

GOVERNING BODY

DRAFT - Minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held at 17.00 on Tuesday 18 July 2023 in Cotie Boardroom and via Teams

Members – Full Governing Board

Present

Lindy Stacey	Chair of Governors
Pat Denham	Vice Chair
Iain Springate	External Governor
Rob Nicholls	External Governor
Andy Champion	External Governor
Dawn Stabb	External Governor
Stephen Wells	External Governor
Katerina Kolyva	External Governor
Richard Bevan	External Governor
Deborah Watson	External Governor
Val Parsons	Support Staff Governor
Sean Mackney	Principal and CEO
Bella Dash	Student Governors

In Attendance

Joanna Boardman	Governance Advisor and Head of Executive Office
Bill Blythe	VP Finance, Resources and Regional Affairs
Jason Jones	Deputy Principal Education & Learners
Sheena Murphy-Collett	VP People, Organisational Development and Engagement
Alex Farmery	Executive Officer
Pete Gammon	Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from David Chalmers and Jon Price.

2. Declaration of Interests

One declaration of interest was made by Katarina Kolyva as the CEO of ETF (Education Training Foundation)

3. Confidential Items

It was declared that there was one confidential item and some confidential minutes which would be covered under the confidential items on the agenda later in the meeting.

4. Minutes from previous meeting

22FGB49

The minutes from the meeting on 19 April 2023 were approved.

5. Items brought forward by the Chair

There were no items brought forward by the Chair.

6. Use of the Seal – Marie Curie contract

22FGB50

This item was noted as the paper had been approved via correspondence and the Seal had been applied and the Lease document signed.

7. Link Governor Reports

7.1 A year at Petroc in Safeguarding and Wellbeing

7.1.1 The Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead presented a summary on the academic year 22/23 including the safeguarding team's achievements, a national safeguarding picture and what to expect in 23/24.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Kz6FJqne1nRbNAobYlwa9KqfaogKhwy9/edit#slide=id.p2>

7.1.2 PG reported an overview on statistics of the quality and quantity of referrals to the safeguarding team, reasons for referrals and confirmed that the number of referrals and cases the team dealt with are beyond anything they had expected. It was reported that there have never been so many children in need and so many children with protection plans as there currently are.

Questions and comments from committee

Q It was asked how many staff were in the team to deal with such a high number of students/incidents?

A It was confirmed there are 6 safeguarding officers in the team and 8 staff members in the Wellbeing team. PG reported that colleges used to rely on CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services over weekend and holidays, however, this was no longer the case due to their staff shortages. The Safeguarding team was expected to be everything to young people including police, social worker, child services etc having to plug the gap left by the inefficiencies of CAMHS.

Q It was queried if Petroc staff receive supervision and counselling?

A Yes, all staff get offered counselling and training.

Q Are the tutorial team aware of all the statistics and the trends for referrals?

A The Safeguarding and Wellbeing teams are very proactive to ensure that students receive tutorials providing information around the current trends.

7.1.3 It was noted that there is a clear understanding from the team around the problems, issues and trends for young people, though a concern was raised by the Governors of the safeguarding team becoming a mini NHS and not being able to cover all responsibilities. The Board was assured that the team are working in collaboration with other organisations, for example employing mental health nursing students on work experience to uplift resources within the team.

7.1.4 It was reported that the feedback from the Learner survey was very positive praising the excellence of quality of service provided by the team.

7.1.5 In regards as to what to expect from the next year, it was reported that the Devon Education Forum had been contacted to remind all feeder schools to share any information on vulnerable students and children with Education and Health Care plans with the college in good time to ensure any issues or problems can be pre-empted.

7.1.6 The Deputy Principal mentioned a new programme that had been approved by BDB starting in September, called H2O (Home to onsite where students are encouraged into college through tutoring at three different stages. Stage 1 - mentoring at home, stage 2 – personal development, encouraged to leave the house, Stage 3 – transition into college in small groups at quieter times)

7.2 SEND*

22FGB51

The report was taken as read and the Link Governor for SEND reported attendance at one of the Petroc Go celebration events held at Petroc for the Pathway B student trip to Sweden. She reported that the students were all very enthusiastic about the trip and everything they had learned and experienced.

7.3 Curriculum & Quality*

22FGB52

The report was taken as read and the Link Governor Curriculum and Quality noted that the college was in good hands with the Deputy Principal since joining back in January.

7.4 Careers*

22FGB53

The report was taken as read and the Link Governor for Careers noted that a new Careers coordinator was now in place and there should be some improvements in that area in the next year.

7.5 Health and Safety

The Link Governor Health and Safety applauded the team for their hard work this year and on the improvements and the action plan for Wellbeing and Mental Health for the new year. It was noted that the team had established some great relationships throughout the college and had improved the Health and Safety compliance awareness. The current sickness absence levels are at 2.7% which is below the college target of 3%.

8. Strategic Termly update

22FGB54

Before proceeding with the meeting, the Chair introduced Val Parsons as the new Support Staff Governor and welcomed her to the Board.

8.1 The Principal reported that the college had received £1.14m by the DfE to build a 100% funded new animal care centre to invest in T Levels starting 24/25.

8.2 It was also reported that the Principal and Vice Principal People, Organisational Development and Engagement received a letter from the UCU (Trade Union) requesting a 15.4% pay increase and various other demands. The college will respond within two weeks confirming that the demands cannot be met. It was confirmed that the college will likely anticipate industrial action next year, unless the government is forthcoming with some more funds for schools and colleges.

8.3 The Principal updated the Board on having been invited by Ventrus to become a Corporate Member of the Trust and a Director had been asked to join the Board of Trustees.

8.4 The Principal confirmed that the Audit Committee had received the two letters that were sent by the bank regarding the college inadvertently breaching its debt service covenant. This was due to the external auditors misinterpreting the banking conditions. The letters state that the bank will not call in the loans but will still reserve the right to do so.

8.5 The Sustain and Grow papers were taken as read and the Principal reported that the application numbers remain volatile with more showing earlier in the year and applications having flattened out recently. The numbers were up compared to last year but still below the 200-growth figure. (Y11 up by 104, progression down by 87, HE up by 39).

8.5.1 The Principal reported that the Executive Team have had conversations with the DfE surrounding the financial issues and agreed to find a solution. The DfE recognises that if

colleges were still in the private sector, the college could have borrowed some more money which would have helped out with the current financial issues.

8.6 The Principal briefly summarised the paper that had been submitted to the Strategic Review Committee setting out plans for further actions on growth and financial efficiencies. Feedback from the committee had been positive and reassured that the college are doing the right thing by concentrating on recruitment, retention and progression.

The Board approved the paper.

There was a discussion on why it should be named Sustain and Grow Phase 2 rather than just carrying on with Sustain and Grow as the title. Phase 2 would mean shutting down Phase 1 and starting fresh, however, Sustain and Grow should be carried on as a continued progress of change, improvement and growth.

It was decided to keep it as Sustain and Grow and slowly after the next 12 months start calling it what it is, a continuous improvement programme and business as usual. The communication of the impact and outcome and the difference the programme has made is more important. The Board requested an impact report with clear deadlines for the next Strategic Review committee.

9. Curriculum and Quality

9.1 To receive any minutes of the Curriculum and Quality committee held on 8 February 2023

22FGB55

The minutes were received, and it was agreed that there are still concerns around the apprenticeship provision. However, improvements have been made and a report was shared with the Chair and Vice Chair.

With the new Head of Quality Improvements in place since September 2022 the overall focus has been on improving all areas of the provision including Maths and English attendance.

9.2 Board Ofsted Readiness

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1whC_YpLXVvkqDbk6Ti6mKUxEhYuAd1IKb/edit#slide=id.p1

The Deputy Principal introduced the Education Inspection Framework to the Board and noted that the college is due a full Ofsted inspection some time soon but before 2025 at the latest. It was confirmed that at least 5 Governors would be required to talk to Ofsted, ideally it would be the Link Governors.

The Board received a handout to read and complete over the summer and be prepared for the next meeting in September when more Training will be provided.

The Board had some questions:

Q Does data still play a role in an inspection?

A Yes, data does still count as the inspection is based on outcomes and learner experience. The data will form the hypothesis and the inspection during the week will form the outcome looking at value added.

Q Could the Board please be sent the last Ofsted report from 2019 please?

A The Board will receive a script with FAQs and hyperlinks as to where to find relevant information and the Ofsted report from 2019.

[Petroc - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#)

Q Looking at the current low staff morale, will staff be on side during an inspection?

A The Deputy Principal and the Head of Quality Improvement delivered an Ofsted training session to all staff last week to ensure all staff are prepared for this and on this journey together, working together as a team.

9.3 To receive the Safeguarding annual report

22FGB56

The Safeguarding report was received by the Board together with the presentation earlier in the meeting. It was noted that there had been some great additions to the policy with better coverage and links to other policies.

9.4 To approve the Safeguarding policy update

22FGB57

The Board approved of the amendments.

10. Finance and General Purposes

10.1 To receive any minutes of the Finance and General purposes committee held on 28 February 2023

22FGB58

The Board received the minutes from the last Finance and General Purposes meeting and the chair explained that the budget and financial forecast was then presented to the Strategic Review Committee in July and a finalised version be presented to the Board.

10.2 To approve a Licence to Occupy at Tarka Leisure Centre and the Lease of A Block Tiverton.

22FGB59

10.2.1 Tarka Leisure Centre

The Board was informed about the licence to occupy the Tarka Leisure centre and was asked to approve the relocation to the new Tarka Leisure Centre at Severn Brethren Bank in Barnstaple. This new facility is operated by Lex Leisure on behalf of North Devon District Council and provides potential access to a wide range of facilities not available at the campus. The arrangement is for a long-term licence to occupy covering 19 years from September 2023 with break options at 5 year intervals for an annual rental fee of £136,160.

It was noted that by agreeing to this lease it was shutting off the recovery action on Sustain and Grow for a £130k saving if this wasn't signed off by the Board.

10.2.2 A block Tiverton

The Board was notified of the colleges intention to provide an external lease for a period of 20 years for the use of A Block at the Tiverton campus.

It was reported that the council has now decided that this needed to be submitted for planning permission and there are currently 3 objections:

Tiverton High School – increased traffic

Bampton council – loss of provision for HE in Mid Devon

Mid Devon economic development team – losing much need educational land

It was confirmed that Petroc will challenge the objections.

The Board approved both requests.

10.3 To approve the budget and financial forecast

22FGB60

The Board approved the paper and the chair confirmed that this had already been seen by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Strategic Review Committee and discussed in great detail regarding learner numbers, the financial pressures, covenant compliance and budget achievability.

Further action was needed looking at worst case scenario.

The Board approved the budget and financial forecast.

Recommendations from Financial and General Purposes Committee:

10.4 To approve the Financial Regulations **22FGB61**

The Board approved the Financial Regulations.

10.5 To approve the Accountability Statement **22FGB62**

The Board approved the Accountability Statement.

10.6 To approve the Employer Engagement Strategy* **22FGB63**

The Board approved the Employer Engagement Strategy.

10.7 To approve the Subcontractor Activity Report* **22FGB64**

The Board approved the Subcontractor Activity Report.

10.8 To approve:

- Subcontracting Fees and Charges and Supply Chain Policy* **22FGB65**
- Health and Safety Policy* **22FGB66**
- Redundancy Policy* **22FGB67**

The Board approved all three policies.

Sean Mackney and Dawn Stabb withdrew from the meeting at 19.27

11. Audit Committee

11.1 To receive any minutes of the Audit Committee held on 28 March 2023 **22FGB68**

The minutes from the Audit committee on 28 March 2023 were received.

Recommendations from Audit Committee

11.2 To approve the Internal Audit plan 23/24 **22FGB69**

The Board approved the Internal Audit plan 23/24.

11.3 To review Strategic Risk Register
22FGB70

The Board reviewed and approved the Strategic Risk Register.

11.4 To review KPI Updates **22FGB71**

The Board reviewed and approved the KPIs.

It was summarised that the KPI document showed what the Audit committee expected to see.

The Audit committee chair confirmed that there was nothing else to report to the Board that has not already been mentioned in the meeting or presented to Board.

12. Search and Governance

12.1 To receive any minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held on 18 January 2023

22FGB72

The Governance Advisor updated the Board on the papers and outcomes from the last meeting in July and noted that all papers submitted to this meeting are starred and taken as read.

It was reported that there will not be many changes to the committee meetings and cycle of business, however, Richard Bevan had agreed to take on the role of the new Chair of Finance and General Purposes committee and an additional date for a Board meeting had been added to the calendar, meaning there will be 4 next year instead of 3.

12.2 To receive the Student Governor's report

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1HWFCd0F4O7kmf8WRDHFq6ypRT5GmjaIV/edit#slide=id.p1>

The Student Governor presented a summary of the year to the Board with the following points:

- Zero Shop opened and running very successfully
- Spain trip supported by the Student Union financially
- The Big Bear Day money raised for the Childrens Hospice Southwest
- PSU Election results
- Encourage Governors to engage more with Students/student voice
- Removal of the Petroc App (replaced by a different version)
- Struggling students with Two factor authorisation

Following the presentation the Governance Advisor summarised that student engagement will be taken to the next level in the new year by the Board and the Executive Team, with the Executive Office working closely together with the Student Representatives (PSU), already having had attended meetings this year. It was noted that the IT changes (myPetroc App and TFA) throughout the year had been necessary and had been communicated to all staff and students via email, though a different way of communication with students may have to be considered going forward.

Katerina Kolyva withdrew from the meeting at 19.45.

12.3 To approve the GDPR Policy

22FGB73

The Governance Advisor reported following an internal Audit it was recommended to update the GDPR policy to give greater clarification of what a breach may look like and to add that there was a 72 hour window from the time of becoming aware of the breach to notify the ICO if required. The report on any GDPR breaches will be submitted to Board in September.

The Board approved the updated GDPR policy.

Recommendations from Search and Governance

12.4 To approve Committee's Cycle of Business for 2023/24*

22FGB74

12.5 To approve the meeting schedule for 2023/24*

22FGB75

12.6 To approve the Committee Membership 2023/24*

22FGB76

12.7 To approve the Parent Governor Recruitment Process*

22FGB77

12.8 To approve updated Instruments and Articles*

22FGB78

All the recommended documents by the Search and Governance Committee were approved by the Board.

Staff and Student Governors withdrew from the meeting.

13. Confidential Items

14. Non discussion items

Curriculum and Quality

To note the Deputy Principal termly report *

To note NARTS and Performance tables *

Finance and General Purposes

To note the termly HR Report *

To note the Month 9 Management Accounts *

To note the Annual Health and Safety Report *

To note the annual project performance report *

To note the amendment and approval of the Pay policy and procedure (via correspondence) *

Search and Governance

To note progress Governance Improvement Action Plan update *

15. Any other business

There was no other business noted and the meeting concluded at 20.15

The next meeting is scheduled in person in Barnstaple on Tuesday 26 September 2023.