted institutions had been invited to attend discussions on 7 June 2018 and then to make a presentation to the SPA Group on 8 June 2018 prior to a final recommendation as to the merger partner being considered by the Board on 28 June 2018

The Board agreed to look forward to receiving a final update and the recommendation as to the proposed merger partner at the next meeting of the Board.

661 ESFA CASE CONFERENCE MEETING

The Board noted that the second ESFA Case Conference had been held on 10 May 2018.

The focus of the discussion had included:

- the performance of the College to date in 2017/18 and the projections to the year-end
- the basis for the submission by the College of the Request for Exceptional Support so that consideration may be given by the ESFA to funding the negative cashflow which was projected to occur from July 2018 up to the point of merger.

The Board noted that the Case Conferences would continue on a monthly basis until further notice and, possibly, up to the date of merger.

662 RECOVERY PLAN

The Board recognised that, as the last meeting had taken place as recently as 27 April 2018, it was not a good use of time to update the Recovery Plan for presentation on this occasion. However, the Executive stressed that the issues set out in the Recovery Plan continued to be addressed having regard to the relative priority of the various themes.

The Board agreed to look forward to receiving the updated Recovery Plan at the meeting scheduled for 28 June 2018.

663 BUDGET – 2017/18 – MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

The Board received and discussed the Management Accounts for April 2018 (Period 9 of 2017/18).

In addition to a comprehensive commentary prepared by the Chief Executive the Management Accounts included:

- The Income and Expenditure Account to 30 April 2018
- Balance Sheet as at 30 April 2018
- Cashflow Forecast

The main points highlighted and discussed were:

- The position at Period 8 was worse than the budget projection (by £94k)
- The current deficit amounted to £931k
- The deterioration in the position since Period 8 presented to the Board on 27 April 2018 was due to learners being withdrawn and the growing shortfall on AEB delivery
- The College recruited less young people to Apprenticeship provision than originally projected (9 and not the target of 40)

- Staff costs were less than the budget
- The cash balance was better than projected and this was due to the receipt of £80k advance payment for provision to be delivered and a more robust approach to chasing up outstanding debts
- The College was continuing to seek to identify opportunities to reduce costs – or at least defer spending - without affecting adversely quality and delivery
- The College now had a robust system in place for controlling purchases and budget holders had been trained so there was a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities given the College’s financial health and the context over the coming months
- The need to have regard to additional professional costs associated with the planned merger which were not included in the reforecast budget for 2017/18

The most significant factor for the College continued to concern the Cashflow Forecast and, specifically, the need to obtain a cash injection by early July 2018. This was addressed later in the meeting and the outcome set out in Part B of the Minutes.

The Board agreed:

- 1 to note the Management Accounts for April 2018 and the various points highlighted during the presentation of the report
- 2 to note that the updated out-turn position was now indicating an end of year deficit of £(1,570)k which was £(650)k worse than the approved reforecast budget for 2017/18
- 3 to note the cashflow position and the need, based on current projections, for a cash injection by July 2018
- 4 to look forward to receiving the Management Accounts for May 2018, including the updated cashflow forecast, at the next meeting of the Board when a focus for particular attention would be the commercial income position and the extent of any projected end of year shortfall against Budget.

664 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Board received the comprehensive report of the Principal which provided an update on the following areas of organisational performance:

- recruitment to Study Programmes and Apprenticeships in 2018/19
- overall in year performance in 2017/18
- subcontractor performance with a focus on Creative Sport and Leisure as the largest subcontractor provider
- staff performance and attrition rates
- progress against the Quality Improvement Plan

The report provided the focus for a wide-ranging discussion when a number of issues were addressed including:

- the importance of targeted marketing which had been the subject of a briefing at the last meeting of the Board on 27 April 2018

- the activities of the College in continuing to raise awareness of what was available at PROCAT including the planned approach to GCSE results day when a number of young people would be reconsidering their options for post 16 education and training
- the fact that the College had not developed much new provision to be launched in 2018/19 and the acknowledgement that the current delivery model did not lend itself to roll on roll off recruitment meaning the College was heavily reliant on September starts to achieve the funding allocations
- the interventions that had been put in place to increase recruitment and improve the learner experience which in turn provided the basis for improving attendance and retention
- 83% of Teaching, Learning & Assessment sessions which had been observed during the current year were good or better
- the continued focus on reducing the number of out of funded learners which had proved to be relatively successful – there were now only 30 such learners from previous years which was a reduction of 60 over the period since September 2017
- the arrangements to maximise staff utilisation whilst removing over delivery relative to the generation of funding for specific programmes

One issue of particular concern was noted to be the generation of commercial income relative to the Recovery Plan which, it was recalled by Members, was a reduction on the amount included in the original Budget for 2017/18. An appointment had recently been made by the College for a member of staff to lead on commercial income and this and other actions were reducing the risk of an under-achievement. This would be given attention in the commentary to the Management Accounts for May 2018 to be presented to the Board on 28 June 2018.

The Board agreed:

- 1 to note the report of the Principal on recruitment, curriculum and quality performance
- 2 to look forward to receiving further updates on all aspects of College performance at future meetings when particular attention would be given, via the Management Accounts, to the generation of commercial income relative to the revised target set out in the Recovery Plan

665 SUBCONTRACTOR - APPROVAL

The Board agreed to approve the recommendation of the Executive that Burleigh College be appointed as a subcontractor for AEB provision.

666 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 APRIL 2018

The Board received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 27 April 2018.

It was recalled that the main outcomes had been reported to the meeting of the Board which had taken place on the same day.

667 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Board received and discussed the report of the Head of Facilities and Estates which provided an update on Health & Safety related items including:

- to date there had been 47 minor accidents during the year since September 2017 plus the 2 staff RIDDOR incidents reported
- the 47 minor accidents compared favourably with the position for the comparable period in 2016/17 when 67 accidents had been reported
- 25 near misses had been reported in the current year
- all staff were undertaking the Health & Safety training module via the Educare system
- the College Health & Safety Committee continued to meet on a half termly basis
- bi-monthly meetings were taking place with representatives of TfL to review Health & Safety
- periodic and routine inspections and audits continued and were up-to-date
- a fire evacuation drill had taken place at Canvey Island successfully and drills were planned shortly for Basildon and TUCA
- work continued on progressing the actions arising from the pre-audit assessment and if the BSC 5* audit was to be progressed before merger the costs would be approximately £5,980 plus VAT
- the College Health & Safety Policy was due for review in July 2018

The Board agreed to note the update on Health & Safety.

668 SAFEGUARDING, WELFARE & PREVENT

The Board received and discussed the report of the Head of Safety & Welfare which provided an update on safeguarding referrals, Prevent and the development of Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare at PROCAT covering the period January to early May 2018.

The particular attention of the Board was drawn to the increase in referrals from 33 to 42 during the period which, it was believed, showed a confidence in the College arrangements for referrals including self-referrals.

The approach to related training was explained with 10 Level 3 and 1 Level trained Safeguarding Officers across the three sites. Plans were in place for 4 more members of staff to be trained to Level 4 on 14 June 2018.

Two members of staff had now completed the WRAP session (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) which it was noted was a Government funded programme and a requirement of Essex County Council for Prevent.

The report also explained the proposed introduction of a management system using Share Point to support the College's approach to Safeguarding.

The College's Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare (PDBW) Committee continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis. The next meeting would be reviewing the arrangements in preparation for 2018/19.

A member asked about mental health given the media and other reports indicating that an ever-increasing number of young people were experience such challenges. It was confirmed that PROCAT, as with other colleges, had seen an increase and this was the subject of ongoing review so that the College could support either directly or through referrals to other agencies.

The Board agreed, following discussion, to note with interest the report on Safeguarding, Welfare and Prevent and to look forward to receiving further updates at forthcoming meetings.

Note: Rao Bhamidimarri arrived during the item on Safeguarding

669 SAFEGUARDING – LINK MEMBER OF THE BOARD

The Board agreed to appoint Sure Dare as the Link Member for the purposes of Safeguarding.

670 MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

The Board received and considered the recommendation of the Governance & Search Committee with regard to membership of the Board given that five Members were due to complete the period of office on 31 July 2018.

In introducing the report, the Clerk explained that the Governance & Search had due regard to the Nolan principles regarding re-appointments for a second or subsequent period and also took into account the contribution made to the work of the Board and the wider College during the period since incorporation in September 2014.

The Board agreed to approve the recommendation of the Governance & Search Committee that the following Members be appointed for a second period of office commencing on 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019 or the date of the dissolution of the PROCAT Corporation Board whichever is earlier:

- Bala Mahendran
- Peter McKee
- Rachel Richards
- David Sherlock
- Theo Steel

671 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)

The Board recalled that at the meeting on 27 April 2018 it had been agreed to designate the Clerk to the Corporation Board as the Data Protection Officer.

To meet GDPR requirements the Chair of the Corporation Board will act as the link and oversee the work of the Clerk as the Data Protection Officer.

672 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS – 2017/18

The Board noted the approved Calendar of Meetings for the remainder of 2017/18 as follows:

- Thursday 28 June 2018 – proposed location Basildon at 1.30pm
- Thursday 19 July 2018 – proposed location Basildon at 1.30pm

Members recognised that, given the range and importance of issues to be addressed, it may be appropriate to arrange additional meetings over and above the dates listed above.

673 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS – 2018/19

The Board agreed that it would be appropriate to give early consideration to the Calendar of Meetings for 2018/19 having regard to the arrangements in place of the chosen merger partner and the need for “Shadow Board” meetings in addition to the ongoing business meetings.

674 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Board considered other items which, on the grounds of confidentiality, are the subject of separate minutes only available for reference by, as appropriate, Members of the Board, the Executive and others designated to have access.

Note: the confidential items of business are covered in 675 to 679.

Signed: _____ Date: _____