

GOVERNANCE⁴FE

EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW

TRURO & PENWITH COLLEGE

16TH MARCH 2023



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF REVIEW OUTCOMES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the overall review of governance compliance and the Board's effectiveness, this is a positive report set against a backdrop of an executive team becoming embedded, and the college addressing the current local strategic and the wider sector policy challenges. This summary of review outcomes should be read in conjunction with the full report as the report contains important contextual information, rationale, and evidence for all the recommendations made. The review considered the Board's effectiveness across the 5 main areas.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

The Board understands and adheres to the differences of role between the operational role of management & strategic role of governors. Financial management and internal control systems give confidence and assurance, and a high level of governance compliance is achieved. Committees work well, and alongside considerable oversight of and involvement in the SAR process, governors have clear insight on the strengths and weaknesses of the college. The Board's expertise in post-16 education, sector policy, and marketing and comms, have contributed to the college's success to date. Regular circulation of information and data on update items and activity by the Principal/Executive team between meetings (such as a monthly report) could free up time in the meetings for greater discussion and dialogue on key issues such as strategy and risk management.

RELATIONSHIPS

There is a willingness by all to demonstrate openness and transparency. Senior staff are very approachable, and the Board is supported by a competent governance professional. Governors are generous with their time and support on activities. The Board's understanding of educational priorities and skills development has been strong. For this to continue, board members' expertise needs to continue to reflect Cornwall's industries and future skills needs. An increase in external focus by governors on their ambassadorial role and sharing of connections from their networks and spheres of influence, would further support the Executive and enhance the student experience.

ENABLING

The Board's use of the Board portal Convene, helps to facilitate timely information flows to support engagement and decision making. The student voice is embedded throughout discussions and decisions, with governors providing challenge on the student experience and keeping students at the heart of everything the college does. Enabling increased participation by all governors in meetings will help to ensure diversity of perspectives contribute to effective support and challenge of the Executive, to drive appropriate decision making.

ALIGNMENT

The Board has clear oversight of annual performance KPIs and short-term goals through the SAR process. Governors have made a clear contribution to the setting of vision, values, and ethos of the college. Greater clarity could be gained on how the Board and committee work links with strategic plan priorities. Improved engagement between board and executive members to define annually the Board's priorities, would deliver more strategic agenda planning and reporting.

TEAM

The Board has taken demonstrable actions to build a board and senior team with the expertise, knowledge, and skills to deliver on its strategic priorities. Composition, succession, and board effectiveness are discussed, and performance indicators are in place to support governance improvement and effectiveness. Expanding the current governance review process to include an annual review of individual governor's contribution, achievements, and support needs, could contribute to greater governor engagement and awareness of how and where the Board adds value, and the contribution of governance to the organisation's performance.