

## Preston's College

### Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on 27 February 2020 at 5:30pm in the Board Room at Preston's College

#### Present:

Mr J Boydell	Chair
Dr E Smith	Principal and Chief Executive
Mr E Bassa	(from Minute 3)
Mr S Browne	
Mr M Collard	
Mr M Driver	
Mr J Jepson	
Ms J Jones	
Ms L Hornsby	
Ms N Kirkbride	
Mr J McMullin	
Cllr J Mein	
Mr D Patel	
Mr J Taylor	
Ms K Williams	

#### In attendance:

Mr S Nixon	Executive Director Resources
Mrs C Rayner	Clerk to the Board

#### Apologies:

Mr S Edwards  
Ms J Garcia  
Mr T Readett

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Board noted that apologies had been received from Mr Edwards, Ms Garcia and Mr Readett.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of Interest were made.

#### 3. Integrated Financial Model for Colleges

Mr Nixon, Executive Director – Resources, presented the new Integrated Financial Model for Colleges (IFMC) making reference to:

- background to the introduction of the new IFMC by the Education Standards Funding Agency (ESFA) and the reception by FE colleges to date;

- the ESFA's extension of the submission deadline in 2020. However, from 2021 onwards the submission deadline would be January each year;
- the IFMC would replace the December finance record and the three year forecast;
- the IFMC was cash flow orientated in response to the increased number of colleges possibly facing insolvency due to cash flow issues;
- the necessity to make financial performance projections in the IFMC due to the timing of the submission;
- the significant amount of time taken by the College's finance team inputting data;
- a formula error in the ESFA template which could not be corrected and for which an explanatory note would be provided.

Members discussed the new IFMC with management and in response to questions noted:

- the College, alongside other FE colleges, had provided feedback to the ESFA on the IFMC;
- reasons why ESFA could only accept the locked version of the spreadsheet;
- going forward, data from the IFMC could inform the College's Management Accounts and forecasts;
- the IFMC could require updating, subject to the College's bid for new capital funding to support the implementation of T-Levels. Members noted that a further update would be provided to the Board at the end of April 2020. Members suggested that, subject to progress of the bid, it would be useful to review the building where the work would take place ahead of future Board discussions.

In response to a query from a member, the Board discussed the reasons why the IFMC included a surplus level of 1.2% and the College's Five Year Strategic Plan referenced a longer term (five year) target of achieving 3% surplus levels. The Board were assured that:

- a projected surplus of 1.2% for 2019/20 had been included for prudence given funding uncertainties and was consistent with the College's Three Year Plan and communications to the FE Commissioner in 2019;
- a surplus of 1.2.% to 1.4% would ensure that the College remained in good financial health;
- College management were committed to the longer term (five year) target of achieving 3% surplus levels.

Following discussion, the Board agreed a commentary note should be added to the IFMC to reflect the Board's ambition to increase the longer term (five year) target of achieving 3% surplus levels as outlined in the Five Year Strategic Plan.

**Resolved: The Board approved the Integrated Financial Model submission for the period 2018 to 2022, subject to additional commentary regarding the College's long term surplus targets.**

**Actions: Subject to progress of a capital funding bid, to arrange a Board visit to the building where work would take place.**

**To add reference to the College's long term surplus target of 3% to the IFMC commentary.**

#### **4. Complaints Policy and Procedure approval**

The Board noted the report on the proposed changes to the Complaints Policy and Procedure at Appendix A.

The Clerk reported that the Quality and Standards Committee had endorsed the revised Complaints Policy and Procedure at its meeting on 21 November 2019 and a small number of corrections had been made which were shown in track changes.

Following a query on the introduction of a time limit for complaints, the Principal and Chief Executive assured members that no complaint would be automatically rejected if it had exceeded the guidance time limit. However, in some cases, complaints were submitted so long after the incident there were limitations to the actions the College could take in these circumstances, other than to note the complaint. Members noted that use of the phrase complain "within a reasonable time period" provided complainants with flexibility. The Principal and Chief Executive assured the Board that the management took time to review complaints, listen to complainants and respond appropriately and sensitively and the introduction of an informal first stage aided this approach.

Management assured members that serious complaints would be considered by ELT and would be added to the Risk Register if considered appropriate. The Chair assured the Board that the Principal and Chief Executive kept the Chair informed of any potentially serious complaints.

Following suggestion from a member, management undertook to review the references to the stage process on pages 8 and 9 and make clarifications and amendments if required.

The Board approved the Complaints Policy and Procedure, subject to review of the stage process.

**Resolved:**

**The Board approved the Complaints Policy and Procedure, subject to review of the references to the stage processes.**

**Action: Management to review reference to the stage process prior to publication.**

5, The Chair closed the Special Board meeting.