

Governing Board

Tue 06 December 2022, 17:00 - 19:25

GW B, Parson's Walk Campus, Wigan



Attendees

Present: Ann Harrison (Chair) (Independent Governor), Kath Causey (Independent Governor) – via Teams, Andrea Ferguson (Independent Governor), Hayley Mercer (Independent Governor), Susan Spibey (Independent Governor) – via Teams, Tom Mooney (Independent Governor) – via Teams, Nazia Rehman (Independent Governor) – via Teams, Harinder Dhaliwal (Independent Governor), Susan Snape (Independent Governor), Alison MacKenzie-Folan (Independent Governor), Steven Tomlinson (Independent Governor), Rebecca Turley (Staff Governor), Jennifer Connor (Staff Governor), Anna Dawe (Principal), Jomana Aref (Student Governor)

In attendance: Anne-Marie Francis (Vice Principal - Curriculum), Louise Brown (Vice Principal, Corporate Services), Alison Rushton (Vice Principal - Employment & Skills), Steven Scott (Finance Director), Dave Harrison (Vice Principal – Data & Funding), Scott Gillon (Wylie Bisset (for Item 4)) – Via Teams, Sarah Rhead (PA to the Principal) (Minutes)

The meeting was quorate.

The Chair welcomed the members of the Board and congratulated the College and the Executive Team for the Ofsted visit and outcome this week.

Meeting minutes

1. Apologies for absence

GB-22-12-01

Apologies for absence had been received from Millie Gallagher, Jenny Bullen and Joanne Platt.

2. Declarations of Interests

GB-22-12-02

There were no declarations of interests.

3. Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

GB-22-12-03

The Board reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. It was noted that all actions have been completed or are scheduled.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 October 2022 were approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.



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The Financial Statements Auditor's Report for 2021-22 was presented to the Board by Scott Gillon (W&B) who joined the meeting via Teams. It was noted that the report had been considered in detail by both the Audit Committee and Resources Committee, and is recommended to the Board for approval.

The Board noted that the Auditor anticipates issuing an unmodified audit opinion subject to authorisation of the financial statements by the Members of the Corporation and clearance of outstanding matters in section 1.2 of the report. In relation to the Regularity Assurance Opinion: There are no issues to report in relation to our regularity opinion.

The Board noted that the Auditors anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion on the accounts of Wigan & Leigh College for the year ended 31 July 2022. The College's forecasts and financial projections indicate that the College has a reasonable expectation that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and for this reason will continue to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of its Financial Statements. The Auditors are satisfied, following review of the forecasts and financial projections, that the Board of Governor's assessment of the going concern basis of preparation is appropriate.

The Chair noted solid, well laid out report. No further questions were raised in relation to this item.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Financial Statement Auditor's Report for 2021-22.

Scott Gillon left the meeting

Hayley Mercer and Alison MacKenzie-Folan joined the meeting.

5. Principal's Strategic Update - presentation

GB-22-12-05

The Principal gave an update on key issues to the Board.

It was noted that there has been 2 recent ministerial changes. Gillian Keegan, SoS Education and Robert Halfon: Education Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships & HE.

The Principal gave an update regarding the ongoing ONS Review. A 6 month review has been completed and the recommendation is that colleges are to be returned to the public sector. The full impact of what this means for the future is being still assessed and it is the Principals recommendation that this is discussed at the Governor's Strategic Day in January.

The key (unconfirmed) strengths and areas for improved from the recent Ofsted Inspection were presented. The Principal informed the board that the next part of the process is to receive a draft report, which should be received before Christmas. This will be checked for accuracy and returned. Moderation will take place and report will be published after Christmas (target for end of January).

Moving forward the College's priorities will be addressing the AFIs, developing the Teaching & Learning academy and quality systems, the Skills agenda and meeting the local need.

Updates on the strategic priorities followed;

Quality - MIDES data indicates 16-18 national average achievement rates are circa 81.9%. W&L College has an achievement rate of 85.3%. 19+ are indicated at 87% and W&L is 88.8%. Apprenticeship achievement for W&L is 64.2% and though the NA for Apps is not known it is thought to be in the region of circa 51%.

There is a slight difference of -0.9% in retention for 16-18 when comparing the same point last year. The focus now is on Teaching and Learning, retention and first time pass rates. There is improvement in retention for both 19+ and HE in comparison to the same point last year.

Early drop out (pre-census) was 11.7% compared to 10.3% last year. Further analysis will be completed as the reasoning is unsure. There has been a marked increase in the number of behavioural problems since Covid. Analysis will look at which levels/departments/EDI measures contributing to early drop out figures.

Post-census the learner numbers for 16-18 are 3,211 and this indicates growth target of 3,276 for 23/24

Current Attendance is slightly down on last year for the same period for 16-18/19+/HE. Further work is required. Attendance was strong for 16-18 during inspection, less so for 19+.

Place - Accreditation for NSAFDM (National Skills Academy for Food & Drink Manufacturing) has been confirmed. This



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will extend the work being undertaken with Kraft Heinz

IoT launch post-Christmas with publicity being arranged and it is hoped this will be live from January 2023.

Scottish Power are now partnering with College. This partnership is focused primarily on apprenticeship training.

AEB initiatives are planned with WBC. This will involve planning curriculum, targeted projects and partner arrangements around quality

Care Leaver work was highlighted during Ofsted. There are early discussions to extend this further with targeted programmes and interventions.

The College is currently commencing a workforce solution project around Teaching Assistant recruitment being developed for partner schools.

Investment for the Future - 16-18 recruitment is strong and there will be further growth for the college in 23/24. This coincides with the increases in the school leaver demographic over the next 2 years

The AEB budget is on track to be fully utilised and may exceed core budget. Further enrolments planned for January and March

Apprenticeship enrolment is expected to meet target and may over perform on 16-18

HE income is down by circa £300k. This is as a result of movement of activity to levy funded higher/degree apprenticeships, increased competition and impact of COVID. The IoT is an important development in response to the growth of this activity.

Remuneration package received well by staff with positive feedback. The Board noted the awareness of industrial action within FE.

IoT capital money will be released in year and works can commence. This includes investment in engineering equipment at Pagefield and remodelling of workshops.

Bids for further T level capital are being explored – this would be for Animal Management at Leigh College.

The Board noted the update.

6. Annual Report and Accounts

6.1. Annual Report and Accounts (including Annual Remuneration Report) 2021-22

GB-22-12-06

The Finance Director presented the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2021-22 to the Board for approval, noting that this had been reviewed in detail by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 9 November 2022.

It was noted that the Resources Committee had also reviewed the report and accounts at its meeting on 8 November 2022.

The Board noted that the College's Financial Health will continue to be "outstanding" based on these results for 2021-22 and the College will remain compliant with all its banking covenants

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2021-22.

6.2. Regulatory Audit Questionnaire 2021-22

GB-22-12-07

The Board noted the Regularity Audit Questionnaire, which provided key evidence for the Financial Statements Auditor when compiling their Annual Report. It was noted that the report had been considered in detail by the Audit Committee on 9th November 2022.



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RESOLVED: On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, to approve the Regularity Audit Questionnaire for 2021-22.

6.3. Audit Committee Annual Report 2021-22

GB-22-12-08

The Finance Director presented the Committee's Annual Report for 2021-22 to the Board for approval. The Board noted the Committee's activities in 2021-22 and the assurance within the report in relation to the monitoring of risk and systems of control at the College.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2021-22.

6.4. Internal Audit Annual Report 2021-22

GB-22-12-09

The Board considered the Annual Report of the Internal Auditor, which had been considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 9 November 2022.

RESOLVED: On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board approved the Annual Report of the Internal Auditor for 2021-22.

7. Autumn Term Updates

7.1. Careers and Destinations

GB-22-12-10

An update was provided to the Board by the Lead Governor for Careers and Destinations. The Board noted the Lead Governor is working closely with the VP Employment and Skills, and engaging with a number of SMEs. The VP Employment and Skills agreed this is essential engagement to encourage the right employers to the Borough.

The Chair requested that the Lead Governor for Careers and Destinations meets with HOD Marketing & CEIG prior to the next meeting.

The Board noted the update.

7.2. Safeguarding

GB-22-12-11

No update was available as the Lead Governor had tendered apologies for the meeting. However, the Vice Principal Corporate Services confirmed that the Lead Governor for Safeguarding had met with the Safeguarding Team as part of her termly link visit with them.

8. Curriculum and Student Matters Committee Reports



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The Board noted that in response to the Enhanced Inspection Framework and the Post 16 Education Act 2022, the structure of the college Self-Assessment Report has been completely rebased to reflect the increasing range of activity across the college and ensure all provision types are subject to a full review and self-assessment process.

Consequently there are now four Self-Assessment Reports:

- Education Programmes for Young People (EYP)
- High Needs Learners
- Apprenticeships
- Adults

These four reports have been summarised in a top level Executive Summary which had been attached for governor scrutiny and approval.

The SAR and QIP have been reviewed in detail by the Curriculum and Student Matters Committee on 15th November, and supported by Ofsted's Strengths and AIF feedback. Both were recommended to the Governing Board for approval. The Board noted that a review was taking place regarding the content of the Executive summary as this is not yet balanced with the detailed information in the programme area SARs and this was a feedback point from Ofsted during inspection.

The Board noted the importance of their Link Visits to see the action of the QIP at curriculum level and close the loop.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the SAR 2021-22 and QIP 2022-23.

8.2. HE Annual Monitoring Report and SAR 2021-22

GB-22-12-13

The VP Curriculum provided assurance to the Board that this report had been scrutinised by the Curriculum and Students Matters Committee, which had recommended it to the Governing Board approval.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the HE Annual Monitoring Report and SAR 2021-22.

8.3. Annual Safeguarding Report 2021-22

GB-22-12-14

The VP Corporate Services presented the report to the Board which was considered by the Curriculum and Student Matters Committee at its meeting on 15 November 2022 and was now recommended to the Governing Board for approval.

The Board noted the key areas of concerns as detailed in the report and noted the number of students engaging the Chaplaincy support, especially the higher number of male students at Pagefield.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Annual Safeguarding Report 2021-22.



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The VP Curriculum provided assurance to the Board that this report had been scrutinised by the Curriculum and Students Matters Committee, which had recommended its approval to the Governing Board.

The Board noted the procedure has been adapted to take into account any potential complaints directed towards the Governing Board which has now been aligned to the current procedure.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Complaints Policy 2022-25.

9. Audit Committee Reports

9.1. Annual Risk Management Report 2021-22

GB-22-12-16

The Finance Director presented the annual risk management report for 2021-22 which provides a risk position statement for the year ending 31st July 2022. The report was reviewed by the Audit Committee on 9 November 2022 and was recommended for approval by the Governing Board.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Annual Risk Management Report 2021-22.

9.2. Risk Register

GB-22-12-17

The Finance Director presented the risk plan for 2022-23 which has been updated to reflect the current year's strategic outlook. The risk plan is reviewed regularly by the Executive.

Since the last report the Risk Plan has been amended to reflect the new assessment of risk for the current academic year as follows:

- increased the risk factor on 6 of the 16 classifications (3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15)
- decreased the risk on 3 (11, 12, 14)
- Risk has remained consistent on 7 (1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 13, 16)

Risk will continue to be assessed throughout the year.

The report was reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 9 November 2022

The Board noted the report.

9.3. Internal Audit Plan 2022-23

GB-22-12-18

The Finance Director presented the first Internal Audit Plan 2022-23 produced by the new internal auditors TIAA. The board noted this report follows on from the contents of the plan from ICCA.

The Board noted that an additional follow had been arranged for 14 March 2023

The Chair raised concerns regarding the noted risk that the apprenticeship programme is not financially sustainable after the average cost of training an apprentice hit double what the Government predicted. The Principal added this risk is noted under current funding mechanisms and is a national picture which all are monitoring.

The report was reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 9 November 2022 and was attached for the Board's approval.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Internal Audit Plan 2022-23.



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10. Resources Committee Reports

10.1. Health and Safety Report and Policy 2022-23

GB-22-12-19

The VP Corporate Services presented the Health and Safety Report and Policy 2022-23. The Board noted the policy has been reviewed by CNS Consultants, the College's Health & Safety Consultants.

There has been no changes requiring significant amendment to the Health and Safety Policy.

COVID requirements are now an embedded part of the policy and practice at the College and therefore covered under the references to pandemic within the document.

The Policy was reviewed by the Resources Committee on 8 November and was now recommended to the Governing Board for approval.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the Health and Safety Report and Policy 2022-23.

11. Capital Projects Update

GB-22-12-20

The VP Corporate Services provided a presentation to the Board.

The contractor procurement for the FE Capital Transformation Project has restarted and a further virtual bidder's day was 21.11.22. The College is awaiting the outcome of this. The costs and targets dates were noted by the Board.

The GM Institute of Technology funding will be used to refurbish the labs at Pagefield and significant resource purchases. This plan is on track for delivery summer 2023.

The Decarbonisation Strategy is now complete with consultation and support provided through Hillside Environmental Consultants. Hillside are also attending the Governor Strategic Day to provide an update.

Capital Funding has been approved by the Office for Students Project which will be used for the refurbishment of the Pagefield Centre LRC and new VR CAVE in the lower ground floor of CATs. This works will run in parallel to the IoT works.

In response to the Chairs question regarding when work will start at WSA, it is likely to be the end of Summer 2023, however more decanting and internal work may start subject to agreement. Fortnightly meetings are taking place with the DfE.

It was noted that a T Level Capital Wave 5 bid was being developed for animal management development at the Leigh Campus. The bid is due for submission February 2023 and if successful, work will commence Summer 2024

The Board noted the update.

11.1. Deed of guarantee for the Institute of Technology Project

GB-22-12-21

The Finance Director informed the Board; the final paperwork for the DfE IoT project has been received by the partners. Board approval is requested to use the College Seal to execute the guarantee deed as part of the process to sign off the IoT.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the use the College Seal to execute the guarantee deed as part of the process to sign off the IoT.



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The Principal provided a verbal update regarding the GMCG financial arrangements. The Board noted that the money associated with the GMCG will be moving to the College along with the new role of the Principal. This money will be kept separately, in the same way as WFTF funding, and will be monitored within the College financial monitoring processes.

As the funds and activities are likely to increase, it is proposed to have a contract drawn up for all GM member Colleges to sign. This agreement will reduce the risk of any clawback or dispute.

In relation to the question regarding governance of this funding, the risk is low as the money is only released when a College meets a KPI, and any issues that do arise will be supported by the contract in place.

In relation to the question regarding the accountancy management of this money, the Director of Finance explained it would sit on a balance sheet, with a separate cost centre code. The transactions will be nominal and clear to the partner Colleges and also the services/people employed on fix term contracts under this funding.

The newly appointment Policy Advisor, Richard Caulfield will be invited to the Strategic Day in January and will attend Board, if required, for regular updates.

RESOLVED: The Board approved the governance arrangements for the GM Colleges Group Innovation Project.

13. Strategic Workshop

GB-22-12-23

In light of the Skills & Post-16 Education Act 2022 the College has altered its approach to skills planning, implementation and reporting. The Governing Board has agreed that the strategic day should focus on how the College meets local and regional skills need and therefore the agenda has been planned with that specific focus. The agenda is not finalised but guest speakers and/or session have been confirmed. One skills slot remains and this may focus on the role of GMCG and its future strategic direction but this can be reviewed further.

The Board noted this has been condensed to one day, starting at 8.30am.

In relation to the question, does the proposed agenda support the strategic direction, the Principal explained that the Board have agreed to cover the specific national and local issues, such as Skills, ONS reclassification and AEB.

In relation to the question regarding Chair and Vice Chairs meeting regarding the contents of the agenda prior to January, the Chair and Vice Chairs agreed no such meeting was required.

Resolved: The Board approved the content and agenda for the Strategic Workshop to be held on 20 January 2023.

14. Part B: The following items have been the subject of discussion or approval by Committees or are attached for the Board's information only. They won't be discussed unless Governors indicate they would like a discussion on any item.

Chair

The Chair highlighted the following items have been the subject of discussion or approval by Committees and are attached for the Board's information only. Items will not be discussed unless Governors indicate they would like a discussion on any item.

The Board agreed that all items had been scrutinised at Committee and had no further comments.

14.1. KPI Dashboards

14.1.1. Finance KPI Dashboard

GB-22-12-24

The Board noted the report.



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14.1.2. HR KPI Dashboard	GB-22-12-25
The Board noted the report.	
14.1.3. Estates KPI Dashboard	GB-22-12-26
The Board noted the report.	
14.1.4. Curriculum KPI Dashboard: Study Programmes	GB-22-12-27
The Board noted the report.	
14.1.5. Curriculum KPI Dashboard: Adults	GB-22-12-28
The Board noted the report.	
14.1.6. Curriculum KPI Dashboard: Apprentices	GB-22-12-29
The Board noted the report.	
14.1.7. Curriculum KPI Dashboard: HE	GB-22-12-30
The Board noted the report.	
14.2. Link Visits Reports	GB-22-12-31
The Board noted the report.	
14.3. Committee Chairs' Reports	
14.3.1. Audit Committee Chair's Report	GB-22-12-32
The Board noted the report.	
14.3.2. Curriculum and Student Matters Committee Chair's Report	GB-22-12-33
The Board noted the report.	



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The Board noted the report.

15. Any other business:

GB-22-12-35

Chair

ONS DfE Reclassification

The Board noted that this has been covered within the meeting.

The Finance Director referred to the summary paper of changes that have been introduced as a result of the reclassification. This paper had been circulated by email but will also be uploaded to the Board Portal.

As of the 29th November 2022, the ONS has decided that further education colleges are again public sector organisations. Today, this currently mainly affects people in the sector with finance responsibilities. The short-term impact is mainly negative and the long-term hard to read but the fact that colleges have public sector status now puts them firmly in the frame for reform, either after the next election, or the one after that.

The report and verbal update was noted by the Board.

16. Date and time of next meeting: 21 March 2022 at 4.15pm*

GB-22-12-36

* Please note earlier start for Board Development

The meeting ended at 7.25pm.

17. Actions:

GB-22-12-10

Action: Lead Governor for Careers and Destinations to meet with the HOD Marketing & CEIG prior to the next meeting.

Action by: Lead Governor for Careers and Destinations



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