



BOARD OF GOVERNORS BRIEFING

EAST SUSSEX COLLEGE GROUP



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Welcome to the East Sussex College Group (ESCG) Board Briefing.

The East Sussex College Group Board has a legal responsibility for the College. The Board's role is to give strategic oversight to the College and ensure its overall well-being and financial solvency. Governors do not involve themselves in the day-to-day management of the College as those responsibilities are fulfilled by the CEO/Principal and her Executive Team.

The Board last met on 12 October 2021. This was the first meeting of the academic year 2021-22. You can read the minutes [here](#).

The pre-Board briefing session was delivered by Jeff Greenidge, Director for Diversity jointly appointed by the Association of Colleges and the Education Training Foundation. Jeff encouraged the Board and the Executive Team to reflect on how equality, diversity, equity and inclusion is experienced through the eyes of staff, students and the local community. The Board talked through the importance of ensuring College leadership and the Board's own membership suitably reflects the communities served by the College.

New Governors, Priscilla Kendall, Averil Price, Becky Cooke, Nicola Taylor were welcomed to their first Board meeting.

The Board received an update from the CEO and her Executive Team on student recruitment at the start of term. The College continues to be focused on recruitment of 16-18 students, which are at 91% of the number informing the College's 2021/22 funding allocation. HE recruitment is also an area of scrutiny and focus. The Board were advised there is likely to be a shortfall in student numbers which will have some adverse financial impacts in terms of in year funding for HE and next year's funding for 16-18. The situation will be closely monitored by the Finance Committee. Governors

asked how the College is supporting new learners to re-engage with learning, and were appraised of a range of initiatives, including activity with the Youth Employability Service co-located at Hastings and Eastbourne. Governors asked for an update on 'life at the College post Covid-19' from both staff and student perspectives. Reports will be tabled at the Curriculum and Standards and People and Culture Committees. The Board were encouraged to hear of significant adult learner recruitment.

The College's Strategic Plan 2021-2024 was given the seal of approval and there will be series of launch events in November 2021 at each local campus. The Board approved the key performance indicators by which Governors, at Board and Committee level, will measure the success of the College in relation to; education and quality, finance and risk, people and culture, digital and estates, engagement and communications and governance and oversight.

The Board approved minor changes to its [Standing Orders](#). Most College Boards have standing orders. These determine how the business of the Board is to be conducted, how Governors are appointed, terms of reference for Committees and the standards expected of a Governor in performing the role.

The Board also approved minor changes to its Instrument and [Articles of Government](#). The Instrument and Articles of Government set out the regulatory framework within which a further education College operates. They define the legal responsibilities of the Board, ensuring that it acts legally and they provide the underpinning authority for the proper management of College business. The Instrument outlines the constitution of the Board, the appointment and dismissal of its Governors and the conduct of meetings. The Articles define the powers and duties of the Board, the principal (chief executive) and the governance professional. They cover the responsibilities of the Board and they set out the basis for dealing with certain matters including audit arrangements, the appointment and dismissal of staff and student discipline.



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The Board resolved to approve an increase in annual leave entitlement for business support staff, up to 25 days, 28 days after 5 years and 30 after 10 years. The current entitlement was recognised as low in comparison with other Colleges.

The Board also agreed to the removal of additional annual leave for staff with an exemplary sickness absence record. This element has been removed for the following reasons:

- it is potentially discriminatory for those with a disability where more frequent absence can be expected
- It encourages presentism and discourages staff feeling able to take time off when they genuinely need it
- Absence reporting can be unreliable and therefore an evaluation of 100% attendance becomes problematic.

The Annual Leave Policy, Sickness and Attendance at Work Policy, Staff and Governors Expenses Policy, and Pay Policy were approved, and will shortly be accessible on the Staff Intranet.

The Board were advised that the basis for calculating loan interest (LIBOR) will soon cease. The CFO confirmed there is no alteration in the current loan agreements or covenant arrangements for the College; only the way that the interest is calculated will change.

The Board were notified the College has very generously been be-quested some monies. The Board accepted this generous gift and the CFO and the Executive Director of Estates and Infrastructure will work with the trustees to identify a suitable project to ensure that the bequest can be invested for the future of the College estate in Eastbourne and to provide a permanent memorial.

The Board next meets on 15 December 2021.

If you would like to discuss any aspects of this short briefing, please [contact corporatoin@escg.ac.uk](mailto:contact.corporatoin@escg.ac.uk)

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