

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held via Zoom Tuesday 6th October at 17:00

Present: David Chalmers, Andy Champion, Lena Marvão, Maxine Padgham, Deborah Watson, Mark Rogers, Iain Springate, Lindy Stacey, Neil Tanton, Jenny Wallace, Rob Nicholls, Chris Williams, Bill Blythe, Jane Hanson, Sheena Murphy-Collett, Sean Mackney

In Attendance: Helena Drawer (minutes)

Governance Advisor: Sheena Murphy-Collett (interim cover)

1. Membership and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Kevin Finan, Holly Milton-Jefferies, Lee Thommen.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declaration of interests.

3. Confidential Items

Agenda Item 10 was declared as commercial and confidential.

4. Items Brought Forward by the Chair

There were no items brought forward by the Chair.

5. No Item

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

20FGB01

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Tuesday 21st July 2020 were agreed and approved by the Board.

7. Membership Matters

It was noted that when the new Governance Advisor, Jo Boardman, is in place in November 2020 the skills matrix of existing governors will be assessed against the new strategy. Skills gaps to consider are the following:

- Someone who has experience of taking a college from Good to Outstanding.
- Someone with experience of strategic health sector, and/or understanding of integrated healthcare systems.

The process of electing a Student Union President is currently underway.

8. Strategic

Petroc Operating Under Covid

20FGB02

The CEO presented the college's approach to the Board, explaining the 'Sustainable, Stable and Safe' model, and making comparison with other local providers. Feedback from parents and students was described as mixed, while educators are being challenged on both capacity and capability. There are high levels of safeguarding referrals (400 in 2019-20, 900 so far in 2020-21). To date there are 82 symptomatic referrals with no positive cases identified.

A demonstration of the new Covid App was given, showing its value in predicting potential infection and self-isolation rates.

Governors commented on social media interaction and the positive cases within local schools. Governors asked about staff safety and were informed of the Staff Health Risk Assessment which self-assesses the individual risk to staff. Staff are on rotas to ensure office coverage with highly vulnerable staff working from home. The JCC union has recently commended Petroc specifically on its Covid planning.

Governors asked how the College is measuring the quality of the learner experience. Supported learning students have 100% in-person learning. Maths and English GCSE is 100% digital, using machine learning to individualise programmes. Students are responding very individually to the blended learning model, educators are having regular quality review meetings and looking at students at risk of not achieving. The potential for learners to get through the curriculum is a live issue, with Plan B for some intensive 'bubbling' in practical subjects being discussed.

Governors asked what would happen if the College were to have a positive case of Covid. It was explained that the College would notify DCC and PHE and would need to follow their guidance.

Governors asked if the College has Risk Assessments for all areas and eventualities. It was explained that the College has detailed flowcharts for processes and is regularly monitoring risk assessments for compliance.

Governors asked about the use of QR codes for students and staff. The current advice is that these should be used for external and commercial visitors but not for students and staff. Queues at college entrances to use the QR codes would be counter-productive for social distancing. The College advised that access control contractors visited the campuses last week to quote for door controls.

Petroc 2025 – Strategic Plan

20FGB03

The CEO presented a cover paper giving updates on the 2025 Strategic Plan and the design for approval.

The CEO gave some detail on the exam results fiasco in the summer, explaining that the Government algorithm produced an 8.3% reduction in A and A* grades at A Level, and a similar reduction in vocational qualifications, when the College was on an upward trend in results. The College made the

decision to honour school GCSE centre assessment grades, prior to the Government change of policy, to maintain local confidence in the college and stability for learners. Health and care are a big opportunity for the College. FE colleges are being seen by Government as central to the Level 4 and 5 expansion, with a White Paper expected to reinforce this message this autumn.

Governors commented that the Strategy 2025 document has a good layout and colours, but that references to North Devon potentially exclude Torrington. The CEO stated that some debate had taken place over this wording; it could be changed to Northern Devon, but it is felt that this is “clunky”.

Governors asked how the College intends to maintain its international connections. The College has built a very successful Erasmus programme, with all learners who showing positive benefits from taking part. The College is considering how to extend this post-Brexit and measures to build international perspectives into the curriculum.

Governors commented that the font for Mid Devon appears smaller than the rest of the document. This was noted.

Governors asked, “How do we see success, and how is that measured?” KPIs and Strategic Operating Plans will be presented at the next Governors meeting, which will illustrate the activity that will lead to fulfilling the objectives. The College will use data and analysis to track progress throughout, and survey learners around their attitudes to their own progress.

Governors asked about the new T Levels, the timeline and whether they will have impact in this academic year. The T Level is a capital bid which the College is waiting to hear the results of later this month. The anticipated start date is September 2021. The college received grant funding agreement for improvements to broadband connectivity earlier this month. The work is currently out to tender for a supplier, with a closing date of November 16th. Work is expected to be concluded by September 2021.

The design of the Strategy 2025 document was approved by Governors.

9. Quality, Curriculum and Learners

To Note the Provisional Results: 16-18, 19+, and HE vs. Targets

20FGB04

The Board were informed that the College does not have all results in yet due to a delay with some vocational qualifications, and that the results from 2018/19 will be the benchmark going forward. GCSE re-sits for new students will be done through their previous school. The College has 7 A Level students taking re-sits in November 2020. Some educational programmes are yet to complete from 2019-20 (Hair and Beauty). The Vice Principal for Quality, Curriculum and Learners asked the Board for their views on whether it is appropriate for the College to work informally with other tertiary colleges to develop benchmarking to assess learner progress.

The Board felt this was a good idea.

The Governors gave congratulations to all staff for their hard work in challenging times.

The Governors asked if the College expected a decision from Ofqual later this month with regard to exams this academic year.

The Board were advised that curriculum teams are working on a plan to pre-empt Ofqual, working on a rigorous quality process to identify which key internal assessments the College will use should centre assessment grades be used again in the summer. These internal assessments will be made known to staff, students, and parents.

The Governing Body noted this report.

10. Finance and Resources

To Note the Month 12 Update

20FGB05

The Governing Body noted this report.

To Receive the Indicative Enrolments for 2020/21

20FGB06

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources provided the Board with a comprehensive paper which showed the current data.

16-18 enrolments are marginally lower than last year.

HE enrolments are 70 below the forecast (35 were hedged for in the budget).

Advanced learner loans are likely to exceed target due to large numbers in Access to Nursing.

Apprentice numbers are down, due to conversations with employers taking longer than usual, and a lack of confidence in the market for employers. There is the opportunity of a boost from Appledore Shipyard in January. This is not included in the forecasts. The parent company Infrastrata expect to increase their workforce from 150 to 1500 by September 2021. The CEO advised the Board that an initial meeting with Infrastrata was positive.

It is expected that the ESFA will not make any allowances for a 'Covid factor' in their reconciliations.

The Governors asked if the College was feeling any negative impact from Exeter College advertising in Petroc's catchment area.

The CEO advised that he has spoken to Exeter College's CEO regarding this. It is felt that Callywith College is having an impact on Petroc's enrolments due to their association with Truro and Penwith, dedicated bus services and brand-new facilities. Secondary schools in the Petroc catchment area are actively steering students into their MAT schools.

The CEO advised that faculty teams will be required to take ownership of gaps in budgets and find solutions such as mid-year projects.

The Governors asked when data from feeder schools will be available.

This data will be available for the November meeting of the Governing Body. The College has just received the Vector report on market share in specific territories and this will be shared with the Board.

The indicative enrolments were received by the Board.

To Note the Insurance Cover: Summary Report F10

20FGB07

The report was noted by the Board.

Capital Programme 2020-21

20FGB08

College Condition Funding has been released by the Government for urgent condition works. There are strict rules about how it is used including 25% match funding and funding to be used by 31 March 2021.

The Board are aware of the physical condition of E Block. The College have a scheme of work ready but have previously not had available funding. Working with cost consultancy Corrius, the College has a preferred supplier and has applied for planning but will need to go forward 'at risk'. The design and build contract has arrived, which is a functional deed rather than a full contract.

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources asked the Board for approval to seek the seal, and to delegate authority to the chair to use the seal to sign the contract.

The Board approved the use of the Seal.

The Healthcare Futures Academy in B block at the Mid Devon campus is a two-phase project. It is hoped that costs will be reduced in negotiations with North Devon Healthcare Trust. A scheme of work will be prepared in readiness for this to go forward. The College has been asked to collaborate with other colleges to bid for an apprenticeship contract for 500 nursing associates.

The Education Training Foundation (ETF) has asked Petroc to bid for the National Lead in T Levels for the Health and Science sectors. This requires the College to develop and facilitate a CPD programme to be rolled out nationally. This is a funded role with payment on delivery, with tight deadlines.

The external life in Faculty Requests is to allow access for learners and staff with disabilities.

The Executive are looking at a Data Analytics tool, the cost of which is £180,000 over 3 years. There is no preferred supplier as yet. The tool has potential to increase student engagement and retention.

11. Our People

HR Summer Report

20FGB10

The Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development presented the HR Summer Report to the Board; the reported purpose of this report provided a comprehensive overview of HR developments during the summer term 2019/20.

Governors noted the key headlines:

1. Staff have shown great resilience and mutual support throughout the challenging lockdown period.
2. 3% of staff turnover was forced leavers due to restructuring.
3. There was a reduction in sick leave during this period, possibly due to staff managing to continue working from home when they would normally phone in sick.
4. The College was unable to purchase home working equipment for staff but allow staff to take items home from work. This worked well.
5. Flexibility around staff caring for families has allow some staff to be retained.
6. The Pandemic Advisory Group includes staff from all areas of the College.
7. The 'Team Petroc' ethos was demonstrated throughout the term.
8. The Executive Team are looking at succession planning. A talent management proposal is in progress for the next meeting.
9. The College has signed up to the AoC Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter.
10. The re-structure programme was carried out via zoom. This was an unconventional situation that worked well, with people having family at home to support them.

Governors noted the annual report.

11. Governance

The new Governance Advisor, Jo Boardman, will be in post on November 8th.

Corporation Business: Standing Orders **20FGB13**

Governors noted the annual report.

Corporation Business: Terms of Reference **20FGB14**

Governors noted the annual report.

Governance Papers **20FGB15**

Governors noted the annual report.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 10th November 2020 at 5.00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 19:20.