

## GOVERNING BODY

### Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held in Room LSF24 at 17:00 on 29th January 2018 at North Devon Campus

**Present:** Kevin Finan (Chair), Stuart Brocklehurst, David Chalmers, Diane Dimond, Karen McElfatrick, Rob Malcolm, Steve Richardson, Iain Springate, Lee Thommen, Lindy Stacey, and Ro Day

**By Video Link from Mid Devon campus:** Ruth Williams

**In Attendance:** Bill Blythe, Jane Hanson and Sheena Murphy-Collett

**Governance Advisor:** Jane Barton (Interim)

## MINUTES

### 1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a) Apologies for absence were received from Jenny Wallace and Chris Williams.
- b) The Chair advised that, due to work commitments, Andrew Chapple had formally tendered his resignation from the Governing Body and that David Gibson had also indicated that it was his intention to resign from the Board. There are now 3 vacancies on the Board which we will be seeking to recruit to.
- c) The Board ratified with immediate effect the appointment of Jenny Wallace as Vice Chair of the Governing Body.
- d) The Board noted that Jane Barton would provide cover arrangements for the Governance Adviser during her period of sick leave.

### 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No conflict of interests were declared.

### 3. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was agreed that item 6, The Estates Strategy and item 7, The Marketing Strategy, should be confidential due to business sensitive content and items 15 and 16 would be confidential items without staff and students present.

### 4. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIR

The Chair outlined the contents of an email from a parent asking questions regarding Neurodiversity. The Vice Principal Quality Curriculum and Learners explained the meaning of the term neurodiversity and provided a brief update in response to the questions raised. After some discussion the Governors agreed that this matter be dealt with by the college management.

**Action: The Principal to respond to the parent and a copy be circulated to Governors.**

## **STRATEGIC MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **5. Quality Outcomes**

**17FGB44**

The Vice Principal Quality, Curriculum & Learners reported on the continuing work of the Quality Team, which included retaining the **Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Assured Quality Mark**.

It was noted that currently Petroc is the only College in *Devon* with this accreditation.

In addition Petroc also received recognition for gaining the **Quality Mark for National Skills for Health**. This provides a framework that defines and endorses superior learning and training standards that healthcare employers need to cultivate a world-class workforce.

The Board received an update on the progress of the **Quality Improvement Plans** monitored via Quality Review Meetings. These meetings are supported by curriculum level updates and Learning Walks carried out by senior staff; these Learning Walks sample teaching and learning and allow opportunities for senior staff to talk to the learners about their learning experience. Themes emerging from the Learning Walks confirmed that at Level 3 learners understood the concept of target grades but that at Level 2 the picture was variable, more work will be focused on this area.

**Attendance** across Study Programmes is of some concern, a picture that is echoed across the sector with mental health concerns seen as a factor in many cases. Measures are in place to improve attendance; these include letters to parents/guardians, targeted phone conversations with parents/guardians, and a roll out of Parents Evenings across departments. Indications are, from those held so far, that these are welcomed by parents with attendance at these evenings encouraging.

**Awarding Body Standards.** Quality measures also include the monitoring of compliance with Awarding Body Standards and we have had visits from Awarding Bodies during the term to validate our standards. Any actions identified in subsequent visit reports are fed back to the assessing teams to be implemented and incorporated into their Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs), to enable tracking of their implementation and impact. This week we received the Quality Achievement Report (QAR) update data from the Department for Education (DfE) and it matched the data we were using on our internal system. This means that

the data we used for our Self-Assessment Report (SAR) is accurate and a true presentation of our outcomes for 2016-17.

**The Governors noted the report and congratulated all those involved in the successful reaccreditation of STEM Assured status and the achievement of The Skills for Health Quality Mark. Governors also expressed an interest in having an opportunity to be involved in future Learning Walks as part of the proposed Link Governor scheme.**

## **6. Estates Strategy Update (Confidential)**

**17FGB45**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the items discussed at the last meeting of the Strategic Review Working Group (SRWG); which included progress on four of the key aspects of the Estates Strategy:

Institutes of Technology/Centre of Technology and Innovation Excellence

Mid Devon Campus/Tiverton High School Plans – update; the college management has met with the Chief Executive of Mid Devon Council who was supportive of Petroc’s outline proposals.

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| <p><b>Action: The Board asked the Vice Principal Finance &amp; Resources to confirm that the public road off the roundabout, which residents are seeking to show as a private access road, remains a right of way.</b></p> |
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Brannams Lease update: an initial meeting has been arranged with Barclays to discuss financing, a further meeting is planned with Lloyds.

Brannams Re-Arrangement of Facilities

Governors asked that appropriate curriculum consultation be undertaken when considering co-location of curriculum and the physical location of activity. Assurances were provided that appropriate consultation would be in place during each stage of any change.

**It was noted that the IoT bid would have to be submitted prior to the next FGB and as some details of governance structure and asset ownership were still to be determined it was agreed that the Board would delegate to the Principal, in conjunction with the Chair of the Board, to agree any details necessary to progress the Institute of Technology submission. The option to call a meeting of members of SRWG with all External Governors also invited to attend would also be considered if necessary at this stage.**

## **7. Marketing Strategy – Commercially Sensitive**

**17FBG47**

The Principal presented Petroc’s Marketing Strategy for approval. The strategy has been reviewed and refreshed and aligned to Petroc’s 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. It has been drafted by the Head of Marketing. It is expected that the newly appointed Assistant Principal – Commercial will bring a new perspective to this strategy moving forward.

Recognition was given to former Governor - Shaun Cooper; his input on Challenger Branding has been incorporated in the development of the updated strategy.

The new strategy sets out the aims and key deliverables for marketing and, takes into consideration the challenging, and increasingly competitive market in which Petroc operates. Petroc will embrace a Challenger Brand approach for elements of its delivery and will adopt a 'digital first' methodology to its campaigns. The strategy recognises the importance of effective communication with staff both to ensure that communication is effective and that we further engender pride in Petroc by all. A new feature of the Marketing Strategy supports the Business to Business requirements of our eight key priority commercial sectors focussing resource appropriately.

Governors asked about the possible additional costs of embracing a 'digital first' approach and it was confirmed that costs were built into budget and forecast calculations. Governors acknowledged the excellent Petroc material on YouTube and encouraged the college to review and update older content.

Governors were encouraged by the College Management to engage themselves in promoting Petroc via the many different Social Media platforms i.e. Twitter and Facebook etc.

It was recognised that Petroc operates in an increasingly competitive market which continues to experience significant challenges. General Further Education colleges, tertiary colleges, specialist colleges, sixth form colleges, private providers, local authorities and third sector providers are all vying for local and regional learners as articulated in the presentation by Ian Munro, AoC South West Regional Director .

Targeted growth areas include:

- 14-16 year-olds looking for post 16 education and training, this could be focussed around GCSE Maths and English;
- 16-19 year-old full time learners, new and current;
- 19+ adults looking to do part-time certificated, blended and distance learning or recreational courses;
- 19+ adults accessing higher level qualifications, including degrees;
- individuals looking to develop their career through an apprenticeship, 16-18 year olds and 19+ adults;
- and
- Employers wishing to upskill their workforce.

**The Board noted and approved the Marketing Strategy.**

## **8. Digital Strategy**

**17FBG47**

The Vice Principal – Finance & Resources presented the draft Digital Strategy; this high level document sets out an overview of the priorities and plans to take the college through to 2020 and beyond. It was recognised that the strategy will evolve as new technologies, and increasingly creative ways of deploying that technology are developed. As with the Estates Strategy, this should be seen as a living document that provides direction of travel with milestone projects rather than a detailed road-map.

The strategy comprises a number of key strands:

The **Digital Learning Infrastructure strand:** Embedding digital learning opportunities will ensure all our learners are future ready and able to take full advantage of the wealth of new and emerging employment opportunities associated with digital technologies.

The **Information Technology Infrastructure:** The era of a static, desktop based infrastructure of PC's and Macs as the core of an IT infrastructure is rapidly disappearing as mobile technology and cloud-based applications increasingly dominate both the workplace and personal IT workspace.

This includes consideration of:

- Google including Bring, Buy and Borrow your own device
- Office 365
- Wi-Fi
- Telephony
- Self Service Corporate Applications
- Storage
- Data Projection
- Super Rooms and Specialist Offices
- Software
- Future Tech/Artificial Intelligence

The **Digital Security and Compliance** strand reflects the College's need to ensure at all times that it can provide a safe, secure and compliant digital infrastructure that is reliable, resilient, fast and responsive.

The Board were advised that following the Strategic Review Working Group comments were also sought from Stuart Brocklehurst and Chris Williams and, with grateful thanks to both, their comments and ideas have been incorporated into this draft. In particular, without those comments, the concepts of Smart Rural and Gamification would not have featured in this draft.

Governors highlighted that the covering paper identified no Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) impacts; Governors were assured that the use of Adaptive Technologies will be a critical focus of the direction of travel – it was acknowledged that Google facilitates Adaptive Technology.

Governors also sought assurance that the Digital Strategy was affordable; it was highlighted by the Vice Principal Finance & Resources that Google developments are shown to reduce costs particularly on equipment and storage. Savings from Software licences were expected and reduction of internal costs was anticipated as a result of the use of virtual technology. Financial challenges are likely to come however from the likely movement of digital related costs from capital to revenue expenditure.

Governors also expressed a view that the development of digital content can be demanding and this view was acknowledged.

**Governors approved the Digital Strategy.**

**MATTERS FOR REPORT AND APPROVAL**

**17FGB48**

## **9. Minutes and Matters Arising**

- a. The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of the **Governing Body held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting.**

**Matters Arising – Item 17 of the confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017.** It was noted that there are 5 members on the Remuneration Committee with a quorum of 3, and the Principal is not a member of this committee.

Research undertaken by the Governance Advisor indicates that there is no common model adopted by other FE colleges. However it was clear that the delegated arrangement to this committee at Petroc was consistent with many in the sector.

**The Board confirmed that there was no wish to revisit the current scheme of delegation.**

## **10. Annual Report to the Community**

**17FGB49**

The Principal presented the Annual Report to the Community which highlights our many successes during the 2016/17 and confirmed this would be sent out to stakeholders.

**The Annual Report to the Community was considered and approved. Governors congratulated all involved.**

## **11. Treasury Management Policy**

**17FGB50**

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources presented the updates to the Treasury Management Policy noting that these were minor in nature.

**The Board approved the Treasury Management Policy.**

## **MATTERS FOR REPORT AND NOTE**

### **12. HR Report**

The Board received an HR update from the Director of HR & Organisation Development; the report highlighted the emerging themes from the Staff Perception Survey report, conducted in the autumn term 2017, and the actions planned.

These emerging themes, having been discussed at SMT, were presented to the College Management Team (CMT) on the 18 January 2018. The CMT were asked for their proposals on how some of the emerging themes could be addressed.

In the coming weeks, the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development is going to work with both the CMT and the Staff Forum, who represent staff from all College areas, to develop a collaborative Action Plan which will seek to address any areas for improvement.

The Senior Management Team are also currently reviewing the data for their areas of responsibility, with a view to managing locally any specific areas for improvement.

A further update on progress will be provided to Governors at a future Board meeting.

Governors commented that staff, together with our learners are our most valuable asset; and it was disappointing to note that only 77% of our staff were satisfied to work at the College, it was felt that the College should focus more on praise than criticism. A Staff Governor indicated that, in his view, things on the ground were improving compared to the last survey in 2015. It was recognised that the College Management Team is not complacent, it is on a journey to further improve staff satisfaction, but this is ongoing.

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| <b>Action: Director of HR &amp; Organisation Development to provide the Board with a further update on progress at a future Board meeting.</b> |
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**13. Project Management Performance Report**

**17FBG52**

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources presented the report, highlighting the many valuable project activities undertaken by the College.

**Governors received and noted this report.**

**14. Finance Report**

**17FGB53**

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources presented the Month 5 Management Accounts and confirmed that work to ensure the College achieved budget was ongoing and would be covered in more detail later in the agenda.

**Governors noted the Month 5 Management Accounts for 2017/18.**

*Confidential Minutes for item 15 and 16, without staff and students present, were kept under separate cover.*