

## CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS REMOVED

### Meeting of the Governing Board – Wednesday 9 December 2020 - conducted remotely

#### Present

David Meakin – Chair  
Paul Ragnall  
Jim Sutcliffe  
David Brown  
Gillian Bardin  
Karen Buchanan  
Emily Slater  
Keeley Seamans  
Humera Khan  
Richard Thorley

Fiona Lugiano  
Kate Quinn  
Guy Thomas  
Richard Robinson  
Philip Turner  
Paul Henderson

#### In attendance:

Simon Jordan  
Stuart Arnfield  
Neil Burrows  
Angela Donovan  
Tracy Kennedy  
Simone Lomas

#### Apologies for Absence

- 1 Gerald Griggs  
Louise Robinson  
James McLean

#### Welcome and Introductions to Student Governors

- 2 Jessica Holt and Oscar Whittaker, the potential new Student Governors were introduced to the Board. Jessica is an A Level student and Oscar is an Advanced Level BTEC manufacturing student also doing Maths A Level and both are representing the College's Sixth Form cohort. Jessica and Oscar left before the meeting started. The decision to approve their appointment would be considered in Agenda Item E.

#### Tours

- 3 The Senior Management Team hosted the Governors (virtually) in areas of the College that had been involved in the redevelopment over the summer break and autumn term, these included:
  - North West Business Training room
  - Fitness Evolution and the Sports Hall
  - Science Hub
  - Creative Industries and Computing Mezzanine

- 4 Governors were impressed with the quality of the work that had been completed and were looking forward to the further developments that were planned.

### **Safeguarding Training**

- 5 Angela Donovan, Designated Safeguarding Senior Lead and Assistant Principal Quality and Curriculum and Tracy Kennedy, Safeguarding and Prevent Manager updated members on the Child Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare agenda, explaining the College's strategies in terms of the Lancashire Continuum of Need and the interventions that take place within the College.
- 6 Governors thanked Angela and Tracey for the training they had received. Governors noted their confidence in the College's Safeguarding Strategies.

### **Review of Remote Hosting of Governor Meetings**

- 7 Governors were keen for the practices of hosting meetings to return to normal as soon as it is deemed safe to do so.
- 8 They were keen to note that they believed the meetings had been successful whilst conducting them remotely and with rigour and compliance. They did feel that the return to attending meetings in the College physically brought many benefits in terms of contribution, inclusion and an increased level of collaboration.
- 9 A cautionary note in terms of contributing to the risk by increasing footfall by attending the building was made. All governors agreed that meetings should remain on a virtual basis and would be reviewed again at the Full Governing Board in March 2021.

### **Declaration of Interest**

- 10 There were no declarations of Interest noted.

### **Draft Minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 September 2020**

- 11 The draft minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 September 2020 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, proposed by David Brown and seconded by Paul Henderson.

### **Matters arising from the Minutes**

- 12 Paragraph 20 – Neil Burrows confirmed that work to support local organisations was continuing, Kate Quinn noted how invaluable the support had been from key staff of the College who were going over and above to support the infrastructure of the rolling out of the vaccination programme in the NHS across the region.
- 13 Paragraph 41 – Neil Burrows confirmed that the higher accident rates that had been reported were due to the interpretation of an 'accident' by the new Health and Safety Officer. After investigation of the detail in the report some of the spike in the numbers can be attributed to new students working in high risk areas that have sustained very minor injuries.

## **Minutes of the Committees**

### **Draft Finance Committee – 2 December 2020**

- 14 Richard Thorley noted that the College had achieved a financial health rating of outstanding, demonstrating that the Colleges income streams have held up very well in the current circumstances. Richard explained the concern that remained in relation to the Government pension scheme and that the uncertainty in the funding of the scheme was extremely worrying.
- 15 A positive outcome was expected in 2021 given the strength in terms of the cash, following the strength of the surplus being reported; a good indication that the College is well managed.

### **Draft Audit Committee – 25 November 2020**

- 16 Jim Sutcliffe informed Governors of the Cyber Security presentation the Committee had received; that although sobering gave assurance that College practices were robust and effective. Training for all staff in relation to Cyber security was being developed and rolled out.

### **Draft Curriculum and Standards Committee – 11 November 2020**

- 17 Paul Ragnall updated Governors on the position in terms of the success of the remote learning, the physical enrolment process that had allowed students to attend the building safely and giving them reassurances for their safety and wellbeing. The Apprenticeship picture, although serious in terms of furloughed students and those that had been and were at risk of redundancy was showing early signs of improvement with companies beginning to take apprentices on, in particular in the construction trades. It was also noted that school leaver applications are up on the same time last year.

### **Student Council – 5 November 2020**

- 18 Angela Donovan advised that the Student Council meeting was well attended albeit remotely using Zoom and was very engaging. The agenda had included the consideration of the Learner Voice and Online Learning, with students advising of the practices that they believed to be an area of focus.

### **Quality Committee – 5 November 2020**

- 19 Angela Donovan informed Governors of the scope of the Committee, that members were representative from key areas of the College. David Shorrocks Health and Safety Consultant attended the meeting, giving reassurance of the robust practices that the College had adopted in light of any compliance issues relating to the current pandemic.

### **Draft Human Resources Committee – 14 October 2020**

- 20 Philip Turner advised members of the very positive staff survey results that had been achieved in particular the 100% response rate achieved whilst staff worked remotely. Philip also noted the work being undertaken to review the staff absence process with the Unions.

### **Draft Academic Board – 14 October 2020**

- 21 Karen Buchanan advised of the three items discussed by the board, Employer Engagement Strategy, Staff Survey 2020 and Remote Learning Best Practice. All three reports were extremely positively received.

### **Draft Search and Governance Committee – 14 October 2020**

- 22 David Brown advised that many of the items discussed at the meeting would be presented in the report at Agenda Item E. David did note that Louise Robinson has been re-elected to the Board for a second term of office and of the extension to the term of office of the Independent Governor on the Search and Governance Committee from one to two years and that Gilliam Bardin had agreed to remain as the Independent Governor for a further year.

### **Academic Results 2019/20**

- 23 Karen Buchanan presented the report explaining that this paper had been written to give Governors an insight into how academic results have been formulated (given there were no exams) across the country and how the College has performed. Karen explained the logic attributed to Centre Assessed Grades, giving detail on the exercise undertaken to produce the results sent to each Awarding Body.

- 24 The outcome for Burnley College was largely positive with high grades increasing by 7% from the previous year, there was questionable evidence of the statistical model not being wholly fair for some students who were penalised as a result of the Colleges four-year historical data set.

- 25 Karen summarised the position that staff will continue to work tirelessly to support students, that the College is likely to be the top College for National Achievements for a second year, although results are not being published this year. A request to virtually host the permanent Secretary of State for Education has been made to the College and will take place on 10 December 2020. Karen will report back on the success of the meeting at the next Board meeting in March 2021.

**Action: Karen Buchanan**

- 26 David Brown asked whether the decision for exams to take place this year would be likely to change. Karen confirmed that the process, although not without challenge had been positive as information not typically gathered was collated and had given the College a unique insight into each students' performance. Adopting this process earlier would give opportunities to action any areas of concern. Presently all exams are taking place and plans for this to happen are ongoing.

### **Audit Committee Annual Report to the Governing Board 2019/20**

- 27 Jim Sutcliffe presented the report confirming that the data demonstrated a positive position. He noted that there had been three areas addressed under the 2019/20 internal audit programme with recommendations that compared positively to those of the previous year.

- 28 The previous internal audit contract came to an end in July 2020, with the College deciding to go out to tender for a new internal audit service in spring 2020. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic this tender was not able to be completed due to audit firms not being able to bid at that time. The decision was taken to delay the tender process until 2020/21 and undertake specific reviews by individual specialist consultants and focus on:
- Cyber Security
  - Health and Safety – Covid-19 response
  - Customer Financial Experience and Efficiency
- 29 The content of the report was summarised with the overall conclusions being that the College continues to offer value for money.
- 30 The Board unanimously accepted and approved the contents of the annual report, proposed by Gillian Bardin and seconded by Richard Robinson.

### **Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2019/20**

- 31 Karen Buchanan asked Stuart Arnfield to summarise the content. Stuart indicated that the College's financial health was identified as "Outstanding", putting the College in the top 25% of colleges nationally and that a detailed submission will be made to the Education and Skills Funding Agency by the extended deadline of 31 January 2021. He concluded that all three of the financial objectives have been met and that the College's financial position remains strong despite operating through the COVID-19 pandemic for much of the year.
- 32 The Board considered and approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the College for 2019/20 and the Letters of Representation for the Annual Report and Regularity Audit, proposed by David Brown and seconded by Kate Quinn.

### **Corporate Performance 2020/2021**

- 33 Karen Buchanan referred to the documents highlighting the first three pages and providing an explanation of the format used. Karen clarified that the report provided an overview of the strategic management cycle and results and a summary of the goals and the progress towards each one, presented to Governors three times a year and to staff twice a year.
- 34 Karen informed Governors of the current position in relation to each of the goals explaining that the data provides headline achievement against the Goals for the last 3 years. Karen emphasised the success in terms of achievements. Achievements recorded for the year 2019/20 are 95%, 1% up on last year's figure.
- 35 Karen explained how the Apprenticeship Standards achievement rates have been adversely affected by the considerable amount of disruption to the apprenticeship programmes due to COVID-19 with a 26.2% decrease in 2019/20. The End Point Assessment organisations have not been able to conduct assessments which has delayed achievements.
- 36 The content was noted.

### **Update on Governance Issues for Autumn/Winter term 2020/21**

37 Simone Lomas presented the report requesting Governors consideration of the draft redacted minutes attached to the report. Governors requested an additional redaction to the minutes of the 2 October 2019 and unanimously approved them for publication on the Colleges website.

**Action: Simone Lomas**

38 Governors noted that the College Seal had not been used in this term.

39 As previously mentioned, Governors approved the extension of the Term of Office of the Independent Governor from one to two years on the Search and Governance Committee. As a result, the Standing Orders for the Committee were amended and reflected the change. Governors unanimously approved the revision to the Search and Governance Standing Orders.

**Action: Simone Lomas**

40 After a rigorous interview process, a recommendation to approve the appointment of the Student Governors, Jessica Holt and Oscar Whittaker to the College's Board was made. The recommendation to approve the Student Governors was unanimously approved, proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by Philip Turner.

**Action: Simone Lomas**

41 David Brown, at this point thanked the current Student Governors for their contribution over the year, it had been an unprecedented year with meetings taking place remotely. He wished both Emily and James well in their future endeavours; Emily had been successful in securing an interview at Oxford University and James was planning to progress to University to study science.

### **Governors Strategic Planning Overview Document**

42 Karen Buchanan introduced the paper and invited Governors to raise questions and comment on the set paragraphs which had been highlighted with the relevant senior managers' name.

43 Karen emphasised the significant increase in current school leaver applications to the College; an increase of 35% at the same point last year.

44 Governors thanked Karen for the update and noted the content of the report.

### **Governors Strategic Residential 2020/21**

45 As the country is likely to still be in a 'lockdown' position as a result of the Pandemic, Simone Lomas asked Governors of the preference in terms of the format of the Strategic Residential. Four options were given to Governors to consider; the consensus being to hold a half-day virtual update to take place on either Friday 22 or Saturday 23 January 2021 presented by the Senior Management Team, with an event at the Coniston Hotel taking place later in the year.

46 Simone was requested to establish which date was the most convenient with Governors.

**Action: Simone Lomas**

Approved by Chair, David Meakin

Signed: Approved via email

Date: 18 February 2021

NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following Board meeting.