

GOVERNING BODY

DRAFT - Minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held at 17.00 on Tuesday 2 October 2024 in Cotie Boardroom

Members – Full Governing Board Present

Iain Springate	External Governor
Dawn Stabb	External Governor
Richard Bevan	External Governor
Gaynor Castle	External Governor
Jon Price	Academic Staff Governor
Pat Denham	Co Chair of Governors
Neil Sherman	External Governor
Martin McNeill	External Governor
Julie McLeod	External Governor
Jon Walton	Student Governor
Kurt Hintz	Interim Principal and CEO
Andy Champion	External Governor
Hermione Copp-Williams	External Governor
Katerina Kolyva	External Governor
Stephen Wells	External Governor
Melinda Stacey	Co Chair of Governors
James Wright	External Governor
Val Parsons	Business Support Staff Governor

In Attendance

Bill Blythe	Vice Principal (VP)
Jason Jones	Deputy Principal (DP)
Joanna Boardman	Director of Governance and Director of Executive Operations (DoG)
Alex Farmery	Executive Officer (EO) Minutes

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Katerina Kolyva, Hermione Williams-Copp, Stephen Wells, Lindy Stacey, Val Parsons and James Wright.

Jon Walton was welcomed as one of the new Student Governors.

2. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Confidential Items

No confidential items were declared.

4. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the meeting on 9 July 2024 were approved.

24FGB01

5. Items brought forward by the Chair.

There were no items brought forward by the Chair.

6. Approvals by correspondence between meetings:

6.1 Energy 2024

24FGB02

Approved by Pat Denham via email. (Chairs Action)

6.2 Access and Participation Plan

24FGB10

The draft had been approved by Pat Denham. The Plan will be presented to Board again once ready for final approval.

7. To approve the Sustain and Grow project closure report

24FGB03

It was reported that the Sustain and Grow project had been closed down whilst establishing the Task and Finish Group during last years financial challenges where a recovery plan was presented to the Board.

The closure report is to formalise the closure of the project and all the details are within the report.

Approved

8. SEAL – Chelsea Deed

24FGB04

It was reported that the Chelsea deed was of no risk or financial implications to the college and was a formality where Chelsea FC had notified Petroc that they wish to novate the agreement from Chelsea Foundation to Chelsea FC.

Approved

9. Principal Update

24FGB05

The principal updated the Board on the following subjects after introducing himself and acknowledging the warm welcome he had received from colleagues during his first four weeks in post.

- Enrolment update with 75% of applicants attending enrolments at Barnstaple and 71% at Tiverton
- Average class size up to 13.7 (14.7 without HE)
- Destinations data has been challenging
- Introducing Adult Short courses from October
- Improve non-pay oversight, staff utilisation at 98% currently
- Low HE Learner numbers
- Learner Outcomes
- Self Assessment and next steps
- Capital projects
- Staffing

Q What were the assumptions in the budget for learners leaving within the first three months?

A Attrition typically lies at 9% which will show in the funding for next year.

Q Will Apprenticeships with Harland and Wolff be affected by their current situation?

A Yes, there were supposed to be 14 new starts this year, however the college had managed to find alternative recruitment for 7 of them. The current Year 2 & 3 students are not affected but we have limited assurances.

There was a discussion around HE numbers and Apprenticeship risks and how that would affect the budget. It was suggested to build those two risks into the risk management. It was also agreed that the college needed to improve outcomes and achievement starting with particular attention to attendance, as this seemed to be the biggest challenge with no apparent reason other than local deprivation, potentially mental health issues and the areas where students come from.

10. Quality and Curriculum

10.1 Ofsted Preparations

The Deputy Principal reported that the college had received the Ofsted call on Monday 30.09.24 and a full inspection visit was scheduled for 8 – 11 October 2024. There would be 11 inspectors visiting and completing deep dives on several different teaching areas, safeguarding and skills needs, where phone calls and visits with Employers had been scheduled. It was confirmed that Jason Jones would be the Lead nominee, with Gail Whenman as skills nominee. The inspection would be concluded with a final feedback meeting on the Friday afternoon where Governors would also be invited as well as the colleges DfE regional contact person.

The preparations for the inspection were in full swing ensuring that all staff, students and stakeholders were briefed in advance.

It was agreed to decide on a mechanism to feedback to the Board during the week and for the Board to send a supporting message to all staff (DoG on behalf of the Board) talking about any potential outcomes/grades and to reassure staff.

11. Finance and General Purposes

11.1 To approve the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire

24FGB07

The questionnaire had been completed by managers at the College and reviewed by the Vice Principal. Its purpose was to assure the auditors that the college has functioning controls over its activities and that the Board have oversight of them. It also required the Board to satisfy itself that its own composition and procedures are sufficiently robust. It was reported that there had been two major changes this year, one being the Sale of Brannams and the other being the establishment of the Petroc Energy Services Limited company, both of which had been viewed as novel and contentious.

Board approved the RSAQ ready for signature from the Chair of Governors.

11.2 To approve the Subcontracting update

24FGB08

It was reported that it was a new requirement by DfE to give an update on subcontracting activities at every board meeting and the Board was asked to approve these activities.

Approved

11.3 To discuss and approve the update on PESL (Petroc Energy Services Limited)

24FGB09

The Paper written by the Vice Principal provided an update to the Board on the activities of Petroc Energy Services Limited (PESL). PESL had been established to deliver the Phase 3a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (Salix).

Stage 1 of the Salix scheme, installing the solar panels, air source heat pumps and associated renovations and storage facilities were on plan to be completed by 31 March 2025.

It was noted that Stephen Wells acts as a Board member for PESL. All posts within PESL were not remunerated posts and the contract between PESL and Petroc was purely for the college to provide heating. The decision to establish PESL was tax efficient decision that was approved by the Board last year. Future updates for PESL would be presented to the Finance and Resources committee first and then to Board for information only.

Approved

12. Student Governor Introduction and update

The new Student Governor introduced themselves to the Board and reported that they were an HE student studying a foundation degree in Sustainable Environment Management in their second year with a particular interest in STEM right from primary school all the way through to university.

It was noted that a second Student Governor should be joining the Board after October Half term once the Student Union President had been elected. The president automatically takes on the role of a Student Governor.

It was reported that the Student Union had lots of projects lined up, such as:

- Bio diversity project
- Mobile living wall
- More plants around the college

It was agreed that the Principal will hold regular meetings with both Student Governors and the aim was to bridge the existing gap of student voice that was highlighted during the External Board Review.

Staff and Student Governors and the Executive Team are excused.

Confidential Items

13. Principal Recruitment Process update

The Director of Governance provided an update to the Board on the Principal recruitment process.

The meeting concluded at 18.52 and the next meeting for the Board is scheduled for 3 December 2024.