



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019

Report: Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 July 2019
Author: Clerk
Action: Approve
Status: Open

Present: Robin Mackie (Chair)
Judith Doyle (Principal)
Richard Bathgate
Darren Heathcote
Martin Jesper
Andy Lorimer
Chris Macklin
David Mitchell
Kirsty Paterson
Claire-Jane Rewcastle

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

2076 Chair's welcome, apologies, conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Martin Gannon, Nick Hurn, Sarah Stewart and Chris Toon.

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.

2077 Minutes of the last meeting dated 7 February 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

2078 Matters arising

The Clerk advised that items under section 4, ESF Funding, should be marked as confidential. The Principal reported that the College had received a request for governance minutes during the last week from trade press representatives who are looking at a particular issue across the sector.

2079 Presentation of Strategic Plan

The Principal presented the College's updated Strategic Plan. This was a PowerPoint presentation.

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The presentation was noted and the new narrative was approved.

2080 Appointment of new Chair

The Clerk gave a verbal update on the recruitment process that had recently been undertaken to appoint a new Chair.

The Clerk circulated the application and CV details for the preferred candidate and made a recommendation to the Board that he should be appointed to the role of Chair. The Principal added that the candidate had recently stepped down as Chair of the North East England Chamber of Commerce and has very strong regional links which will be of huge benefit to the College. A member who had been part of the interview panel informed the Board that the 3 short-listed candidates had gone through a very intensive process. All candidates were very credible and the recommended candidate was felt to be by far the stand-out candidate during the interview process.

The Principal reported that she had agreed with the recruitment agency that she would advise the unsuccessful candidates personally. The Clerk added that she will work together with the Principal and the Director of Marketing & Communications on stakeholder announcements to formally announce the new Chair whilst also recognising the achievements of the outgoing Chair.

The recommendation was approved from with the new Chair taking up the role from midnight on 31 July 2019.

2081 Calendar of meetings 2019/20

The Clerk presented a draft calendar of meetings for the academic year 2019/20 and advised that in some areas the number of meetings required had been reduced.

The Clerk advised that there was an error on the original circulated calendar and that the date of the first Business Committee meeting should read Wednesday 9 October 2019. It was reported that a large number of meetings were still being cancelled at short notice. Members were asked to advise in good time if they were not able to attend. The Clerk reminded members that they could join meetings by telephone or video conferencing facilities should they be unable to attend in person.

Members were asked to make contact with Suzanne Clark if there were any dates on the calendar that would prove to be particularly problematic.

The calendar was approved subject to further review by members.

2082 Future of Amacus subsidiary company

The report was presented by the Deputy Principal: Operations / Finance Director.

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The Board approved all recommendations set out within the report.

2083 Future of Gateshead College Foundation

The Clerk gave a verbal update.

The Clerk reported that the Gateshead College Foundation is a separate charity entity which has been established for several years. Over recent years the Foundation has made grants but has not had the focus and ability to fundraise as a charitable foundation potentially could. Efforts have been taken by the College but are felt to not really have had an impact. At a recent meeting, the Board of Directors of the Foundation reviewed administrative costs which included approximately £2700 of annual audit costs. As a result the Foundation Board had proposed that the Foundation be brought into the College. The Foundation Board had discussed having a restricted fund within the College accounts that could be used only to support the learner experience. The Clerk advised that on further investigation it had transpired that a restricted fund would cause an issue in terms of accounting and it had been confirmed by auditors and that this approach could have consequences. The Clerk advised that further strategic discussion was needed by the Foundation Board. The Principal added that the work of the Foundation was very valued within the College and it has a significant impact on individual learners so there is a need for it to continue in some form. A member felt that having it as a separate entity was a good approach and members suggested a conversation with the audit team to see if the annual audit costs could be reduced based on the low number of transactions completed.

The report was noted.

2084 Draft Budget 2019/20

The report was presented by the Deputy Principal: Operations / Finance Director.

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The proposed budget for 2019/20 and the forecast for the year to 31 July 2021 were approved.

2085 Annual Safeguarding Report

The report was presented by the Director of Student Experience.

The Director of Student Services thanked the Chair of the Teaching & Learning Committee for his support, as designated safeguarding governor, in relation to safeguarding at Gateshead College.

The Chair of the Teaching & Learning Committee outlined that governors have a statutory responsibility to be satisfied that safeguarding arrangements are adequate and assured members that arrangements are more than adequate and of a very high quality. He added that he had requested that governors be given a safeguarding training update at a future meeting. The Principal confirmed that this should be added to the agenda for the next meeting. The Chair thanked the Chair of the Teaching & Learning Committee for supporting this key area of work and commended the College team, making particular reference to 99% of students confirming that they feel safe in College. The Chair of Teaching & Learning informed members that learners who indicate that they do not feel safe are followed up individually to address any concerns they may have.

The report was noted.

2086 Confidential item (elected governors only)

The Clerk gave a verbal update.

The report was noted.

2087 Any other business

The Principal advised members that this would be the Chair's last Board meeting. The Principal thanked the Chair for his contribution to the College as Chair for 11 years and 17 years in total as a governor. The Principal advised that a celebration event is being planned but wanted to take the opportunity at his final Board meeting to formally thank the Chair on behalf of the College, recognising his contribution in terms of the College's success.

The Chair thanked the Principal for her kind words and, after sharing some of his highlights of his time at Gateshead College, advised that his greatest achievement had been being ranked the number 1 college in the UK and working with the top performing Gateshead College team. The Chair thanked the Board and the Executive Team for the experience he had of working with them and wished everyone well for the future.

2088 Chair's review of business

The Chair formally recorded his congratulations on the College's recent achievement of being rated the number one college in the UK.

2089 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 10 October 2019 at 12.30pm.