



## External Governance Review

In October 2022, the Board of Sir George Monoux College commissioned an external independent Board Review, the aim being to understand the strengths of the Board and the areas needing development. The aim was also to facilitate a collaborative approach between the reviewer and the Board to co-design pathways intended to lead to improvements in effectiveness, in line with the Board's ambition, to move from being good to excellence. The framework used to undertake the review required analysis of the Board composition, the Board structures and the Board interactions. The review also included an examination of the context in which these key areas have contributed to the Board's effectiveness, as measured against the AOC's code of Good Governance for colleges.

The process involved interviews with the Chair, the interim Governance Professional and other members of the governing body, together with an examination of the governance documents and papers and observations of a number of Board and Committee meetings.

The starting point for the review was to consider the college strategic plan, as this enabled an assessment of how well the golden thread runs through the research, considerations and recommendations and links governance back to the strategic plan.

The Governors' responsibility and accountability for the college strategy includes determining the character, ethos, strategic aims, business, outcomes and impact. The review and subsequent report in looking at the current Strategic Plan included any considerations for the Board for the next iteration, bearing in mind the ambition in the scope to move from good to excellent.

The report included sections of current good practice but also areas for further development with more detail than would normally be included. The inclusion of considerations and suggestions to enhance practice and make improvements was intended to be helpful, recognising that at the time of the report the Clerk was in a temporary role and for future actions to be part of a handover to the incoming Director of Governance.

The number of suggestions was in no way a reflection on what the college is doing is a deficit model; rather a learning organisation keen to develop current practice.

The review posed some questions for members of the Board to consider, particularly reflecting the government's changes to policy and practice and the enhanced regulation for college boards. The report recognised the degree of change of governance over the past few years and included suggested enhancements to practice for the future.

**Pauline Odulinski OBE, May 2023**