

## MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Thursday 08 February 2018 held at GPUTC, commencing at 1000 hours

Present (Board): Phil Brown (PB - Chair), Steve Warburton (SW - Principal ex officio), Karl Hicks (KH), Lauren Faulkner (LF), David Hiorns (DH), Peter Kelley (PK - staff governor), Jane Murton (JM), Lisa Russell (LR -Vice-Chair), Terry Jones (TJ)

Apologies sent (Board): Anne Devlin (AD)

In Attendance: Habtom Mebrahtu HM (vice AD), David Bisley (DB), Natalie Drewery (Clerk)

*The meeting was quorate throughout*

### **1 Welcome and apologies for absence**

1.1 The Chair opened and welcomed those present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted and approved.

### **2 Declarations of Interests**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest pertaining to items on the agenda.

### **3 Draft Minutes of the meeting 07 December 2017 (for ratification)**

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting on 07 December 2017 were agreed by the board as an accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

**Action: Clerk to file**

### **4 Matters Arising and Action Log**

4.1 The Action Log had previously been circulated, the Chair asked that governors update the log and close off any action items as appropriate.

4.2 The following items were updated:

- Item 130 - PB clarified the letter written to staff concerned the 1% salary increase only, not the incentive scheme. The letter was written and the item closed. In answer to a question regarding how staff received the letter, it was remarked that positive comments had been given. It was noted that the working party to formulate a bonus incentive had met and would report back under AOB.
- Item 127 – SW acknowledged that the written paper for KH had not been actioned; KH advised that it was still relevant and would be useful to take to the treasury. Item rolled forward.

- Item 122 – SW clarified that Parent Pay has not been progressed, as IT development has been focused on other systems such as GCSE pod, 4 matrix, and IT provision for sixth form and the intervention room.

*Q/. In noting that Parent Pay was not currently being progressed, a governor stressed the importance of the parent portal and questioned how successful this was in operation and use.*

*A/. DB clarified it has been operational since October; most KS4 parents are actively using it to view timetables and behaviour data, but they can't yet access academic data such as progress. Of the 221 users, 67000 hits have been made since its launch. SW advised that ISAMS have offered a free resource for IT development and this may be looked at for setting up real time data.*

- 4.3 Governors discussed the number of action items which remained open; whilst a number have been allocated to SW or DB, they noted that some of the actions should be passed to other staff to undertake, as many are too onerous for the SLT to solely manage. It was agreed that moving forward, timescales and greater clarity of ownership was required for the Action Log. Each item will be recorded with a priority 1-3; 1 being important, within 1 week; 2 good to have, one month; 3 like to do, one term.

## **5 Principal's Reports to Governors**

SW advised his report would also link in item 8 on the agenda, Risk Register and Action Plan. Referring to the KPI's report the following highlights were noted:

- 5.1 Leadership & Management – student numbers maintained at 97% (funding received for 280 students)
- 5.2 Behaviour, Safety & Support – DB summarised the action being taken by staff regarding the strict implementation of the behaviour policy to remove low level disruption from the class environment.

*Q/. A governor questioned how staff have reacted to this implementation.*

*A/. DB commented that it had been received positively and explained the process of yellow cards, name on the yellow board, being removed from the lesson and detention.*

*Q/. A governor asked if parents have been informed of this action and what, if any, reaction parents have given.*

*A/. DB explained that when students receive a formal warning (name on the yellow board), parents are informed. Parents were notified of the changes to the behaviour policy and most KS4 parents are on board with what the college is doing. The next step will be to introduce a stricter policy for behaviour around the college and on the buses; this will be targeted for the current Year 10 and subsequent years.*

*Q/. A governor queried where students are taken when removed from the classroom.*

*A/. DB advised that the number of students taken out is minimal; they either sit outside his or SW's office, or are taken to the intervention room. Students are only taken out for the duration of that lesson and take the lesson's work with them, with a requirement to complete it.*

- 5.3 Year 13 Students –of the 52 students, 20 have applied for university placements through UCAS; 17 of which are for degrees related to the UTC specialisms. Other students will apply for apprenticeships, other colleges, or work.

*Q/. A governor questioned if these Year 13 students will attain the grades they require for university places.*

*A/. SW advised that staff work hard to ensure students apply for the right courses for their predicted grades.*

Governors noted the aspiration is for zero NETS (not in education or training) and questioned how the Employer Sponsors could be more involved; it would be a positive message to parents to see that Employer Sponsors take on a certain percentage of students. A discussion followed on work experience placements for Years 10 and 12, the H&S requirements for Year 10, and the involvement which Employer Sponsors could have. It was agreed that real work experience places are often difficult to come by.

**Action 132: DB to email Sponsors with the number of students requiring placements, timescale and the year group profile. Sponsors to endeavour to offer places with an appropriate project / work experience. - Priority 2**

- 5.4 Teaching & Learning –there is a college wide review w/c 19.02.18; DB will head up a week review consisting learning walks, book scrutinies, data & progress meetings, and student feedback. Governors were encouraged to attend.

- 5.5 Staffing –1.8 FTE positions are covered by long term supply teachers; following the resignations prior to Christmas, appointments could not be made for the positions in Chemistry, Art and English.

*Q/. A governor questioned whether the college's recruitment process was robust and would stand up to scrutiny. Governors do not always need to be part of the recruitment process, but the recruitment process needs to be transparent.*

*A/. SW advised that governors are involved in the appointment of SLT. He confirmed that all bar one non SLT positions have been advertised externally, through the website, Times Education Supplement or CV Library. One position was advertised internally, which drew 3 applicants. All applications are shortlisted by a panel; all recruitment is conducted using a student panel, a teacher panel and /or SLT formal interview. HR provider EPM finalises the process. The lead governor for HR had taken part in several recent recruitments.*

Governors requested that in future, the Chair of Governors should be notified of any recruitment and the outcomes noted in Board minutes.

- 5.6 Staff absence – it was noted that there had been an increase in staff absence, which was stress related. One person has left; the other two are back at work.

*Q/. A governor asked if there was a staff wellbeing policy and if so, was it effective.*

*A/. SW confirmed that a policy is in place; for these particular absences, the policy was effective for 2 staff members. Lessons have been learned moving forwards.*

- 5.7 Achievement – referring to the presentation material, SW clarified there will be a data collection this week; students are not doing as well as their peers in national settings, as the data is produced in Progress 8 format, which does not fit with UTC's. Noting the English and Maths statistics, DB advised there had been an improvement in the recent data, with more students moving towards achieving their grade. This is because in year progress is being sustained. Further mock exams will be held and

staff are working hard, focusing on exam topics, offering before and after school clubs, focus interventions and specialist tutor investment.

Q/. A governor noted that at the last Board meeting, the actions for each departments and the list of student “weaknesses” had been provided, but questioned if the two had been married up and if the students and their parents know clearly what is needed.

A/. SW confirmed that they had and that some communications have been sent out to students and parents.

Q/. A governor expressed concern that the parents do not appear to know what’s being provided to students to help them achieve. It appears that the college is providing interventions and support, but this is not being communicated enough to parents to engage their support. Given how close the exam season is, it is vital that parents’ attention is drawn to this.

A/. SW noted the concerns, advising that steps are being taken within the college to refocus the timetable & resources and provide interventions; the next step is to engage parents more effectively.

Q/. Referring to the comment regarding further mock exams, a governor questioned why these are taking place again and what the benefits will be.

A/. DB explained that each subject will provide a mock paper within a lesson each week; the results will enable staff to pull together a question level analysis and future lessons will be structured to address the knowledge gaps.

Q/. A governor queried if the full GCSE specification for all subjects will have been delivered by Easter.

A/. DB confirmed that it will in all subjects bar Chemistry, although this is being addressed and independent study is being utilised for Chemistry rather than the other two sciences. Student time is being focused. Parents have been advised that the college will focus on the top 8 subjects of each student; their response has largely been positive.

Q/. A governor questioned when the parents’ evening for Year 11 students is, as concern is being raised by parents through the Parent Governor.

A/. DB advised that the last parents evening was at the end of last term, the next one will be more of a drop in session to meet staff to discuss any concerns after the mock exams. A Year 11 parents’ forum consisting of 12 parents has also been arranged. SW confirmed that a letter will be sent this week to parents confirming the resources available and the steps the college is taking to support students. Revision sessions have been planned for the Easter holidays, along with a residential; students are being targeted according to their needs and the resources the college has to support.

Q/. A governor questioned the criteria for the residential.

A/. SW advised there is a challenge to deliver support to all students; it is for those students who are borderline to achieve either grade 4 or 5.

Q/. A governor asked if the college considered what is in place will meet the targets and if parents will feel that the college has done its best.

A/. DB advised that the sharing of key personalised interventions with parents should answer parents’ questions. Whilst it is a significant piece of work to undertake, the intervention timetable and personalised plans have to be delivered; a lot has already been provided and this was shared at the recent C&S committee.

Governors noted that a significant amount of work was being carried out, but some parents are not aware and are expressing concerns; the work should not fall to SLT alone, but the mentors should be tasked to communicate with parents. DB advised that the letter would be sent out this week, to be followed up after half term. Noting that the Engineering department are awaiting the outcomes of the portfolio marking, PK was asked to report any concerns to the next C&S committee.

**Action 133: PK to feedback concerns for Engineering outcomes to C&S committee.  
Priority 2**

SW advised that the same support is being provided to Year 13; individual plans are in place.

*Q/. Noting that there had been an issue with a Year 13 course concerning over-marking, a governor asked how the college would ensure this does not happen again.*

*A/. SW advised that the DfE are funding support for T&L from Arthur Mellows College, therefore they will provide moderation to ensure consistency in marking.*

Thanks were expressed by governors to all staff for the hard work associated with delivering the support to students in Years 11 and 13.

*(HM left at 12.00 hours)*

**6 Safeguarding Review Update**

6.1 TJ reminded governors of the requirements for systems to be in place for effective safeguarding. The recent Safeguarding Audit, which was circulated for the last meeting, provided an Action Log of items which the college needed to provide / update to ensure compliance. It is the designated lead's responsibility to report back on any actions not undertaken.

6.2 SW confirmed that the Action Log has already been updated and will be circulated to governors.

**Action: 134: SW to circulate the updated Safeguarding Action Log.**

6.3 Governors discussed the level of experience the Board needs on safeguarding. It was noted that they had received training during 2017; it is their responsibility to monitor the audit to ensure that the action items are being addressed.

6.4 PB advised that as a requirement of the DfE additional funding, the college needed to draft a strategy towards becoming a MAT. Having engaged Arthur Mellows College as a teaching school they were a potential partner. In addition trustees would be having discussions with Parkside Federation regarding MAT opportunities with them. Governors were reminded of the webinar available on Ofsted Readiness [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLc\\_nITsmY0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLc_nITsmY0)

It was noted that the strategic partnership with the Regional College remains effective and this partnership has been made aware of the potential MATs.

*(KH left the meeting at 12.20 hours)*

**7 Sub-committee Reports**

7.1 Curriculum & Standards – the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 18.01.18 were circulated.

7.2 Finance & Resources – dates have been set for the next three terms: 19<sup>th</sup> March, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> September.

- 7.3 Health & Safety – DH advised that following the H&S walk last term, a date for review has been set for 20<sup>th</sup> February. Whilst a number of items had been reported for action following the last walk, it was not known if these had been dealt with. Ideally, the report should be RAG rated and a monthly check on H&S conducted.

**Action 135: SW to explore if there is a standard compliance pack for UTC's and to arrange an external H&S audit. TJ to arrange for the Regional College's H&S Officer to conduct the audit. Priority 2**

## **8 Risk Register & School Action Plan**

- 8.1 This item was covered under the Principal's reports, item 5.

## **9 Employer Sponsor**

- 9.1 PB noted the discussion under item 5 concerning work experience and the engagement of Employer Sponsors in providing this. It was explained that the Royal Navy were attending the college for a promotional opportunity following their engagement as a Sponsor. In response to a query, PB clarified that the Royal Navy would not be represented on the Board at this time; as experienced secondary education governors were the priority.

*(RB left the meeting at 11.35 hours)*

## **10 Skills Audit Summary and Governor Development**

- 10.1 PB advised that the NLG coach whom he is working with will attend the next Board meeting; he will conduct an external review of governance.
- 10.2 PB thanked governors for returning their skills audits, noting that the summary will be provided to the DfE. Arising from the summary, individual training needs will be considered.
- 10.3 PB clarified that governors are expected to advise the clerk via the email, [governance@gputc.com](mailto:governance@gputc.com), of any training attended, with certificates of evidence, as the Board needs to evidence governor development.

*(DH & TJ left at 12.30 hours)*

## **Any Other Business discussed – for noting only**

LF advised that the working party had met to develop the bonus incentive, but were unable to present a policy for approval at this meeting, as the remit was unclear; whether it was a one off bonus or wider recognition policy.

PB clarified that the original idea was to recognise the extra effort staff were making towards Year 11 and 13 outcomes but that it could have wider use in the future.

Governors established that due to the urgency of this policy being agreed, the proposed policy submitted by the working party would be circulated for approval by email.

The meeting closed at 12.35 hours

Date of Next Full Board Meeting: Thursday 29 March 2018 10am – 12.30pm