



# MINUTES

## BOLTON COLLEGE BOARD

Minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday 13 December 2023 – (PART A)

**Time:** 5.00pm

**Venue:** Boardroom / Video Conference

### Members present:

Dr Andrew Roberts (Chair)  
Mr Andrew Fawcett (Vice Chair)  
Dr Adrian Brooks  
Mrs Kate Flood  
Mr Tom Martin  
Mrs Claire Garth  
Mr Chris Ball  
Mr Tony Unsworth  
Dr Gill Waugh  
Mr Bill Webster (Principal)  
Ms Sharon White  
Mrs Gulnaz Brennan  
Dr Julian Coleman  
Mr Ming Fong  
Mrs Adeeba Gulzar

### In Attendance:

Mr Mark Burgoyne (Deputy Principal)  
Ms Deborah Bradburn (Clerk)  
Mr Garry Westwater (Executive Director of Finance)  
Ms Jane Marsh (Executive Director of HR & Estates)  
Mrs Karen Westsmith (Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Quality)  
Mrs Catherine Langstreth (Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Stakeholder Engagement)  
Mrs Tracy Clarke (Assistant Principal of Curriculum Design, Information & Technical Services)  
Mr Tim Openshaw (Assistant Vice Chancellor (Planning & Student Experience) (UOB)  
Miss Jill Hebden (Minute Taker)

## 1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS

### 1.1 WELCOME TO MEMBERS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which commenced at 5.05pm. He confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

Dr Julian Coleman was welcomed to his first meeting as a University nominated Board Member and Ming Fong and Adeeba Gulzar were welcomed to their first meeting as Student Governors.

### 1.2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Sue Lomax and Dr Gill Smallwood.

### **1.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted particularly in relation to the University of Bolton reciprocal governance arrangements and also paid positions.

Declarations of interest were made under Items 4.7 and 4.8.

### **1.4 REQUEST FOR AN ITEM TO BE UNSTARRED**

Members were reminded that starred items on the agenda would be taken as read rather than being presented. However, Members could ask questions of the report author, or ask for any item to be unstarred for full discussion.

There were no requests for items to be unstarred for discussion.

### **1.6\* MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

#### **Minutes of the Meeting held 27 June 2023 - general publication**

The minutes of the meeting held 27 June 2023 had been previously circulated to Members for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record and authorised for publication (Part A).

### **1.7 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Members had received a summary of action(s) arising/outstanding from previous meetings, noting that all action(s) had been completed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the matters arising be noted.

### **1.8 MINUTES (SUB-COMMITTEES):**

#### **(i) Search & Governance Committee of 20 September 2023**

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held 20 September 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

#### **(ii) Remuneration Committee of 20 September 2023**

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held 20 September 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

#### **iii) Resources Committee of 26 September 2023**

Members had received the minutes of the meeting held 26 September 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be received as detailed.

## **2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS**

## 2.1 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented the twenty-second report under the 'Designated Institution' Bolton College, which provided an overview of key issues. He highlighted the following point:

### Ofsted:

The draft report had been received with the expectation that the final report would be published mid-January. The final report would go to the Standards and Quality Committee where the Quality Improvement Plan and other actions plans would be presented. All Board Members would be provided with a copy of the final report for further discussion in due course.

The Chair thanked the Principal, Senior Management Team and Board Members who met with the inspectors during the inspection week.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Principal's Report be noted.

## 2.2 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2022/23 & LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

The Executive Director of Finance presented the Financial Statements for 2022/23 and Letter of Representation.

The Statements had been scrutinised by the Audit Committee at its meeting held 30 November 2023.

The following key points were highlighted:

- The external auditors gave an unqualified audit report and confirmed that the College was regarded as a 'going concern'.
- The College's financial health was rated "Good" by ESFA with the previous year rated as "Outstanding".
- The College had required a waiver on two of the three banking covenants for 2022/23. The College did not pass the covenants as a result of the shortfall in adult funding and increased utility costs.
- There were additional disclosures in the regularity self-assessment questionnaire as a result of the ONS reclassification.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Financial Statements for 2022/23, Letter of Representation and Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire be approved; and
- (ii) the Audit Management Report and the College's financial health/bank covenants be noted.

## 2.3 ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Executive Director of HR & Estates presented the Annual Health & Safety Report which provided a summary of health and safety activities during the academic year 2022/23. The following key points were highlighted:

- There had been no change to the health and safety policy.
- A number of key areas of work had taken place during the summer period. Speed gates had been installed as part of the wider health and safety and safeguarding strategy.
- RAAC was not present in any College buildings. Bolton Council had started undertaking a review of the community centres and had confirmed that RAAC was not present at Brownlow Fold.
- The new build at the rear of the building would require an amendment to the fire routes.

- Government funding would support the cost of a new roof.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Health & Safety Report be noted.

## **2.4 COLLEGE KPI DASHBOARD**

The Assistant Vice Chancellor (Planning & Student Experience) (UoB) presented the College KPI Dashboard, which detailed the key sustainability indicators and those indicators on areas monitored by the ESFA.

The KPI dashboard was provided for information due to it being out of sequence with the UoB Board. The dashboard would be updated after the Christmas break and would go through the normal cycle of review.

It was **RESOLVED** that the College KPI Dashboard be noted.

## **2.5 AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Executive Director of Finance presented the Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23 which provided the Audit Committee's annual assessment of the control systems in operation at the College, based on the reports received from the Internal and Financial Statements & Regularity Auditors and other sources.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Audit Committee Annual Report be noted.

## **2.6 SAFEGUARDING REPORT AND ASSURANCE STATEMENT**

The Executive Director of HR and Estates presented the Safeguarding Report and Assurance Statement, noting the following key points:

- There were no significant changes in the way that the College approached safeguarding with Sue Lomax as the link governor for safeguarding.
- The College continued to work with a number of partners and agencies.
- External funding had been secured to further develop the tutorial on self-harming.
- The College had introduced CPOMS that would provide the College with school safeguarding data as part of a learner's transition from school to college.
- Members had received detail around the updating of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' regulations with the main change being the prominence around filtering and monitoring.
- The College had seen an increase in safeguarding referrals with 552 safeguarding referrals in the last academic year of which 382 were student related.
- Mental health continued to be a significant area of work within the safeguarding and wider wellbeing teams.
- There were nine cases of concern last year under 'Prevent' with a small number referred to the Channel panel. All cases were referred back to the College.

### **Governor Questions:**

Why were those cases that were referred to the Channel panel referred back to the College?

This was due to mental health concerns rather than radicalisation. The Channel panel felt that the individuals weren't a risk and posed no threat to society, it was felt that the College could provide support to the individuals around their behaviours.

Has the police 'Fair Care for All' had any impact on the College?

There has not been any noticeable difference at the College from the implementation of this strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that the:

- i) Safeguarding Report be noted and the actions endorsed; and
- ii) Annual Safeguarding Assurance Statement for the University is signed.

## **2.7 SUPPLY OF LIFTS PURCHASE PROPOSAL**

The Executive Director of HR & Estates presented the Supply of Lifts Purchase Proposal.

The College had four lifts across its estate that were introduced as part of the relocation of the College to Deane Road campus and had been in operation for circa 13 years. Over the last 12-18 months they had required a significant amount of spend on replacement parts and additional servicing. The College had experienced times of inoperability that had resulted in difficulties with regards to moving equipment around the estate and accessibility issues for staff and learners with mobility issues.

The Chair approved the expenditure via 'Chairs Action' on 27 November 2023 to ensure that the College was best placed to have the lifts operational for the next academic year.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Supply of Lifts Purchase Proposal be approved.

## **2.8 E-SPORTS EQUIPMENT PURCHASE PROPOSAL**

The Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Stakeholder Engagement presented the E-Sports Equipment Purchase Proposal.

The College proposed to offer e-sports for delivery in September 2024. The equipment and environment would be set up in Term 2 to enable enrichment opportunities and taster sessions to gain interest and promote the offer.

The Chair approved the expenditure via 'Chairs Action' on 3 October 2023 to enable funding to be spent within the limited timeframe provided.

### **Governor Questions:**

What is the teaching resource required for e-sports?

It is covered within the teaching teams and we have links with HP with someone that has 35 years' experience and will be providing the College with 2-days a week.

It was **RESOLVED** that the E-Sports Equipment Purchase Proposal be approved.

## **2.9 MATHS AND ENGLISH UPDATE**

The Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Quality presented the Maths and English update noting the following key points:

- There had been changes within English and maths since the end of summer as the level of staff resource stability had significantly changed.
- The English team had seen staff leaving for higher salaries offered at other colleges, which had meant that existing staff were required to cover or merge classes.
- There were a higher number of students entered for the November resits this year than previous years.

### **Governor Questions:**

What are the underlying reasons behind UoB trainees not wishing to teach at GCSE level?

The English trainees this year have chosen to go down the ESOL route instead of the English GCSE route. Meetings have been arranged with UoB to explore this further and mitigate the reasons wherever possible, in addition to building trainee confidence in teaching GCSE.

It was **RESOLVED** that the English and Maths Update be noted.

## **2.10 CONTRIBUTION TO SKILLS NEEDS**

The Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Stakeholder Engagement noted that the College had been successful in receiving Local Skills Improvement Funding and would lead on the health and digital strand whilst working together with other GM colleges, Bolton NHS and Christies Hospice to focus on the digitalisation of health.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Contribution to Skills Needs update be noted.

## **2.11\* STARRED ITEMS**

### **(i) SAFEGUARDING POLICIES 2023/24 UPDATE**

Members had received and reviewed the Safeguarding Policies 2023/24 Update.

The College's Safeguarding Policies were updated on an annual basis, with the review process incorporating any legislative changes, alterations to local safeguarding processes, best practice and lessons learnt.

The College had five key policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Children (0-18) Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Abuse of Trust Policy
- Personal and Professional Relationships at Work Policy
- Early Years & Pre-School Centre Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy

The policies had been updated with minor changes to terminology and regulations.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Safeguarding Policies 2023/24 updates be approved.

### **(ii) ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT 2022/23**

Members had received and reviewed the Annual Risk Management Report 2022/23.

The report enabled the Audit Committee to review and subsequently advise the Board on the progress made regarding risk management to assure the Board that risks were being managed effectively.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Risk Management Report 2022/23 be noted.

### **(iii) ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REPORT 2022/23**

Members had received and reviewed the Annual Capital Expenditure Report 2022/23.

Capital spend for 2022/23 was £1.098m with capital spend in 2021/22 at £1.306m.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Capital Expenditure Report 2022/23 be noted.

### **(iv) COUNTER FRAUD STRATEGY**

Members had received and reviewed the Counter Fraud Strategy.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Counter Fraud Strategy be approved.

**(v) TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW**

Members had received and reviewed the Terms of Reference Review for:

- a) Resources Committee; and
- b) Remuneration Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference be approved.

**(vi) ANNUAL REPORT ON SENIOR POST HOLDER REMUNERATION**

Members had received and reviewed the Annual Report on Senior Post Holders' Remuneration for 2022/23 as considered by the Remuneration Committee at its meeting held 20 September 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Report on Senior Post Holders' Remuneration be approved.

**(vii) USE OF COLLEGE SEAL 2022/23**

Members had received and reviewed the report on the use of the College Seal as provided by the Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** that the use of the College Seal report be noted.

**(viii) ANNUAL REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING**

Members had received and reviewed the Annual Report on Development and Fundraising as provided by the Principal.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Report on Development and Fundraising be noted.

**3. SECTION C - UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS**

**3.1 STARRED ITEMS**

**(i) GROUP RISK REGISTER**

Members had received and reviewed that Risk Management/Risk Register at University and Group level.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group Risk Register be noted.

**4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**4.1 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP PROPOSALS**

**i) STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

The proposal was made for Dr Gill Smallwood to become a member of the Standards and Performance Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** on the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee the Committee membership as stated.

**ACTION:**

All Board Members to be extended an invitation to attend the Standards and Performance Committee meetings.

## 4.2 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

It was discussed that some of the meetings had been convened too late in the calendar year.

### **ACTION:**

The schedule of meetings would be reviewed for this academic year and the remaining cycles.

## 4.3 SURPLUS FUNDS INVESTMENT PROPOSAL

The College intended to maximise its investment income and earn interest on its surplus funds in-year by placing its funds on an instant-access and 32-day basis at the bank. To facilitate this a bank mandate would require amendment.

It was **RESOLVED** that delegated authority be provided to amend the bank mandate.

## 4.4 MEETING EVALUATION

Members confirmed they felt that the Senior Management Team had provided the level of detail needed. All Members were able to ask questions, contribute and were overall content with the meeting.

**(All Members and Officers save for Independent Members left the meeting at 7pm)**

## 5. SECTION E – FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates and times of future meetings were noted as follows:

**Board Meeting** - Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 5.00pm

### **Committees:**

Resources – Tuesday 16 January 2024 at 5.00pm

Standards & Performance – Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 2.00pm

Audit - Thursday 21 March 2024 at 5.00pm

Search & Governance - Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 3.00pm

Remuneration – Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 4.00pm

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 7.15pm

**Chair's Signature:**

**Date:** 6 February 2024