

## MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

**Thursday 29 November 2018 held at GPUTC, commencing at 1005 hours**

Present (Board): Phil Brown (PB - Chair), David Bisley (DB), David Hiorns (DH), Jane Murton (JM), Charlotte Maybank (CM – Staff Governor), Habtom Mehbratu (HM), Hou-Fung Yuen (HFY)

Apologies sent (Board): Lisa Russell (LR -Vice-Chair), Karl Hicks (KH), Anne Devlin (AD), Rob Robson (RR)

In Attendance: Dr Mehrdad Asadi (MA), Peter Walker (PW), Nigel Croft (NC – Baker Deering), Mark Jackson (Rawlinsons), Steve Coleby (SC), Natalie Drewery (Clerk)

*The meeting was quorate through to item 9 inclusive.*

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

- 1.1 The Chair opened and welcomed those present to the meeting. Introductions were made to Peter Walker and Hou-Fung Yuen who have joined the Board; Peter Walker joins vice Terry Jones; as Acting Principal of PRC and Hou-Fung Yuen is a Co-opted governor.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were noted and approved. Habtom Mehbratu and Mehrdad Asadi had notified the clerk that they would be delayed in arriving.

### **2 Declarations of Interests / Register of Business Interests**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest pertaining to items on the agenda, however Peter Walker stated his interest as a PRC employee.

### **3 Safeguarding**

- 3.1 The Chair advised that the purpose of this separate item was for the UTC to highlight any updates or matters of importance which the Board should be aware of.
- 3.2 DB advised of two matters to bring to the Board's attention. 1. a panel of governors had met to review a permanent exclusion; this was upheld. 2.a DfE Safeguarding Audit has been commissioned, this will be conducted by Jane Low from the Dfe.

*(DH joined the meeting at 10.10 hours)*

### **4 Health & Safety**

- 4.1 SC noted the good support given by DH on H&S matters; two meetings have been held of the H&S group (SC, DH, DB), and an internal audit has been completed by DH. The workshop was closed for the first two weeks of term to enable updating of risk assessments and staff training to be conducted.

- 4.2 DH noted that Action item 155; Electronic Action Log has now been provided, as such the action item can be closed. A further visit has been arranged for 17<sup>th</sup> December; H&S is now measurable and moving in the right direction.
- 4.3 The Chair reminded governors that H&S is everyone's responsibility and it would be useful to make comment on it within all governor visits.

## **5 Governing Board Membership update**

- 5.1 The Chair noted that Habtom Mehbratu had stepped in vice Anne Devlin for ARU representation on the Board, but as he lives in Chelmsford, this is unrealistic to continue; therefore the ARU Dean has recommended Mehrdad Asadi to the Board. As noted in the last meeting, Anne Devlin on retirement from ARU has now been co-opted as an independent governor to the Board.
- 5.2 A parent trustee election process has been conducted; Amanda Allport and Denise Burt were successful and will join the next Board meeting in February. Both are parents of Year 11 students and will bring a good level of experience and skills to the Board.

## **6 Draft Minutes of the meeting 20 September 2018 (for ratification)**

- 6.1 These were approved and signed by the Chair.

## **7 Matters Arising and Action Log**

- 7.1 The Action Log has been updated and circulated.
- 7.2 The following notable items were updated:

**Item 181: All governors to undertake on-line safeguarding training by the next Board meeting – governors were reminded of this requirement and asked to provide the clerk with the certificate once completed.**

*(HM joined the meeting at 10.25 hours)*

## **8 Auditors Report**

- 8.1 MJ referred to the documents provided and talked governors through the content. Referring to the Management Information, he highlighted the carry forward, deficit and pensions reserve.
- 8.2 Referring to the document titled Trustees Report and Audited Accounts, the following points were noted:
- 8.3 There has been an increase in the Teachers' Pension Scheme of 7% in costs; whilst this will be 'fully funded' through the national formula for one year; this will need to be factored into the budget from September 2020.
- 8.4 The income summary was discussed and the increase in expenditure was noted due to the growth in UTC students.
- Q/. A governor asked if the auditors monitored the staff cost as a percentage of income.*
- A/. MJ advised that it was not recorded, but works out at 76% of core income; it is not recommended to be higher than 80%. DB clarified that Baker Deering have provided an analysis across UTCs specifically looking at overspends and costs; as such DB and SC are reviewing staffing.*

**Action 182: Wording for Trustees Report to be circulated by email for approval – priority 2**

*(MA joined the meeting at 1040 hours)*

8.5 Balance Sheet – generally creditors exceed debtors; the debtors were high for this year; as a result of VAT rebates due and a refund requirement for double payroll deductions relating to transition arrangements. The background to this was provided. Additionally capital funding for furniture is still owed; this is not in the current accounts, but if the UTC can access this fund, it will go in the subsequent year's accounts.

**Action 183: DB to raise with Roy Bird on 30.11.18 re VAT and to continue pursuing the capital fund access – priority 1.**

**Action 184: PB to raise with Roy Bird re EPM payroll overpayment – priority 1.**

8.6 Auditors notes – attention was drawn to the breakdown of staff costs which had increased. DB advised this reflects the recruitment of more experienced staff, but steps have been taken to address recruitment and supply costs; going forward there will be cost savings.

8.7 DB commented that SLT are currently reviewing the budget and taking the necessary steps to focus on Teaching & Learning and subsequently reduce staffing costs.

8.8 The Chair advised that the Board are taking steps to address the MAT requirement and detailed the strategy; three potential candidates were identified; only one could meet the deadline of September 2019; therefore they have been invited in to present to the working group, Baker Deering and SLT on 14<sup>th</sup> December. Due diligence will be required before any sign off by Baker Deering and the DfE.

8.9 MJ asked for governors views on the potential disclosures and auditors note; these items were discussed and BD/PB offered information which gave a more positive view for income. These were summarised as: Actions being taken to raise income, staffing changes as discussed at Curriculum committee with cost savings and due diligence of the MAT which will review the accounts and forecasts going forward.

*Q/. A governor asked if the UTC can demonstrate financial security, would it still need to join a MAT.*

*A/. PB explained that joining a MAT is one of the conditions of the ESFA funding. There are alternatives, but the UTC would need to persuade the DfE otherwise.*

8.10 It was noted that under third party transactions, PRC are referenced. Also, trustee Jane Murton was employed by the UTC for invigilating work.

**Proposal: The Chair advised that governors were required to formally accept the accounts and recommend to the Members; this will then be ratified at the AGM.**

**Decision: On a show of hands, all governors were in agreement to accept the accounts for 2017-18, subject to the inclusion of the trustees report and adjustment of the disclosure note.**

8.11 Report to Management – MJ referred to the document and noted the requirements that as the UTC grows, the greater need plan ahead, demonstrating good long term financial management.

8.12 Addressing this issue, it was noted that PB had challenged DB & SC to ensure a more robust reporting cycle from PRC and to update the responsibilities and

processes. Considering the requirement to appoint a new Responsible Officer, it was noted that this will be allocated to a person from Anglian Water.

*(MJ left the meeting at 11.35 hours)*

## **9 Principal's Report**

9.1 DB referenced the KPI information sheet and working SEF which have been posted on the secure governor area. He clarified that the SEF has been designed around the Ofsted Inspection framework, with overall good judgements to work towards, along with a more specific breakdown of the judgement on subsequent pages. The SEF is reviewed weekly at SLT meetings; with two separate operational meetings to review student achievement. He talked though the potential Ofsted changes, noting that Ofsted are due this academic year. A PowerPoint presentation was given which will be placed on the secure governor area; notable points are summarised:

9.2 Priority Areas - As a result of last year's student outcomes, Rapid Improvement Plans (RIP) have been put in place for 4 key areas: English, Engineering, More Able + Gifted, Disadvantages students.

*Q/. A governor asked how the SEF had been cascaded to staff.*

*A/. DB explained that there is a lot of information published on the SEF; most of the areas are talked through with staff before it goes on the SEF; either collectively or through individual discussion.*

*Q/. A governor noted that although this was informative, they need a sense of progress and understanding of where the problems lie.*

*A/. DB advised that the KPI data sheet gives that snapshot.*

*Q/. A governor asked if the actions within the SEF go towards the performance management reviews.*

*A/. DB clarified that they do, or tend to be that performance management targets specifically relate to the key terms on the SEF.*

9.3 Evidence - The evidence column on the SEF demonstrates how this judgement has been achieved; governors need to challenge this evidence on visits. Governors discussed the need for them to be recording visits and challenging the UTC, as governance is judged within the Ofsted Leadership & Management criteria.

**Action 185: Governors to complete the online survey which will help DB & PB to determine which of the 4 RIP areas governors will target within visits – priority 1.**

**Action 186: Governors to undertake NGA on line training or Peterborough Governance training; or link up with RR / SC to do an initial visit – priority 2.**

9.4 Visit Reports - DB discussed the need for governors to write up their visit reports and provided an example report form to be used, this will be posted on the secure area. Noting the process will be for governors to send their forms to DB to collate governors' actions /comments; governors will be encouraged to question the data and evidence.

9.5 Governor Profile – There will be a governor board within the main reception; alongside the senior student leaders. Governor allocation of responsibilities were discussed and agreed:

SEND & Pupil Premium – Amanda Allport

Welfare & Safeguarding – Anne Devlin

Compliance (including policies) – Jane Murton

H&S / Premises – David Hiorns

SMSC – Denise Burt

Current Committee structure was recorded as:

C&S – Chair –LR, DH, JM, MA

F&R- Chair – HFY, KH, PB

- 9.6 Surveys - DB explained that during the academic year, surveys are conducted with staff, parents and students. Parents and students survey will be reported on at the next meeting. The staff survey results were presented noting the significant improvement in all areas compared to last year's results. Plans are in place to publish on the notice boards a 'you said, we did' area for the surveys.

*Q/. A governor asked if it was possible to compare the student outcomes with this data; was there a correlation, or was the improvement in Teaching & Learning perceived.*

*A/. DB advised that the surveys will be compared against previous year's data; similarly perception will be compared against the reality of the data.*

*Q/.A governor asked how much employer engagement has been followed up.*

*A/. SC clarified that a benchmarking exercise was being conducted; there is a need to improve sponsor engagement and SC is evaluating and working on this, with a view to holding a launch event next year, to define the role of the sponsor. Employer engagement should distinguish the UTC from other schools; this is positive but needs to be embedded even further and filter directly through to the students' experience.*

*(DH left the meeting at 1235 hours)*

- 9.7 Work life balance – DB noted the recent survey suggested that staff are concerned with the length of the school day and workload. The UTC is working with the Peterborough LA, using a toolkit to manage workloads, focusing on three areas: data management, marking and lesson planning. Consequently, at the next board meeting, governors will be asked to consider uniform and the length of the school day. There is a formal process of consultation; the next newsletter to parents will note that governors are being consulted on.

- 9.8 Outcomes – governors were reminded of the official position regarding the Progress 8 secondary school measure; it is not the most appropriate measure for UTCs', as they educate students from the age of 14. No judgement will be made on Progress 8 by the DfE; this is also contained in the Ofsted Rule Book. This statement will be made prominent on the website, along with the official outcomes that 96% of KS4 are in education, employment or training; 94% of KS5 are in education, employment or training. Governors discussed the context of the data, and noted that a data collection and mock results were being collated which will give a picture of the current position.

**Action 187: DB to provide a bullet point sheet of data for governors to understand the headlines of the progress of the present cohorts' data – priority 1.**

*(PW left at 1300 hours)*

- 9.9 Teaching & Learning – DB provided a summary of the current teaching performance management of teaching staff; this has been quality assured by RR. Governors discussed how this was being addressed, noting the GPUTC lesson cycle which DB talked through and is being introduced to staff & pupils to give further structure for

lessons; this builds on good practice already in place, but notes the need for consistency of application.

**Action 188: MA to attend the staff training day on GPUTC lesson cycle on 03.01.19 -**

**Action 189: All governors to respond to forthcoming email from ES requesting dates in the diary for the spring term visits.**

*(NC left at 1310 hours)*

## **10 Policies**

10.1 It was noted that SC had circulated a number of policies for governors to adopt; these were policies already agreed by governors, but due for review. SC is using a compliance tracker to manage the policy review process and in future policy review will be staggered.

**Action 190: PB to email governors for approval for the policies previously posted – priority 1.**

## **11 Sub-committee Reports**

11.1 Curriculum & Standards – it was noted that the improvements in Teaching & Learning had been the focus of this committee at the last meeting. This included the specifics of staff changes.

11.2 Finance & Resources – PB advised that the committee met on 19<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the budget with the auditors.

## **12 Employer Engagement Committee**

12.1 SC noted that he would like a group formed to discuss how the UTC can better engage with employers; MA, as ARU representative offered to join, with JM & SC.

*(MA & HB left the meeting at 1325 hours)*

## **13 Update on MAT**

13.1 As discussed in item 8.10.

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

The Chair advised that in future, Board meetings will be scheduled for 3 hours, to avoid overrun and the need for governors to leave before any decisions have been made.

Thanks were expressed to Habtom Mehbratu for joining the Board temporarily, until a successor for Anne Devlin was found; this is his last meeting as Mehrdad Asadi takes over as ARU representative.

The meeting closed at 13.30 hours

Date of Next Full Board Meeting: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 1000 – 1300 hours