

# MINUTES

## **BOLTON COLLEGE BOARD**

**Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 9 November 2021 – (PART A)**

**Time: 5.00pm**

**Venue: Boardroom / Video Conference**

**Members present:**

Dr Andrew Roberts (Chair)

Mr Andrew Fawcett (Vice Chair)

Dr Chris Ball

Mrs Gulnaz Brennan

Dr Adrian Brooks

Ms Rebecca Davison

Mr Fardean Farooq

Mrs Kate Flood

Professor George Holmes DL

Dr Sue Lomax

Mr Tom Martin

Ms Stephanie Nixon

Mr Tony Unsworth

Mr Bill Webster (Principal)

Mrs Kate Wallace (Director of Curriculum, Employer and Student Services)

Mr Tim Openshaw (Assistant Vice Chancellor (Planning & Student Experience))

### **1.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted particularly in relation to the University of Bolton reciprocal governance arrangements and also paid positions.

Interests were noted from Dr Adrian Brooks (Item 4.1 of the agenda – Membership) and from staff members, Mr Bill Webster, Mr Mark Burgoyne and Ms Deborah Bradburn (Item 4.4 of the agenda – Senior Post Holder Performance Appraisals).

### **1.4 REQUEST FOR AN ITEM TO BE UNSTARRED**

Members were reminded that starred items on the Agenda would be taken as read rather than

### 1.7 (iii) Resources Committee of 28 September 2021

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held 28 September 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

## 2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS

### 2.1 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented the fourteenth report under the 'Designated Institution' Bolton College, which provided an overview of key issues. He highlighted the following points:-

#### Coronavirus (Covid-19) Impact

- The College COVID-19 case rate had continued, up until half term, to be relatively low and stable with the majority of cases being students with no evidence of any 'in College' transmission.
- There had been an increase in positive COVID-19 cases with some local schools re-introducing measures to minimise transmission. The College continued to be cautious and continued to support good hygiene, temperature checks, regular testing and the use of face coverings. The situation continued to be monitored internally and in the wider Bolton context; the College would reintroduce measures if the circumstances warranted it or guidance required it.

#### Bolton College of Medical Sciences (BCMS)

- The BCMS project had been successful in its 'Levelling Up' fund bid and had secured £20 million. This Group project aligned the College and University with the health provision agenda in Bolton and secured the sustained growth of the Group's healthcare education and training offer.

#### Road to Outstanding

- The 'Road to Outstanding' was the central focus for the College this academic year

## 2.2 ACHIEVEMENT RATES 2020/21 & PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2021/22

The Deputy Principal presented the report on Performance Targets for 2021/22 which provided an overview of achievement rates for the College across different funding categories for 2020/21, with information on previous years provided for comparison. It was noted that the national rates from 2018/19 were provided as this was the latest year that national performance data had been formally published.

The following points were highlighted:-

- The overall achievement rate for 2020/21 had decreased by 2.1% compared to the previous year. This ended a period of continuous improvement in achievement rates over the previous years that had been due to the impact of the pandemic.
- Achievement for the 16-18 year old cohort decreased by over 3% and it was noted that retention had increased and was above the national rate.
- Achievement for the adult cohort had improved by 0.33% and it was noted that the achievement rates had decreased at Levels 2 and 3 but had increased for all other levels. It was proposed that the target for adult provision be increased for 2021/22.
- It was proposed that the target achievement rate for 2021/22 for 16-18 year-olds and adult learners be set at 89%.
- Apprenticeships had an achievement rate of 62% compared to 72% in the previous year, and it was noted that this was below the national rate of achievement. It was proposed that the target for apprenticeship overall achievement remained at 70% for 2021/22 due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19.
- Community learning had increased by 4% following a decline in the previous year, with retention being the main reason. It was proposed that the target for community learning remained the same at 89% for accredited and 94% for non-accredited provision.

### Governor Questions:

- Are these good results following a pandemic?  
Yes, the College had to assess learners in a variety of ways i.e. teacher assessed grades and centre assessed grades with some areas having no dispensation.
- Will there be an indication on national achievement rates during lockdown?  
DfE outcomes have not been completed over the last two years.

The Chair mentioned that whilst there were no national figures GM colleges were going to ask the Principals to share their results locally. The Principle said this is being done.

Members noted that staff had worked over the summer holidays to support students through practical assessments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Mno

The Statements had been scrutinised by the Audit Committee at its meeting held 2 November 2021.

The following key points were highlighted:-

- The external auditors gave an unqualified audit report and confirmed that the College was regarded as a going concern. It was also noted that the Finance Team had provided a strong set of accounts and working documentation and had responded to all the audit questions in a timely manner.
- The College had complied with its banking covenants (noting the Board had approved the revised operating leverage covenant variation for 2020/21).
- pre-FRS charges, the College had recorded an operating surplus of £1.273m.
- The College had a strengthening cash position.
- The Audit Report showed that no adjustments were needed to the accounts.
- There was a contingent liability in the Financial Statements with the College confident of a satisfactory conclusion on the matter.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the Financial Statements for 2020/21, Letter of Representation and Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire be approved; and
- (ii) the Audit Management Report and the College's financial health/bank covenants be noted.

**(Gary Devlin of Azets left the meeting)**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Community Asset Transfer be endorsed for approval at the

This related to the debt policy and chasing students for fees in addition to an internal consolidation matter.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Audit Committee Annual Report be approved.

## **2.8\* STARRED ITEMS:-**

### **(i) SAFEGUARDING POLICIES 2021/22 UPDATE**

Members had received and reviewed the Safeguarding Policies 2021/22 Update.

The College's Safeguarding Policies were updated on an annual basis, with the review process incorporating any legislative changes, alterations to local safeguarding processes, best practice, and lessons learnt.

The College had four key policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Children (0-18) Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy & Procedure
- Abuse of Trust Policy
- Personal and Professional Relationships at Work Policy

The policies had been updated with minor changes to terminology and regulations.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Safeguarding Policies 2021/22 Updates be endorsed.

### **(ii)**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Treasury Management Policy be approved  
**(v)**



This appointments had been considered by the Search and Governance Committee and recommended to the Board for approval.