

## **Governance of Barnfield College**

Barnfield College has a Board of Governors, similar to the non-executive board of a private company, comprising key, skilled individuals committed to the future of the College, its financial health and the success of its learners. The Board of Barnfield College includes the Principal and Chief Executive

The primary role of the Board is to:

- Determine the strategic direction of the College
- Set the policy framework for the College
- Monitor the performance of the College
- Maintain financial health and protect the College's assets
- Provide accountability

In recent years Government has brought more sharply into focus the Board's responsibility for driving improvement in teaching, learning and assessment, and ensuring a rigorous focus on improving standards and quality.

In general terms, the Board sets corporate aims and objectives and monitors their achievement. It is the role of the Principal and Chief Executive, Vice Principal Transforming Curriculum and Learning, Vice Principal Transforming Equalities and Safeguarding and Executive Director Finance and Resources (the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)) to identify what needs to be done to achieve these aims and objectives. The Board is responsible for strategy, direction and policy – ends; while the Senior Leadership Team makes proposals and implements strategy and policy - means.

The manner in which Barnfield College is governed is of considerable importance. Governance affects the quality of the products and services Barnfield provides, public confidence in its activities, its financial security and its ability to meet the needs of current and future students, the community and local business. A consistent characteristic of successful colleges is strong governance, leadership and management. Ofsted has highlighted the importance of the relationship between governors and college leaders and managers in ensuring a culture of accountability and success. The role of Governor, therefore, although voluntary, requires a high degree of commitment and professionalism.

### **Responsibilities of the Board**

A key responsibility of Governors is to set the strategic direction of Barnfield College. This is a creative process involving environment scanning, analysis of policy initiatives, local priorities and opportunities linked to a realistic assessment of Barnfield College's ability to deliver to a high standard based on current priorities, management resources and the quality of College leadership and management.

Governors must comply with English and relevant European law and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The legal responsibilities of the Governing Body are set out in the College's Instrument and Articles of Government. The Instrument covers procedural arrangements including membership, eligibility, disclosure of interest and the appointment of the chair, clerk and student and staff governors. The Articles of Government describe the Board's responsibilities for determining the educational character, ethos and mission of the College, setting its strategic direction and overseeing its activities.

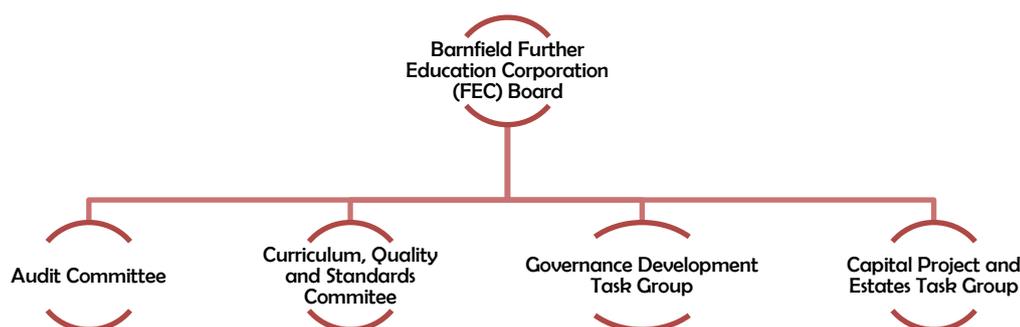
The Board has a set of Standing Orders which are the rules by which it operates and there is also a Code of Conduct for Board Members. All Members are required to declare financial and

other interests, which are held by the Clerk in a Register. In addition eligibility to be a Member of the Board is confirmed on appointment and annually thereafter.

## Barnfield College Governance Model

The current Governance structure is set out below and comprises:

- Six or seven meetings of the Corporation Board
- Two Committees: Audit and Curriculum, Quality and Standards. Typically, each Committee meets, respectively, four and three times a year.
- Two ad hoc Task Groups Governance Development and Capital Project and Estates.



An Annual Calendar of Reporting steers the work of the Corporation Board.

The expertise available at Committee meetings coupled with the greater time for debate allows Governors to examine issues in more depth than if they were referred to the Corporation Board. 'Update from Board Committees and Task Groups' is a standing FEC Board agenda item so the Board is kept informed of the Committees' work. Committee Minutes, once approved are made available to all Members.

In addition to being a Member of the Board it is expected, wherever possible, that each Governor serves on a Committee or Task Group.

The remit of each of Barnfield College's Committees and Task Groups is set out in its Terms of Reference.

## Good Governance

In 2004 the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services published, *The Good Governance Standard for Public Services*. The core principles identified still resonate ten years' on and provide a means by which the Board may wish to consider its model of good governance.

- At the centre of good governance is a focus on Barnfield College's purpose and on outcomes for communities and learners.
- Good governance means the board performing effectively both as individuals and as a team in defined roles and responsibilities.
- Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and behaving with integrity.
- Good governance means taking informed transparent decisions and managing risk.
- Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the Board to be effective.
- Good governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real.

## Governor Role Description

### Purpose

Collectively, as a Member of the Board of Governors:

- Determine and periodically review the educational character and mission of Barnfield College;
- Set the strategic direction of the College and monitor the College's progress towards achievement of its strategic objectives;
- Oversee the College's activities.

### Main Duties

1. Attend Board meetings and serve on at least one Committee/Task Group of the Board and contribute to these;
2. Participate in training opportunities for Governors, such as briefings, networking meetings, e-learning and workshops, to develop understanding of the role, the College and its operating context;
3. Act as an ambassador for the College and Corporation, embodying the College's values and the Nolan Principles of Public Life (attached).
4. Ensure that the ethos of the College is conducive to the well-being of students and staff
5. In meetings, work with fellow Governors and the College's Senior Leadership Team and:
  - Monitor the College's performance, providing constructive challenge to ensure the continuous improvement of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, outcomes for learners and outcomes for the community;
  - Set and review the College's strategic plan;
  - Review the College's equality and diversity plan and challenge management to identify and close achievement gaps;
  - Ensure the effective and efficient use of the College's resources and assets;
  - Ensure the College remains solvent and its assets are safeguarded;
  - Set and approve the College's revenue and capital budgets;
  - Approve the College's Quality Strategy;
  - Oversee the appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal, and determination of pay, terms and conditions of senior post holders (Principal & Chief Executive, Vice Principals Transforming Curriculum & Learning, and Transforming Equalities & Safeguarding, Executive Director Finance & Resources and Clerk);
  - Set a framework for the pay, terms and conditions of all other staff;
  - Ensure that the College is effectively managed and complies with all statutory requirements;
  - Appoint Governors to the Board based on their skills and contribution.
6. Comply with Statutory Duties:
  - **Safeguard** the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and raise any concerns in line with College procedures
  - Ensure that the College is compliant with the provisions of the **prevent** legislation;
  - Promote **equality and diversity** in line with College procedures
  - Follow **health and safety** requirements in line with College policy and procedures and approve the Health and Safety policy.

## Governor Person Specification

<p><b>Knowledge and experience-</b> <i>Governors will have knowledge and experience of one or more of the following:</i></p>
<p>Strategic management or governance in the private, not-for-profit or public sectors.</p>
<p>Equivalent professional or community roles relevant to the governance of Barnfield College.</p>
<p>Matters relevant to Barnfield College's customers, communities and markets, including teaching and learning, community partnership, and business and economic development.</p>
<p><b>Commitment and Values -</b> <i>Governors will be committed to and value the following:</i></p>
<p>Barnfield College, its current and future learners and its role in the community and economic life of the area.</p>
<p>The Vision, Mission, Values and strategic development of Barnfield College.</p>
<p>The expansion and improvement of opportunities for lifelong learning in Luton and surrounding region.</p>
<p>Outstanding education and training, recognising its ability to transform life opportunities and tackle social exclusion.</p>
<p>The promotion of the learner/customer voice as a key driver of development and improvement.</p>
<p>Equality of opportunity for all members of the community regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.</p>
<p>Safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.</p>
<p>The achievement and maintenance of high standards in public life (Nolan), College Values and Governors' Code of Conduct.</p>
<p>Good attendance at Board and Committee meetings and attendance, where possible, at other College events.</p>
<p><b>Skills and Abilities -</b> <i>Governors will have the following skills and abilities; a willingness to learn and update skills and knowledge:</i></p>
<p>Ability to behave appropriately and professionally as a Governor of the College, to make a positive contribution to the team, valuing and respecting others expertise and contribution.</p>
<p>Ability and willingness to champion the College externally and to challenge internally - recognising the value of appreciative enquiry.</p>
<p>Ability to contribute to the determination of strategic priorities, strategic planning and review of strategic progress and direction.</p>
<p>Ability to bring sound judgement to the Board's work including scrutiny of performance monitoring reports and organisational performance and the formulation of appropriate targets and board level responses.</p>
<p>Ability to support the Board's role in risk assessment and determining an appropriate risk management strategy.</p>

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## **Barnfield College Values**

### **As individuals at Barnfield College our values are to –**

- Ensure that exceptional teaching and learning and an outstanding student experience lie at the heart of everything we do.
- Work hard and SMART with full commitment and integrity ensuring that decisions are ethically and commercially sound.
- Be honest and transparent in our decisions wherever possible.
- Establish and maintain a fair working environment free from discrimination, bullying and prejudice.
- Always be proactive and positive in addressing issues and not to be afraid of pioneering new approaches.
- Seek, recognise and acknowledge the potential in others.
- Take personal responsibility for one's own actions.
- Possess high expectations of oneself and others.
- Be courteous and respect others.
- Use appropriate humour and ensure that learning can be fun.
- Set and maintain high professional standards at all times.

### **As an organisation we will value –**

- The creation of a safe, caring, transparent, disciplined and supportive environment where students reach their full potential and achieve as many goals as possible.
- Making outstanding learning and teaching a high priority.
- Continually developing our curriculum ensuring it is innovative, addresses the entrepreneurialism agenda, is current, meets and exceeding the needs of our stakeholders.
- The use of clear, timely and concise communication.
- The opinions of our students and other stakeholders.
- The diversity of our College and local community where services are open and accessible to all, supported by a welcoming and friendly environment.
- The use of coaching to promote self and team development and improvement.

## **The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)**

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

**These principles apply to all aspects of public life. The Committee has set them out here for the benefit of all who serve the public in any way.**

*The College's current mission, vision, values and strategic objectives are captured in the current Three year Development Plan titled 'Reclaiming Excellence'. This plan may be found on the website [www.http//barnfield.ac.uk](http://barnfield.ac.uk)*

## Appointment

The Corporation is responsible for the appointment of Governors. Governors are invited to apply by letter setting out their reasons for wishing to become a Governor and enclosing a brief Curriculum Vitae. Short-listed applicants are interviewed by Members of the Governance Development Group, Principal and Clerk, and thereafter are invited to attend a Board meeting, following which the Board will consider a recommendation to appoint. In recommending appropriately qualified and experienced individuals for appointment the Board will take account of the need to maintain an appropriate balance of experience, expertise, and interests among Corporation members.

Potential new Governors must declare that they meet certain eligibility criteria. These include restrictions relating to bankruptcy and conviction for an offence. Further details on eligibility may be found in the extract from the College's Instrument and Articles at the end of this document. All Governors are subject to a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

## Declaration of Interests

On appointment, and annually, each Governor signs a Declaration of Interests to record all business and relevant interests, financial or otherwise, that he or she may have, **including** (insofar as he or she is aware) **an interest** of a **spouse, partner** or **business associate** or of a **close relative** or his or her **spouse, partner** or **business associate**.

Governors must declare any conflict or potential conflict of interests in any agenda item at individual meetings. If there is a conflict of interest, they must not take part in the discussion of the item, not form part of the quorum, and not vote.

## Period of Office

With the exception of the Principal and Chief Executive and Student Members, Governors initially serve for a period of four years. Members may be re-appointed for further terms at the invitation of the Corporation. The Principal, if she or he chooses to become a Corporation member, serves for the duration of their employment at the College. Student Members serve for the academic year until their successor is appointed.

## Attendance at Meetings and Participation

It is expected that members will be able to participate fully in the work of the Corporation and the life of the College. The Corporation annually sets itself a target for attendance at Corporation and Committee meetings which is currently 85%. The Instrument of Government allows the Corporation to consider removing a member from office if they are absent from Corporation and relevant Committee meetings for longer than four months without the permission of the Corporation. Governors are also expected to take part in the College's Link Governor Programme.

Events that Governors should attend:

- Meetings of the Corporation and relevant Committee(s);
- Briefing and training sessions;
- Strategic planning events (typically an Annual Development Day);
- Where possible, College functions such as Student Awards;

- Governor Link Programme, where a Governor is linked to a curriculum or functional area of the College and meets periodically with its Head, staff and students to learn more of this aspect of the College.

#### **Time commitment**

- ✓ Corporation meetings are held up to eight times a year, each lasting approximately two to two and a half hours;
- ✓ Committee meetings are usually held at least once a term, lasting approximately one and a half to two hours;
- ✓ Annual away day – approximately eight hours;
- ✓ Link Programme meetings approximately one to two hours once a term;
- ✓ College events and functions which vary in time, but typically two or so hours.

## Eligibility to Serve

Extract from latest approved Instrument and Articles.

### 7. Persons who are ineligible to be members

- (1) No one under the age of 18 years may be a member, except as a student member.
- (2) The Clerk may not be a member.
- (3) A person who is a member of staff of the institution may not be, or continue as, a member, except as a staff member or in the capacity of Principal.
- (4) Paragraph (3) does not apply to a student who is employed by the Corporation in connection with the student's role as an officer of a students' union, or as an apprentice, or any paid employment the student may undertake on behalf of the College.
- (5) Subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), a person shall be disqualified from holding, or from continuing to hold, office as a member, if that person has been adjudged bankrupt or is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking within the meaning of the Insolvency Act 1986(3), or if that person has made a composition or arrangement with creditors, including an individual voluntary arrangement.
- (6) Where a person is disqualified by reason of having been adjudged bankrupt or by reason of being the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a bankruptcy restrictions undertaking, that disqualification shall cease—
  - (a) on that person's discharge from bankruptcy, unless the bankruptcy order has before then been annulled; or
  - (b) if the bankruptcy order is annulled, at the date of that annulment; or
  - (c) if the bankruptcy restrictions order is rescinded as a result of an application under section 375 of the Insolvency Act 1986, on the date so ordered by the court; or
  - (d) if the interim bankruptcy restrictions order is discharged by the court, on the date of that discharge; or
  - (e) if the bankruptcy restrictions undertaking is annulled, at the date of that annulment.
- (7) Where a person is disqualified by reason of having made a composition or arrangement with creditors, including an individual voluntary arrangement, and then pays the debts in full, the disqualification shall cease on the date on which the payment is completed and in any other case it shall cease on the expiration of three years from the date on which the terms of the deed of composition, arrangement or individual voluntary arrangement are fulfilled.
- (8) Subject to paragraph (9), a person shall be disqualified from holding, or from continuing to hold, office as a member if
  - (a) within the previous five years that person has been convicted, whether in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, of any offence and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, for a period of three months or more, without the option of a fine; or
  - (b) within the previous twenty years that person has been convicted as set out in sub-paragraph (a) and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, for a period of more than two and a half years; or
  - (c) that person has at any time been convicted as set out in sub-paragraph (a) and has received a sentence of imprisonment, whether suspended or not, of more than five years.
- (9) For the purpose of this regulation there shall be disregarded any conviction by or before a court outside the United Kingdom for an offence in respect of conduct which, if it had taken place in the United Kingdom, would not have constituted an offence under the law then in force anywhere in the United Kingdom.
- (10) Upon a member of the Corporation becoming disqualified from continuing to hold office under paragraphs (5) or (8), the member shall immediately give notice of that fact to the Clerk.