



**Mission Statement:** *Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures*

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

**Date:** Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021  
**Virtual meeting via Google Meet**  
**Time:** 5.00- 6.25pm

**Present:** Ms W Middlemas Chair)  
Mr C Simkins OBE  
Ms J Gray (Principal)  
Ms C Coyne  
Cllr D Clapham  
Ms D Taaffe  
Mr N Webster  
Mr A Burr  
Mr J Mannino  
Mr D Gascoigne  
Ms N Baranowska  
Ms T Vijayaratham

**Together with:** Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)  
Ms T Cooper (Vice Principal: Vocational)  
Mr S Ormson (Assistant Principal: Student Services)  
Ms A Crumblehulme (Assistant Principal: Business Support)  
Ms S Hawitt (Governance Administrator-FCAT)

**Apologies:** Ms A Newton-Leeming, Cllr C Baxter and Mr R Baker

### **01.2021 Preliminaries**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially David Gascoigne, his first full board meeting. Apologies were noted. The meeting was held virtually via Google Meet, the Clerk received permission to record the meeting.

### **02.2021 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

### **03.2021 Consideration of any items of urgent business.**

There were no items of urgent business to discuss

### **04.2021 Confirmation of Quoracy**

It was noted the meeting was quorate

### **05.2021 Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 were approved

### **06.2021 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

There were no matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

### **07.2021 College Action Plan**

Directors received the College Action Plan (paper 7.1) presented by the Deputy Principal and were invited to ask questions.

#### **Questions and comments from directors**

Directors stated that the contribution from student directors at the recent strategy meeting had been fantastic and well received.

In response to a question about the percentages for English and maths in the report and what it means, the Deputy Principal explained that all students arriving at the college having not yet achieved a grade 4 in these subjects will have to study the subjects as a condition of the funding agreement.

She went on to explain that the college are really successful at ensuring that students make good progress at the college, the expectation is that the figure will be heading towards 70% (at the end of the academic year) in comparison to a national average of 40%; these percentages represent the progress made by students.

In response to a further question about what percentage would be cause for concern, it was noted that probably 20% or below, it was re-iterated that the figures for B6 in March are similar to the national figures in July. It was also noted that incremental progress had been made over the last four years despite moving over to new specifications something the college are very proud of. It was noted that the Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) for 2020 could not be validated nationally due to the pandemic, the same will apply for 2021, however in previous years Blackpool Sixth had been near the top of the league tables for value added in maths and English.

### **08.2021 Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Directors' focus for this meeting was Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). The Principal gave a verbal update to directors which included that the college are yet to receive the full guidance from awarding bodies for TAGs and are not likely to before the 29<sup>th</sup> March. However, directors were informed that staff at the college had been working hard to plan the process despite not having details of the full basket of evidence required from government.

Directors were informed that the TAG grades had to be submitted to awarding bodies by 18<sup>th</sup> June, she went on to say that it is an anxious time for staff and students due to time restraints taking into account half term, time needed for college to mark and quality assure assessment and submit the grades.

It was agreed to add this item to the next Standards Board meeting in April 2021 for further clarification.

Agenda

#### **Questions from directors**

Asked if any consideration had been taken into account on the long-term plan and how comparisons will be made in the future, in light of the 19/20 – 20/21 situations. It was noted that at present benchmarking is taking place against 18/19, however, it was also noted that some context will need to be taken into consideration, for example since 18/19 improvements have been made which shows a very different picture.

It was also noted that performance tables had not been made public for the last two years.

In response to a question about the number of appeals related to results, it was noted that initially it seemed quite a lot until the government revised the decision for students to take their highest grade either from TAG or final awarding body grade and, in comparison, to other colleges it was very few.

It was noted it took staff a number of weeks at the start of term to deal with the issues and is something they are preparing for again, the appeals process guidance from government has yet to be published, once, this has been received it will be communicated with students and parents. Directors were informed that communication with students and parents had been very good throughout the whole process.

The Vice Principal: Vocational informed directors of the move this year to Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) for most BTEC qualifications.

Students completing this year and receiving TAG are still on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) programme, which means that college can still make comparisons to historical data, however for Lower 6 students on the new RQFs there will be very little data to benchmark against.

In response to a question about the possible impact on lack of live music, theatres and art galleries for students studying creative courses, it was noted that visual arts department had been really creative in using virtual media to continue to share and assess each other's work, examples given were, the use of TikTok and Pinterest. It has been a bit more difficult for performing arts, however they have demonstrated a lot of opportunity for acting for TV instead of stage and individual dance performances had been brought together virtually. Some gaps had been identified, especially in face to face learning, however this remains a focus now students have returned to college.

#### **ALPS Progress Report**

Directors received the ALPS progress report for February 2021 (paper 8.2) presented by the Deputy Principal, she invited questions.

#### **Questions from directors**

In response to a question about mathematics it was noted that there are no concerns about the progress made in maths, the Deputy Principal gave directors a brief overview of how students develop from core maths to further maths and noted it is quite typical to see the lower ALPS grades at this point in the year; the same can be said for Chemistry.

In response to a question about how to read the table on page 3 of the report, the Deputy Principal explained the representation of the ALPS grading system 1-9 against national benchmarks. (1-3 red performance is within or exceeds the top 25% of the national benchmark, 4-6 black middle 50% 7-9 blue performance is within or worse than the bottom 25% of the national benchmark)

### **09.2021 Destinations Report**

The Assistant Principal: Student Support presented the Destinations Report 2019-20 (paper 9.1) and invited questions

#### **Questions from directors**

Asked about the increase in the 'not known destinations' and if they are similar across the country or specific to Blackpool, it was noted that as a result of Covid and college closure the information could not be gathered in quite the same way as previous years, it was also noted that it is anticipated it is a similar picture across the sector but we won't know for certain until the data is published.

Asked about the decline in Sports, Tourism and Public Services (STPS) it was noted that there is concern over the decline. Positive destinations may have declined due to the current situation, especially within the travel industry, Further work is being carried out to ensure students are aware of future opportunities when the industry improves and what is available to them now in the interim if tourism is their destination of choice.

Asked if students are asked what their desired destination is when they arrive at the college, it was noted that these conversations take place at the application stage even before students come to college and there is a regular focus on career aims throughout the student's study programme.

Directors congratulated the college on the increase in student apprenticeships and asked what was it that contributed to the increase, especially with the difficulties of Covid-19, it was noted that the focus for the last few years had been on students looking at alternative options as well as higher education. A lot of work had been carried out with employers and universities in terms of degree apprenticeships. Directors were informed that the data in the report uses August/September data and some students may not have started their apprenticeships due to Covid-19. Therefore, the destination might not be sustained, this is something the DFE will explore further. Directors were also

informed that although the progression for students to HE had maintained a downward trend, the increasing progression to the higher tariff universities was particularly pleasing.

Directors were informed that students are encouraged by their teachers, pastoral mentors and families to choose the right option for them in order to achieve their lifelong ambitions.

Directors were asked to look at the 'Building Futures event' on the college website which shows that the apprenticeships and university options and information and guidance are of a similar measure in comparison to previous years.

*SLT left the meeting*

**10.2021 Professional Support**

Nothing to report since the last meeting, the Principal stated that the staff are working extremely hard.

**11.2021 Principal's Report**

The Principal presented her report (paper 10.1) and highlighted the following; **recruitment** as it stands is 1701 it is slowly increasing but still slightly lower than last year. Currently, SLT are discussing New Student Day which will be virtual, however discussions are taking place about how to bring new students into the college for a visit, tour, festival to give students a chance to visit the college in person if restrictions allow.

**Finance** - it was noted that the college had received additional funding of £115k this includes funding for an extra student and the pension costs for the remainder of this year and next. £10k had been received for the term January – February for Covid-19 testing and a further £30k is due for the mass testing programme which has taken place this term. £60k for maths premium is due to be received in April 2021.

**College website** - the Principal shared with directors the work carried out around health and wellbeing and asked that they look at 'Thrive at B6' on the website, it is full of resources which are really useful. After looking at the website and praising staff on its excellence it was pointed out that there are some links to religious websites for mental health but no link to a Christian website, DG offered to discuss some useful links/resources with the Assistant Principal: Student Support

DG/SO

**Questions from directors**

Directors complimented the Principal and her team for the strategy 'Thrive at B6' it is an excellent example of what is needed right now.

In response to a question about research into why students do not choose B6 as their choice of sixth form college, there were many reasons including, faith, friendship groups, preferring the continuation of school and staying on for their sixth form year, (however it was noted that there is only one from three remaining schools in the local area with sixth form provision). Some gifted and talented students are recruited to the independent sixth form colleges by being offered bursaries, it was also noted that a few students who choose other colleges sometimes change their mind during induction and join B6.

To encourage recruitment, it was noted that every application is followed up by college staff and the Principal has a conversation with all the local Headteachers. Work is being carried out with schools to introduce activities that not only brings students into college but can help to raise their aspirations, unfortunately, at present, this has been put on hold due to Covid-19. Not all local schools take up the invitation but all are invited.

**12.2021 Report on Chairs' action since the last meeting**

There was nothing to report

**13.2021 Safeguarding**

Directors received the minutes of the FCAT Safeguarding Board meetings

held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (papers 13.1)

**14.2021 Directors Training**

Directors received an update from the Clerk on the directors' personal record (DPR) and were asked to complete the meeting attendance tab and training tabs

The Chair gave directors an update on the new directors' self-assessment process which will be used to develop a training plan for directors. It was noted that 1-1 meetings with the Chair will hopefully take place before September 2021.

**Committee Meetings**

**15.2021 Audit Committee**

Directors received the following minutes and reports for approval

**15.2021 D1 Resolved: to approve the joint virtual minutes of the Audit and A&F committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**15.2021 D2 Resolved: to approve the minutes of the virtual Audit committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021**

**15.2021 D3 Resolved: to approve the Risk Management Report and Risk Register**

**16.2021 Search and Governance Committee**

The Chair of the Search and Governance committee presented the minutes of the meeting held virtually on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and highlighted various committee issues for approval. In addition, the Clerk noted that a new parent director had successfully been appointed through a ballot process and thanks were given to CC the previous parent director who has now taken on the role as Non-Executive director for a further term. The Principal thanked CC for agreeing to be the SEND link and CB for agreeing to be the E&D link.

**16.2021 D1 Resolved: to approve the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**16.2021 D2 Resolved: to approve the appointment of Cllr C Baxter to the A&F committee and to the Chair of Self-Assessment committee**

**16.2021 D3 Resolved: to approve the extension of the Chairs' role for the Remuneration and Standards Board committees**

**16.2021 D4 Resolved: to approve the appointments of David Gascoigne and Ray Baker as Non-Executive Directors**

**16.2021 D5 Resolved: to approve the appointment of David Gascoigne to the A&F and S&G committees**

**17.2021 Self-Assessment Committee**

Directors received the minutes of the Self-Assessment meeting

**17.2021 D1 Resolved: approve the minutes of the meeting held virtually on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**18.2021 Administration and Finance Committee**

The Chair of the A&F committee gave a summary of the virtual meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and highlighted the revised FE financial benchmarks and what that means for the college.

**18.2021 D1 Resolved: approve the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**19.2021 Remuneration Committee**

The Chair gave a verbal update on the Remuneration Review meeting held virtually on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**20.2021 Identification of any new or amended risks**

No new or amended risks were identified other than the lack of information from government regarding the TAGs which will be added to the next Standards Board agenda agenda

**21.2021 Farewell to Neil**

The Chair noted the retirement of the Support Staff director Neil Webster and thanked him for his commitment and hard work on the governing body over the last 8 years, he had represented the support staff fantastically.

**22.2021 | Date and Time of next meeting**

Monday 5 July at 5.00 pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_